



Children's Experience of Violence & What the Evidence Tells us Helps Keep them Safe

**Gail Gibbons, Head of Change
– Children's Services &
Neighbourhoods**



The Youth Endowment Fund

Our Vision

A world where no child becomes involved in violence.

Our Mission

To find what works and build a movement to put this knowledge into practice.



Focusing on 7 essential sectors



Children's Services



Education



Health



Neighbourhoods



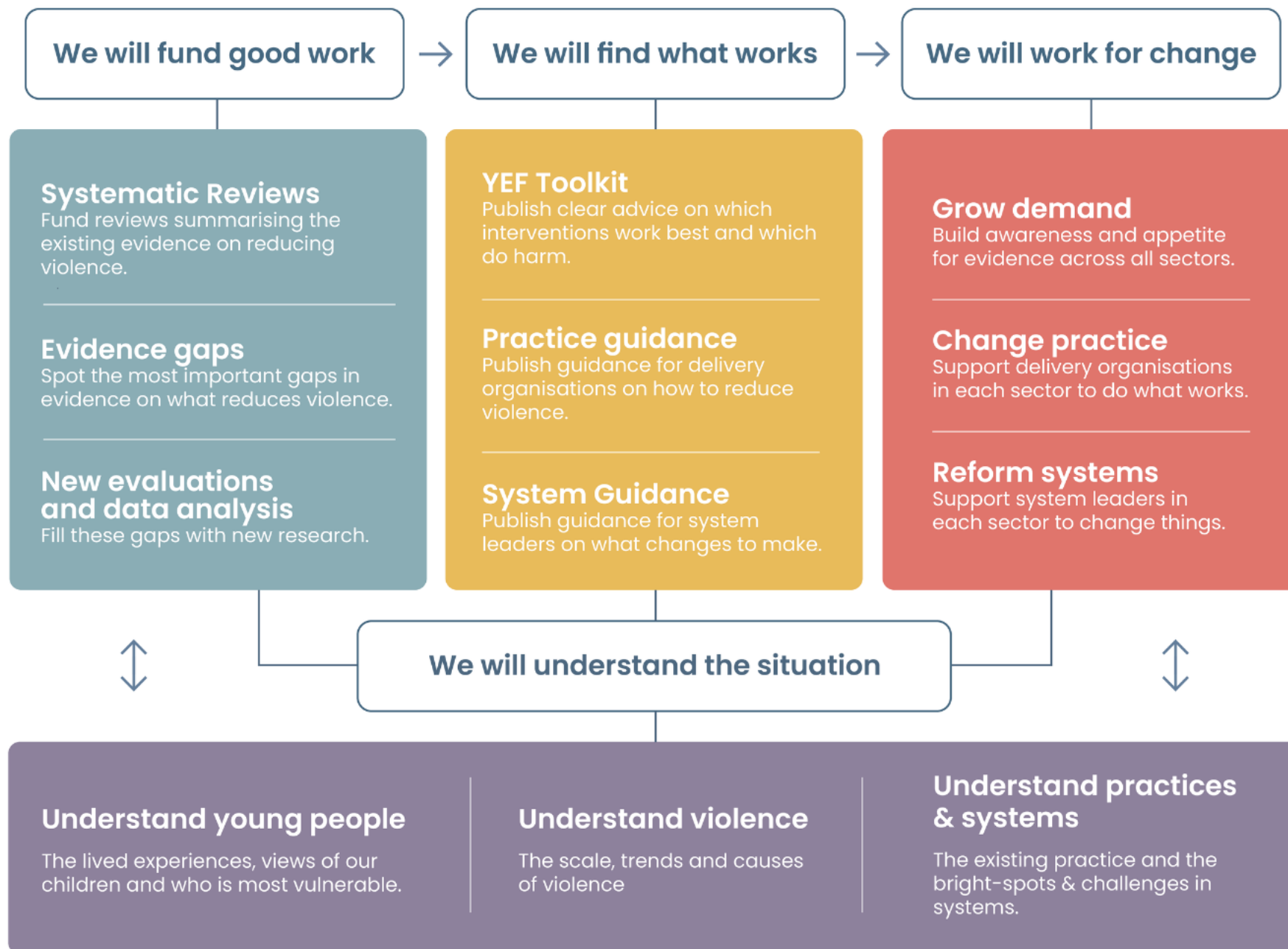
Policing



Youth Justice



Youth Sector



Children, violence and vulnerability 2024

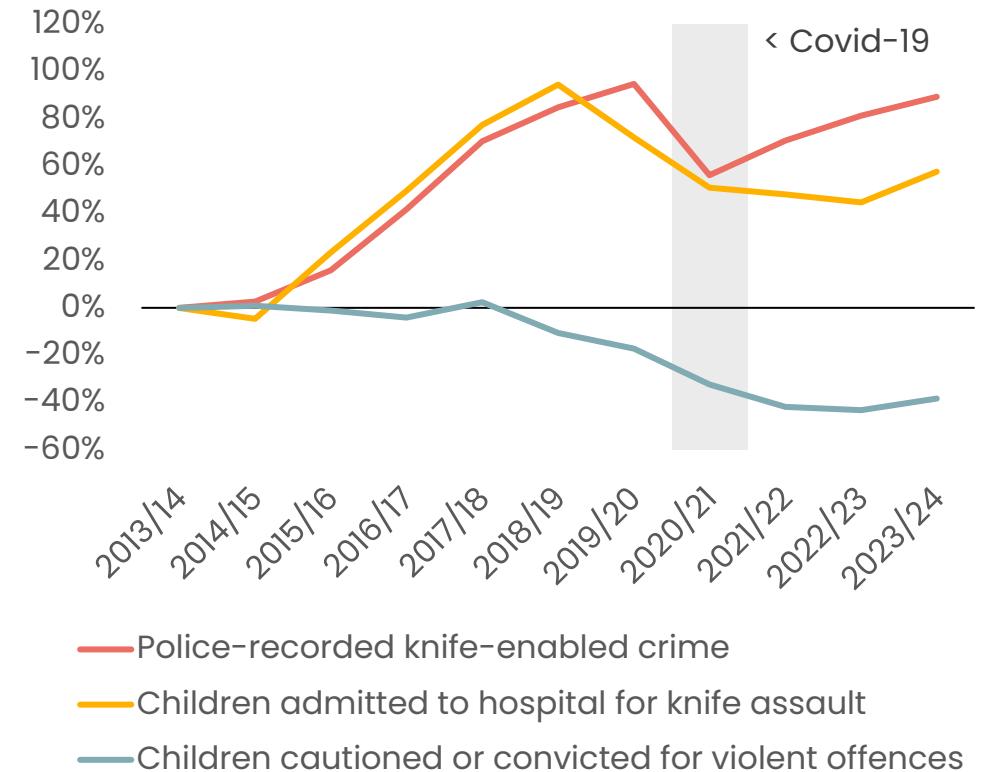
Background to the survey

Different sources show different things about the nature of violence...

- Police-recorded crime
- Youth justice system
- Hospital admissions
- Surveys (e.g. CSEW - 1,528 10-15-year-olds)

Purpose of our survey is to provide....

- Robust national estimates of the number of CYP affected by violence (victims, witnesses, perpetrators)
- Greater clarity on which children are most affected by violence.
- Provide more information on the context we operate in and the sectors that support CYP



Our latest survey

This is our third annual survey. We surveyed over 10,000 13–17-year-olds across England and Wales.

