

## YEF A&E Navigators Review

### Summary

- YEF is seeking a team to conduct a review of practice of A&E navigator programmes in England and Wales.
- The study will inform YEF's recommendations for the youth sector on how to reduce violence amongst children and young people (which will draw on a range of ongoing and completed research work).
- The deadline for the final report is May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025. The deadline for proposals is 10am, 4<sup>th</sup> November 2024. We intend to have appointed the successful team by 16<sup>th</sup> December 2024.

### Background

The Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) is a charity with a mission that matters. We exist to prevent children and young people becoming involved in violence. We do this by finding out what works and building a movement to put this knowledge into practice.

Children and young people at risk of becoming involved in violence deserve services that give them the best chance of a positive future. To make sure that happens, we fund promising projects and then use the very best evaluations to find out what works. We also synthesise the best available evidence from across the world, and then aim to mobilise what we learn across various sectors to make a change to the lives of children.

It is also imperative that YEF fully understands the context in which children live, and in which services operate to support them. Only then can we make evidence-based recommendations on how best to reduce serious violence amongst children and young people. Alongside our [programme funding](#), and [evidence synthesis](#) work, we fund a wide range of research projects (including data analysis, youth understanding work, and practice reviews) to better understand young people's lives, and the systems and services that surround them.

The youth sector is one such system that supports children.

### YEF's youth sector work

In late 2025, YEF will publish a set of recommendations for how the youth sector across England and Wales can support the reduction of serious violence amongst children and young people. These recommendations will draw upon YEF's existing work in the youth sector, including:

- Projects YEF has funded and evaluated in the sector (such as multi-site trials of [mentoring](#) and [detached youth work](#))
- Relevant sections of the YEF [Toolkit](#) (e.g. sports programmes, arts programmes, mentoring, and A&E navigators).
- Our extensive work understanding the lives of young people with the [Peer Action Collective](#)
- Our annual [Children, Violence and Vulnerability survey](#) of young people.

In addition, YEF is currently commissioning three other reviews of practice, covering youth clubs, youth workers' role in safeguarding, and youth sector provision, commissioning, and funding. We are open to teams applying for more than one project, particularly if efficiencies can be achieved through combining methods or reporting.

## **The aim of this project**

A&E navigator programmes place youth workers in A&E departments with the aim of providing support to children who have been involved in violence at a vulnerable moment. Although the existing evidence suggests that A&E navigator programmes can have a high impact on violence, the evidence is very weak: the YEF Toolkit estimate is based on only two studies, both conducted in the United States.<sup>1</sup>

These programmes have proliferated in England and Wales. All 20 VRUs have commissioned A&E navigator programmes. Alongside the government's commitment to place youth workers in A&E as part of their plan to tackle knife crime,<sup>2</sup> the £75m expansion of VRUs, planned under the previous government,<sup>3</sup> could lead to new investment in these programmes.

We want to understand how well these programmes are engaging children who have violence-related injuries, the challenges that these programmes may face, and the circumstances in which they are most useful.

## **Race equity**

There are significant racial disparities in children's experience of violence and youth justice. For instance, 26% of children in Youth Custody are Black, compared to 6% in the population in England and Wales aged 10–18.<sup>4</sup> Our 2023 survey of 7,500 children found that while the majority of violence was committed by White children (70%) and the majority of victims were White (72%), Black teenage children were, on average, more likely to be vulnerable as both victims (21%) and perpetrators (22%) compared to White children (16% and 14%, respectively).<sup>5</sup>

The Youth Endowment Fund's mission is to prevent children and young people from becoming involved in violence. We can't achieve this mission if we do not challenge this racial inequity. Addressing these disparities is an important aspect of our work, and race features in the research questions posed in this call for proposals.

## **Research questions**

These research questions are only indicative, and we encourage bidding teams to propose amendments to them and/or additional questions that they think could help meet the aims of the project. We would expect to finalise the detailed research questions and methods with the appointed team.