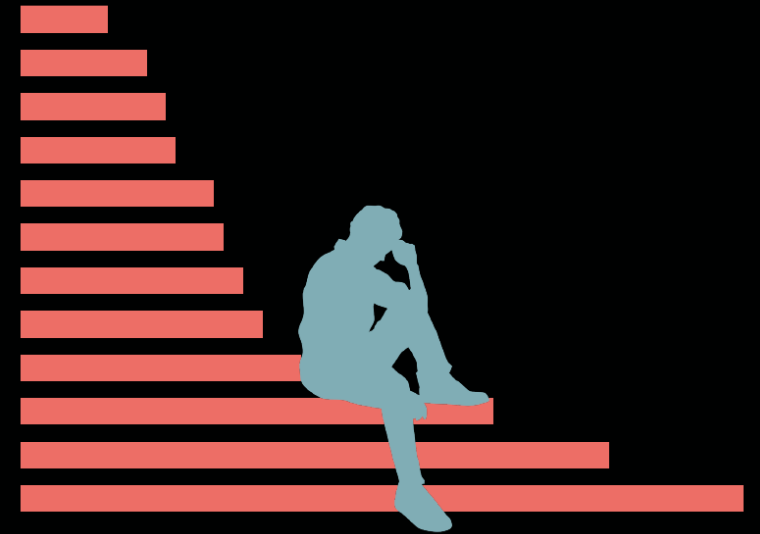
The findings were split over five separate reports:

1. Overall prevalence of violence
2. Social media
3. Gender and relationships
4. Police (covered next time)
5. Positive activities, youth clubs and trusted adults (covered next time)



How common is violence?

1. A worrying minority of children continue to have direct experiences of violence.
2. A majority are exposed to violence on social media.
3. Relationship violence is common for both boys and girls.



How we measured violence

“By violent crime, we mean the use of force or threat of force against another person or people, for example punching someone, threatening someone with a weapon, or mugging someone. This also includes sexual assault, which is when somebody intentionally touches someone in a sexual way without their consent.”

Physical assault

- Someone kicked, hit, pushed/shoved, or was physically violent in some way towards another person

Robbery

- Someone used force or threats to steal or take something from another person.

Sexual assault

- Someone intentionally touched another person in a sexual way, e.g. touching, grabbing or kissing, without their consent (permission). Both girls and boys can be sexually assaulted by either boys/men or girls/women.

Weapons

- Someone used or threatened to use a weapon on another person.

A worrying minority of children continue to have direct experiences of violence

20%

have been victims in the past year

16%

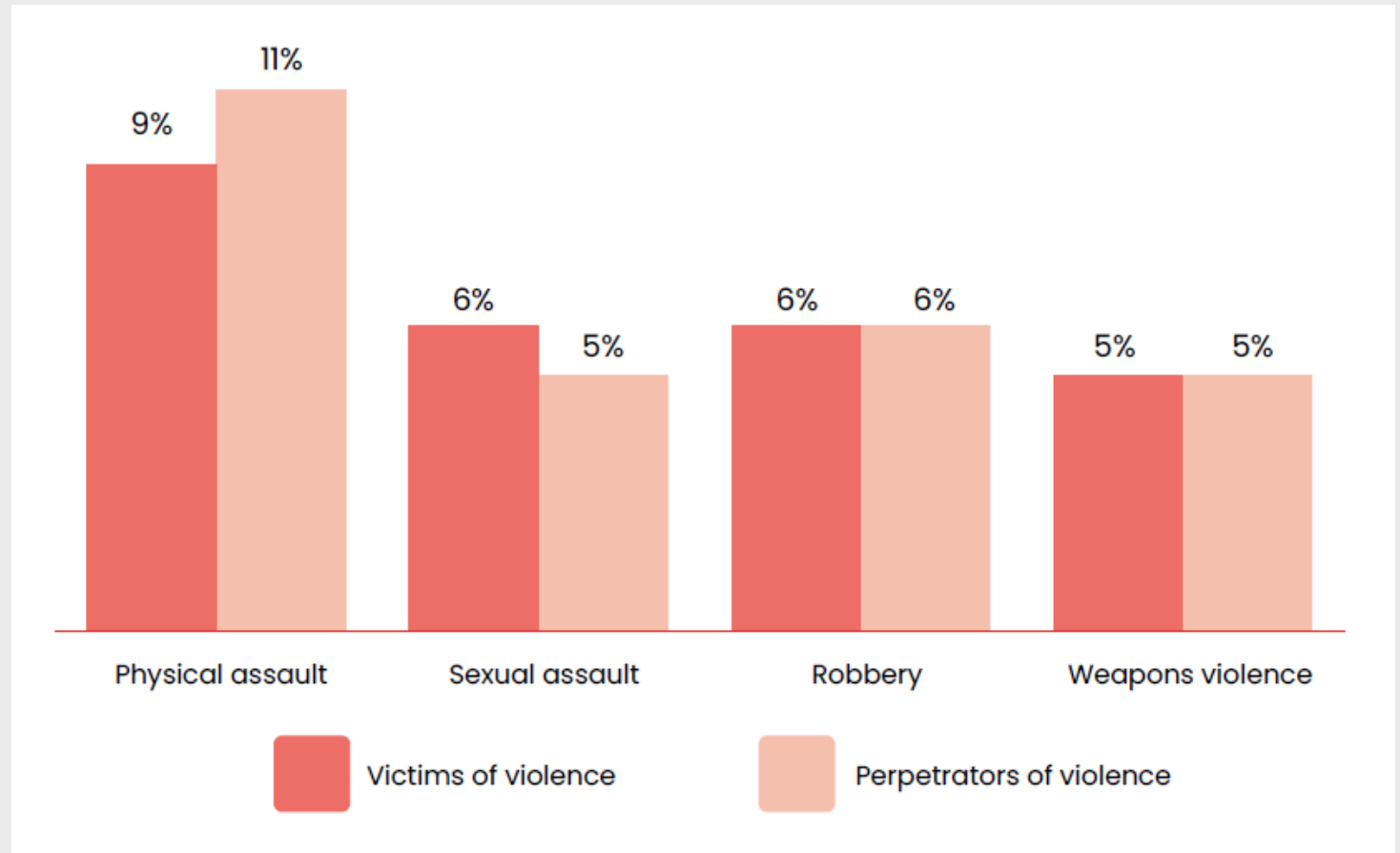
have perpetrated violence

27%

have been either victims or perpetrators

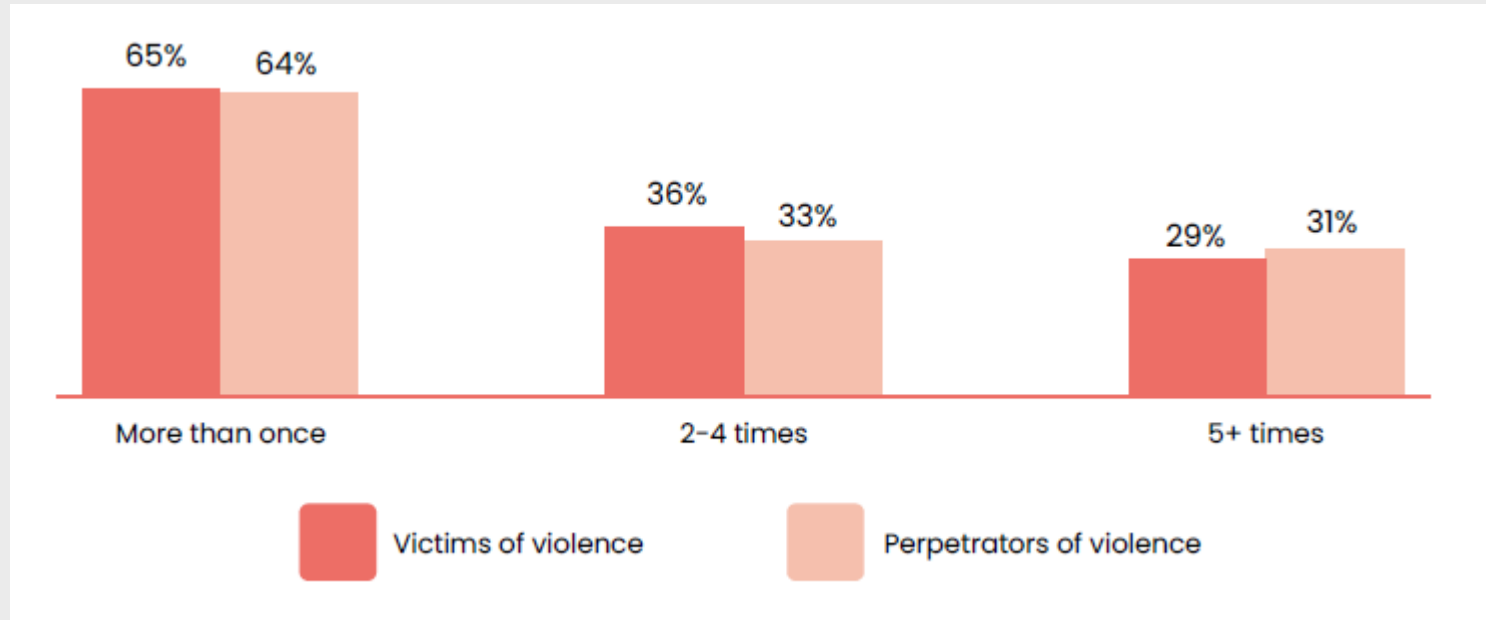
(equivalent to 960,000 13-17-year-olds)

Proportion of 13-17-year-olds who were victims and perpetrators of violence in the past 12 months:



Most experience more than one incident

Proportion of 13–17-year-olds who were victims and perpetrators of violence who experienced more than one incident in the past 12 months:



61%

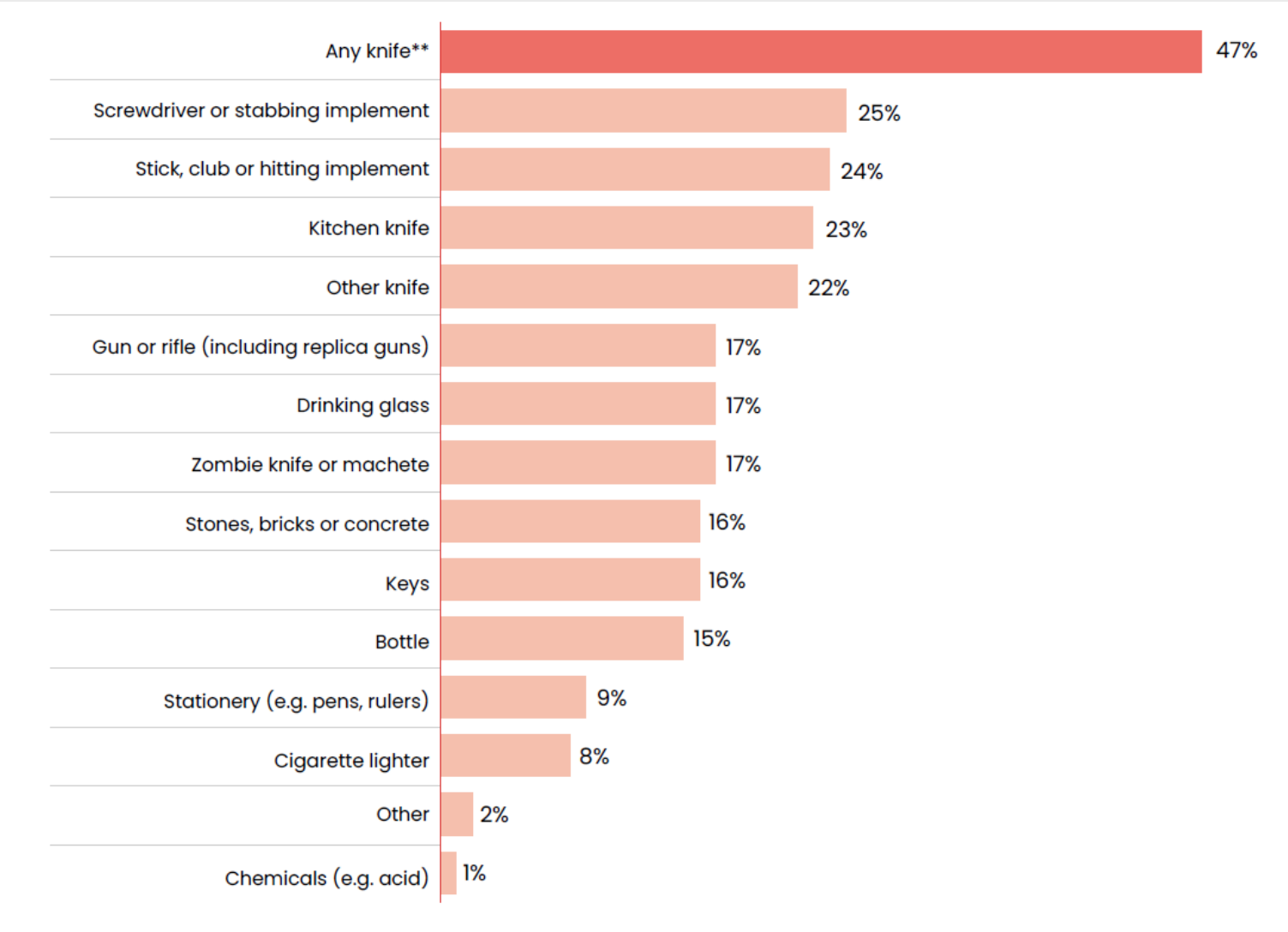
of victims experienced violence that resulted in physical injury

48%

of those who perpetrated violence say it resulted in physical injury

5% of children said they carried a weapon in the past year

Types of weapons carried by children who've carried one in the past year:



25%

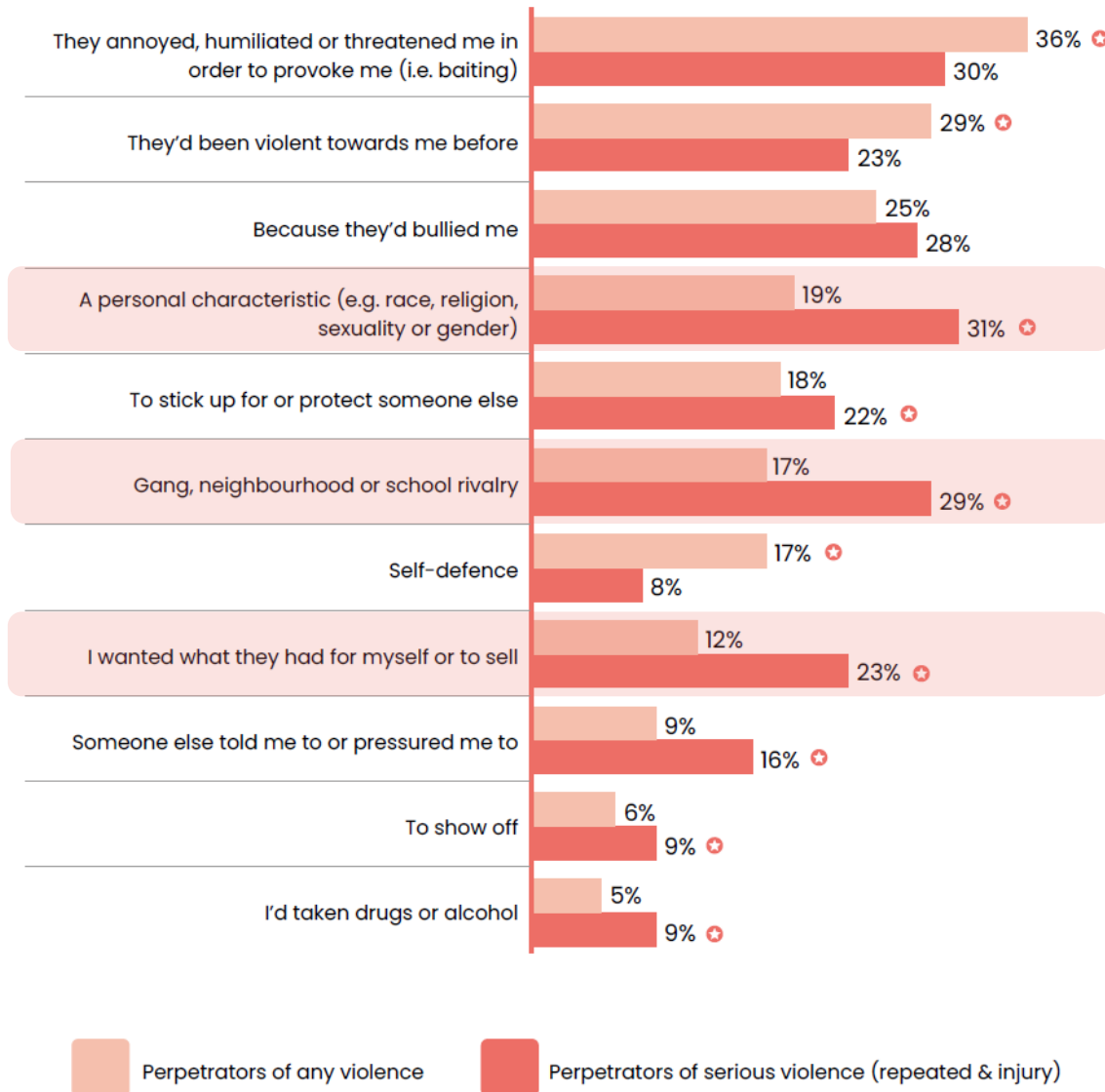
of those carried a screwdriver or other stabbing implement

23%

carried a kitchen knife

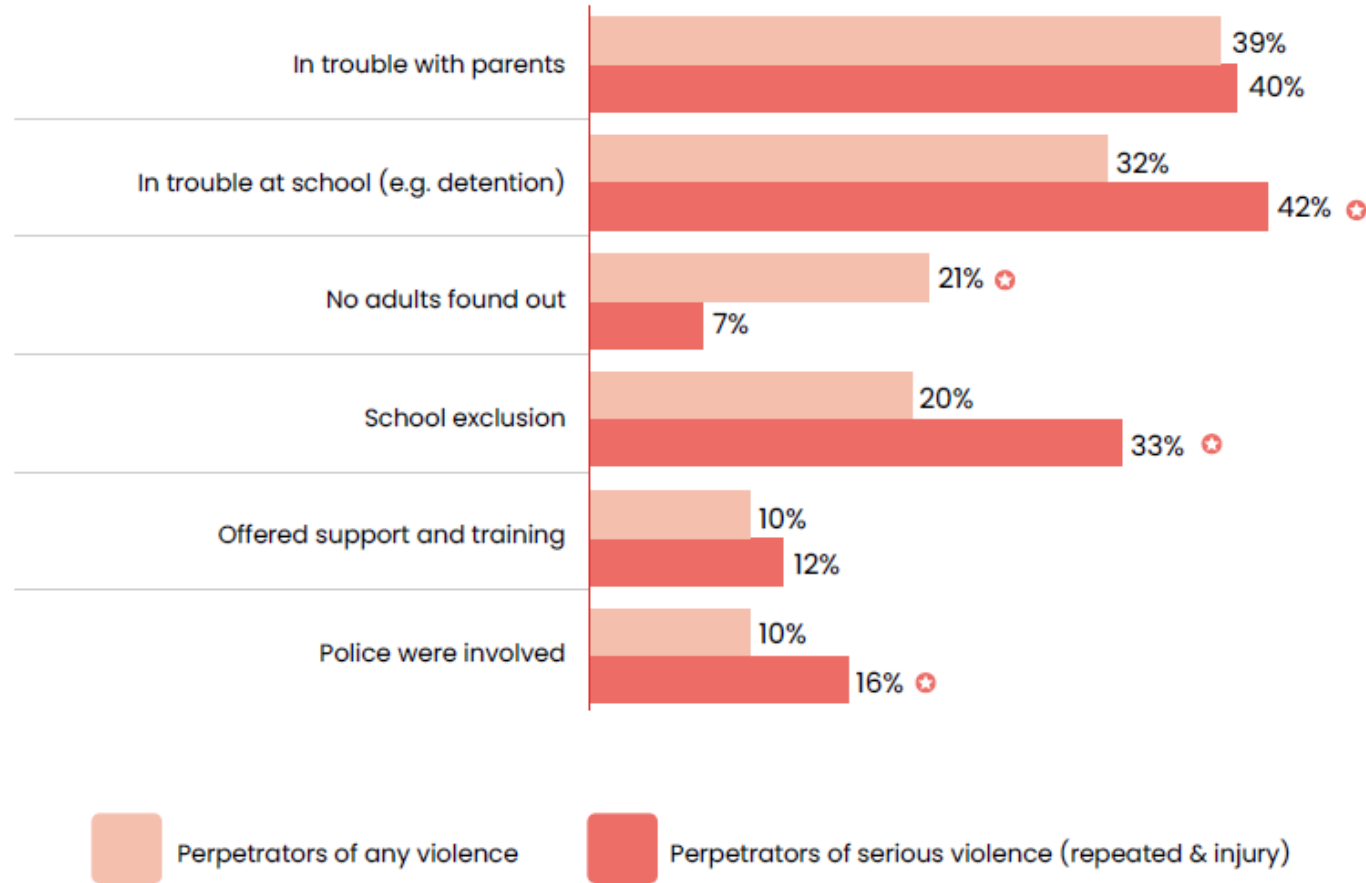
The leading reasons children gave for perpetrating violence were baiting and retaliation