This project has 4 proposed research questions.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://youthendowmentfund.org.uk/toolkit/ae-navigators/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://labour.org.uk/change/take-back-our-streets/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/18-billion-benefits-through-public-sector-productivity-drive>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/youth-justice-statistics-2022-to-2023/youth-justice-statistics-2022-to-2023-accessible-version#children-in-youth-custody>

<sup>5</sup> <https://youthendowmentfund.org.uk/reports/children-violence-and-vulnerability-2023/>

- 1. Efficiency.** Are A&E navigator programmes in England and Wales distributed efficiently according to local need? In addition:
  - a. To what extent do children with violence-related injuries have access to navigators in A&E?
  - b. How much of navigators' time is spent supporting children with violence-related injuries (vs supporting adults or children hospitalised for other reasons)?
  - c. Does the demand and uptake of navigator programmes vary by location or hospital type?
  - d. What are the characteristics of hospitals that are more/less likely to benefit from navigator programmes?
- 2. Participation.** How do children with violence-related injuries engage with available A&E navigator programs? In addition:
  - a. What does participation involve, both in and beyond hospital?
  - b. How long do children remain engaged with the programme, and with what intensity?
  - c. What factors/characteristics predict participation and attrition rates (e.g. age, severity of injury, length of stay in hospital)?
  - d. Do participation and attrition rates vary according to children's ethnic background?
  - e. How can programmes effectively engage children from minority ethnic communities?
- 3. Success and challenges.** What are the key criteria for successful A&E navigator programmes? In addition:
  - a. What are the characteristics of an effective navigator?
  - b. What challenges are experienced when implementing programmes and how can these be overcome?
  - c. Are there specific models/examples of best practice that could be adopted more widely?
- 4. Policy and practice changes.** What policy or practice changes could improve the potential of A&E navigator programmes to prevent children's involvement in violence? Under what circumstances should A&E navigator programmes be established in hospitals?

## Required outputs and suggested methodology

To answer the research questions, we would expect to see a detailed written discussion that draws from:

- a. Desk based research.
- b. Surveys, interviews, and focus groups with a range of stakeholders (that may include commissioners, Violence Reduction Units, A&E navigators, children and young people, and hospital staff).
- c. Reviews of published and unpublished process evaluations of A&E navigator programmes.
- d. Any data analysis that the review team deem possible.
- e. Additional resources suggested by the research team.

We encourage teams to consider how input from stakeholders can be combined with quantitative analysis (from existing or new research) to describe current practice and identify opportunities for change.

At the end of the study, we would expect all these outputs to be drawn together in a written report, comprising:

- a. An executive summary
- b. An introduction

- c. Methodology
- d. Findings (written discussion of each of the research questions in turn)
- e. Conclusion and recommendations for policy and practice

Upon sharing the final report with us, we would expect the research team to provide a short presentation to the YEF team on the study's findings. YEF will pay for the peer review of the report.

## Timeline

The deadline for proposals is 10am, 4<sup>th</sup> November 2024. We intend to have appointed the successful team by 16<sup>th</sup> December 2024. The deadline for the final report is 30<sup>th</sup> May 2025, after which a peer review process will take place.

## Budget

We expect the project to cost approximately c.£40-60k. However, we have some flexibility here, and will be judging bids on value for money rather than absolute cost. We would not expect VAT to be included in teams' budgets. Pass through VAT via sub-granting work to other organisations may in some circumstances be included. However, it is up to the bidding team to decide if they need to include VAT and any charges must be covered within the total grant amount.

We do not require budgets to use a specific template in proposals. Any approach that enables us to see total cost, the cost of project components, day rates, and number of days assigned to each team member is sufficient.

## How to apply

YEF will judge research applications using the following criteria:

- **Subject expertise (20%).** How much expertise does the team have relating to violence prevention programmes, particularly those that are hospital based or involve youth workers?
- **Research experience (20%).** How much experience does the team have in delivering similar research projects? Does the team have expertise and experience in delivering research projects that aim to understand racial disparities?
- **Proposed methodological approach (40%).** What methodology has the team suggested, and does it match our needs?
- **Value for money (20%).** Does the bid represent value for money?

Where teams may be weak in any of the above areas, we encourage applicants to seek expert consultants and partnerships to supplement their bid.

Proposals should be no longer than 2,500 words, and should set out the team's expertise, experience, methodological approach, and budget. You may attach relevant documents to support your application – this will not be included in the word count.

As noted above, we are open to research teams suggesting their own research questions, and/or suggesting improvements and amendments to our own. Teams are welcome to apply for multiple projects, particularly if there are opportunities to streamline methods or reporting for greater efficiency.

**Please email your application to [chloe.lowry@youthendowmentfund.org.uk](mailto:chloe.lowry@youthendowmentfund.org.uk) by 10am on 4<sup>th</sup> November. If you have any questions regarding the project, please email these to [chloe.lowry@youthendowmentfund.org.uk](mailto:chloe.lowry@youthendowmentfund.org.uk) by 25<sup>th</sup> October.**