← Reasons children perpetrated violence



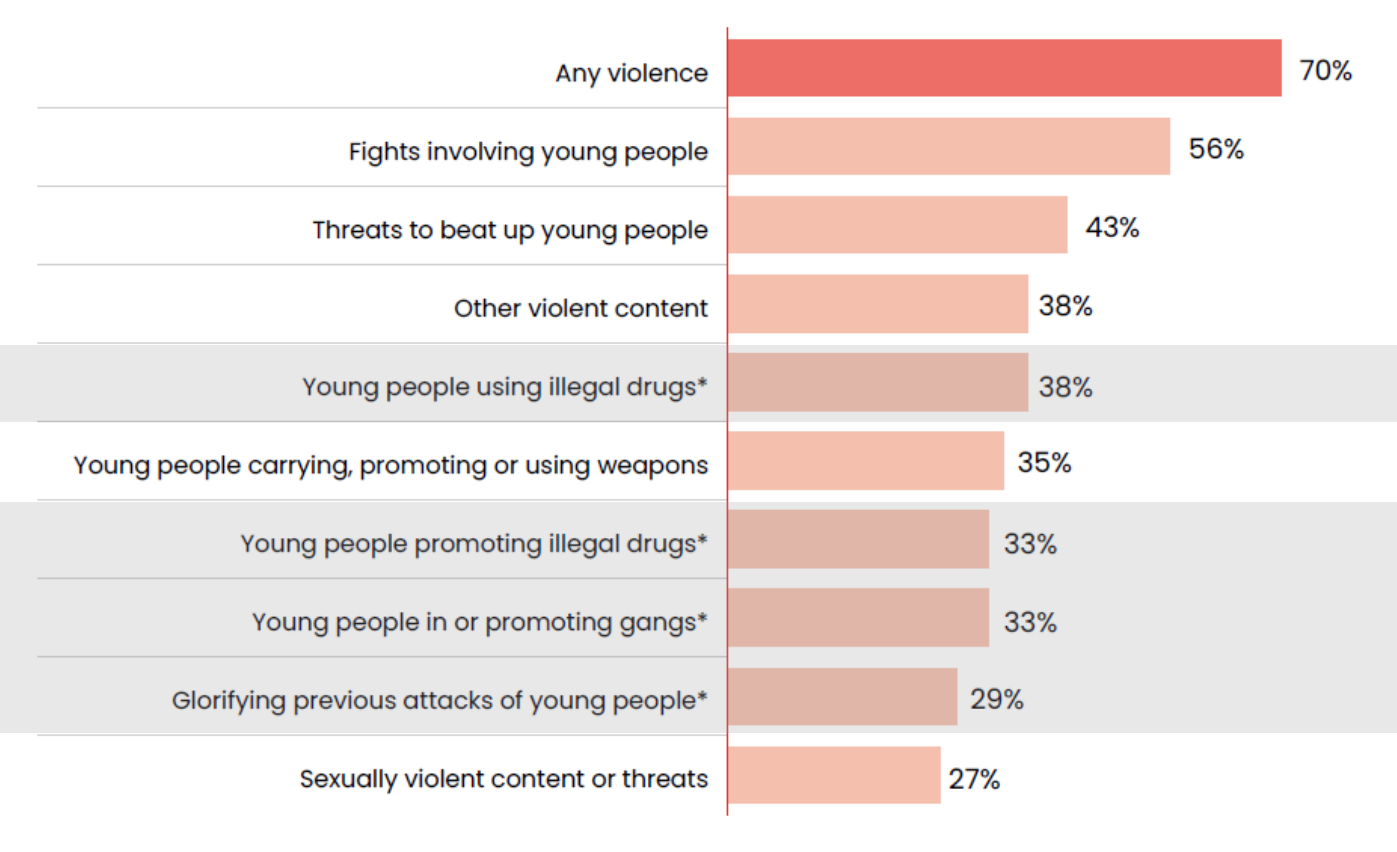
Most children perpetrating violence don't receive support

Adults' responses to children who perpetrated violence:



70% of teenage children have seen violence on social media in the past year

Proportion of children who've seen different types of content on social media in the past 12 months:



Users of certain platforms are more likely to see violence

44% of TikTok users

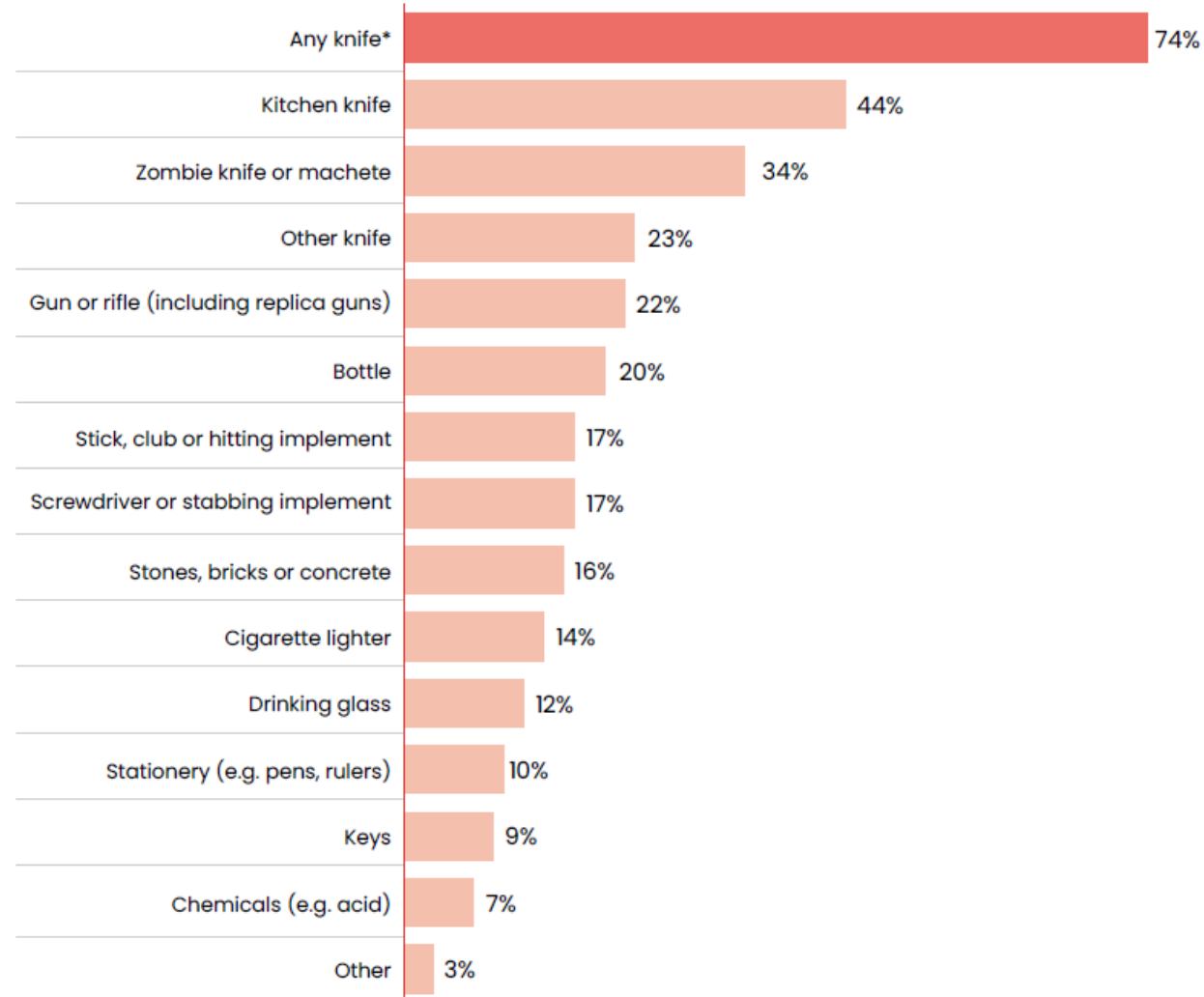
43% of X users

Platforms appear to be pushing content at children

6% searched for it

25% had it promoted to them by the platform

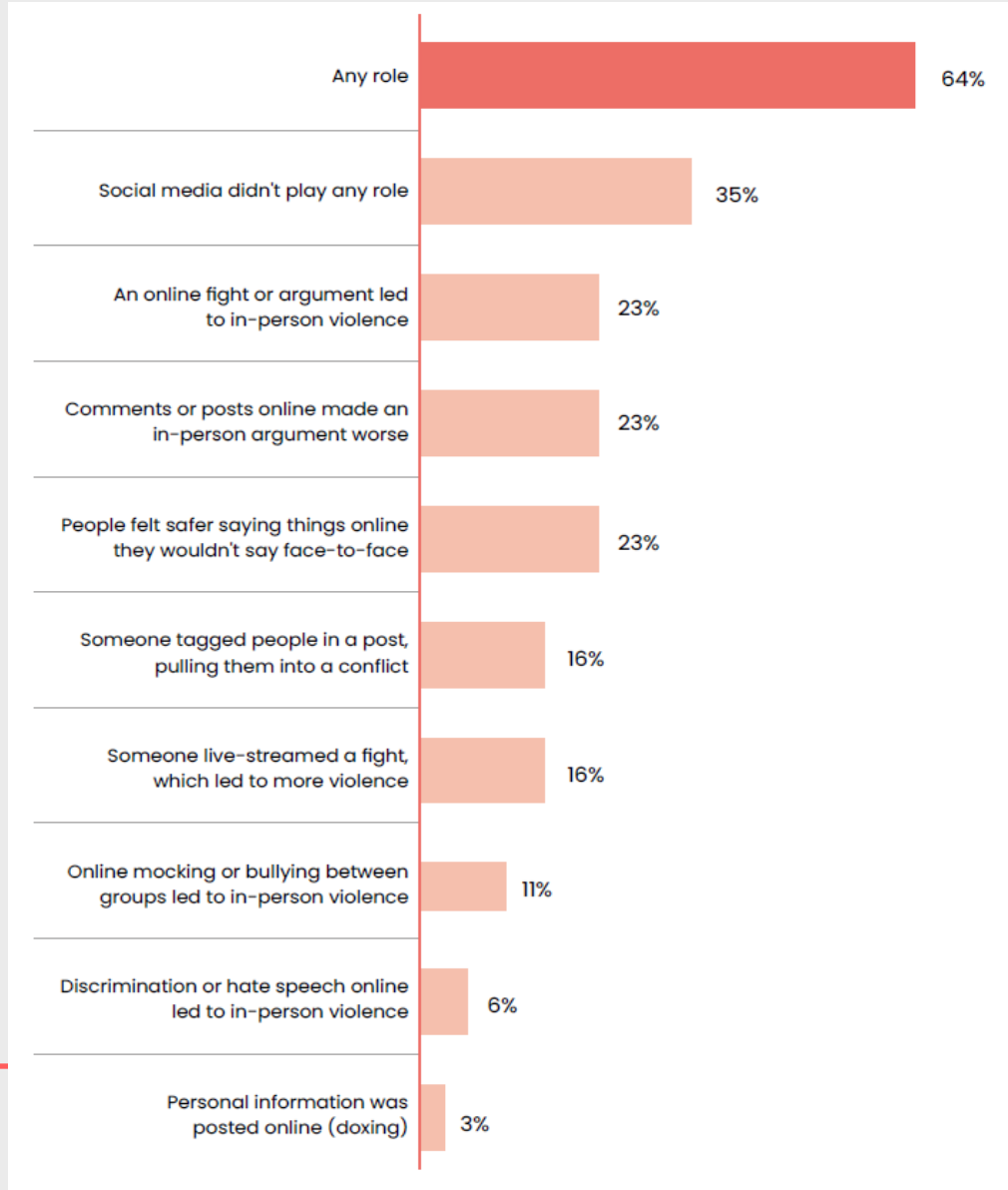
1 in 9 have seen zombie knives or machetes on social media



← Types of weapons seen by children who've seen weapons online in the past 12 months

*Kitchen knife, zombie knife or machete, or other knife.

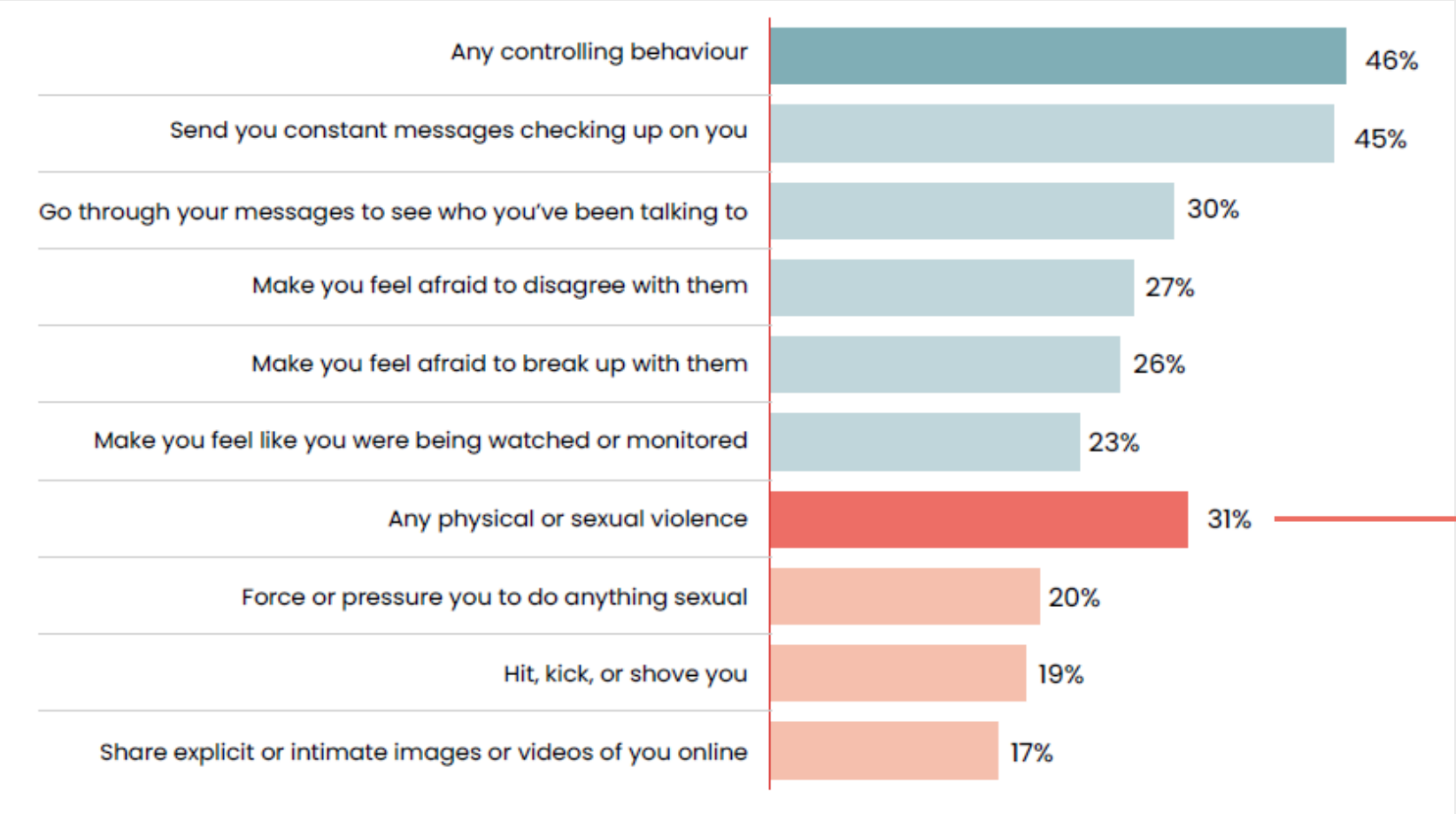
Two-thirds of children who perpetrated violence say social media played a role



← Proportion of children who perpetrated violence who say social media played a role

Half of children in relationships experienced violent or controlling relationship behaviours

Proportion of children in relationships who experience violent and controlling behaviours:



8.5%
of all 13-17-year-olds

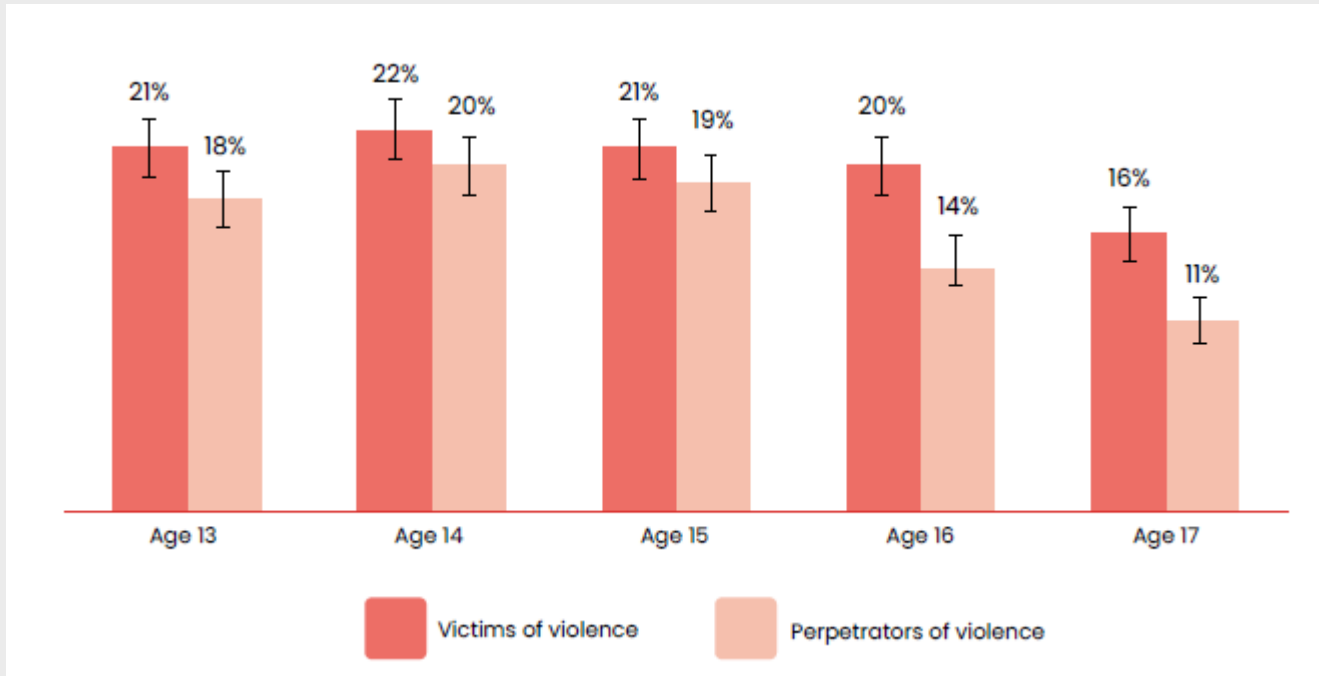
Who is affected by violence?

1. Younger children are more likely to say they've been affected by violence.
2. Violence is experienced differently by boys and girls.
3. Experiences of violence are concentrated among the most vulnerable.



Younger children are more likely to be affected by violence.

Proportion of children who've been victims and perpetrators of violence in the past year by age:



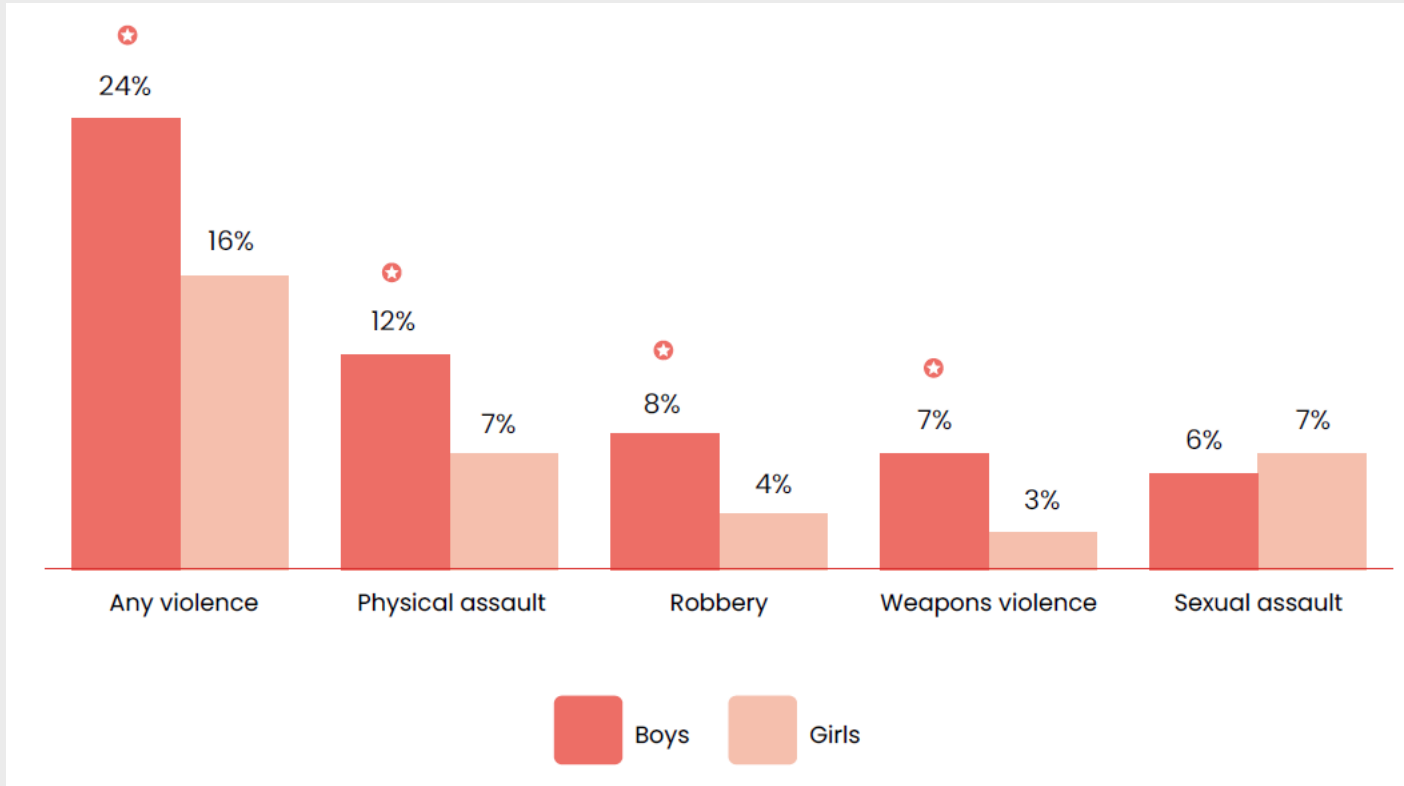
47%
of 13-year-olds in relationships
have experienced physical or
sexual relationship violence

compared to

19%
of 17-year-olds in relationships

Boys are more likely to be involved in violence, but rates for girls are high as well.

Proportion of children who've been victims of violence in the past year by gender:

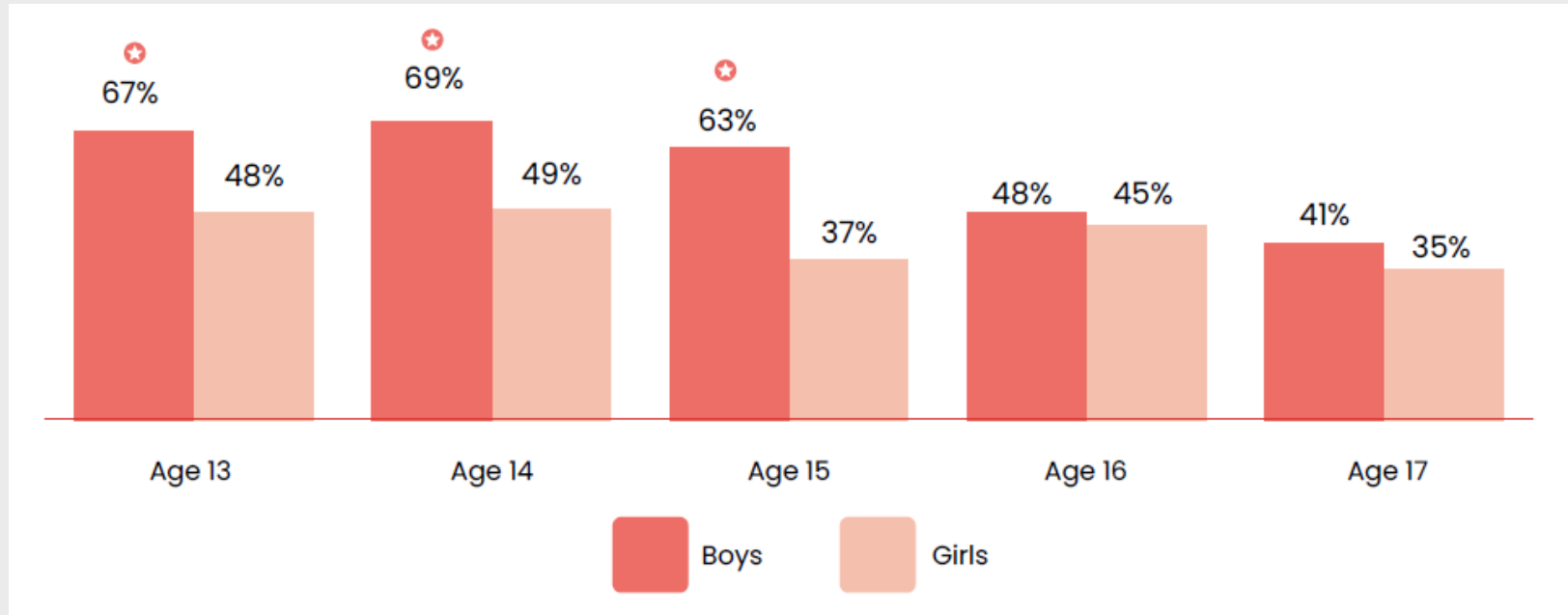


21%

of boys perpetrated violence vs 11% of girls

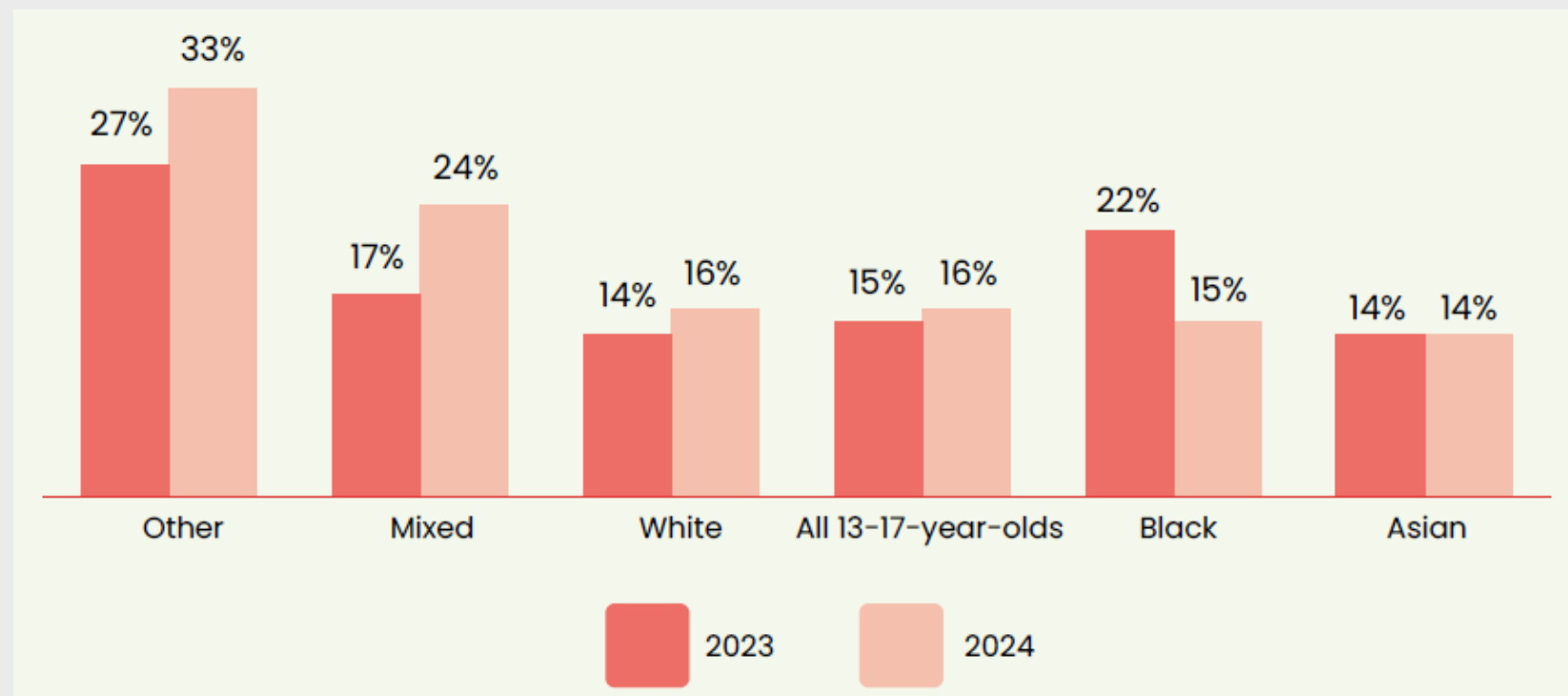
Relationship violence shows unexpected gender patterns

Proportion of children in relationships who've experienced any violent or controlling behaviour by age and gender:



Experiences differ by ethnicity

Proportion of children who perpetrated violence this year compared to last year:



But looking at broad ethnic groups might obscure the results

13%

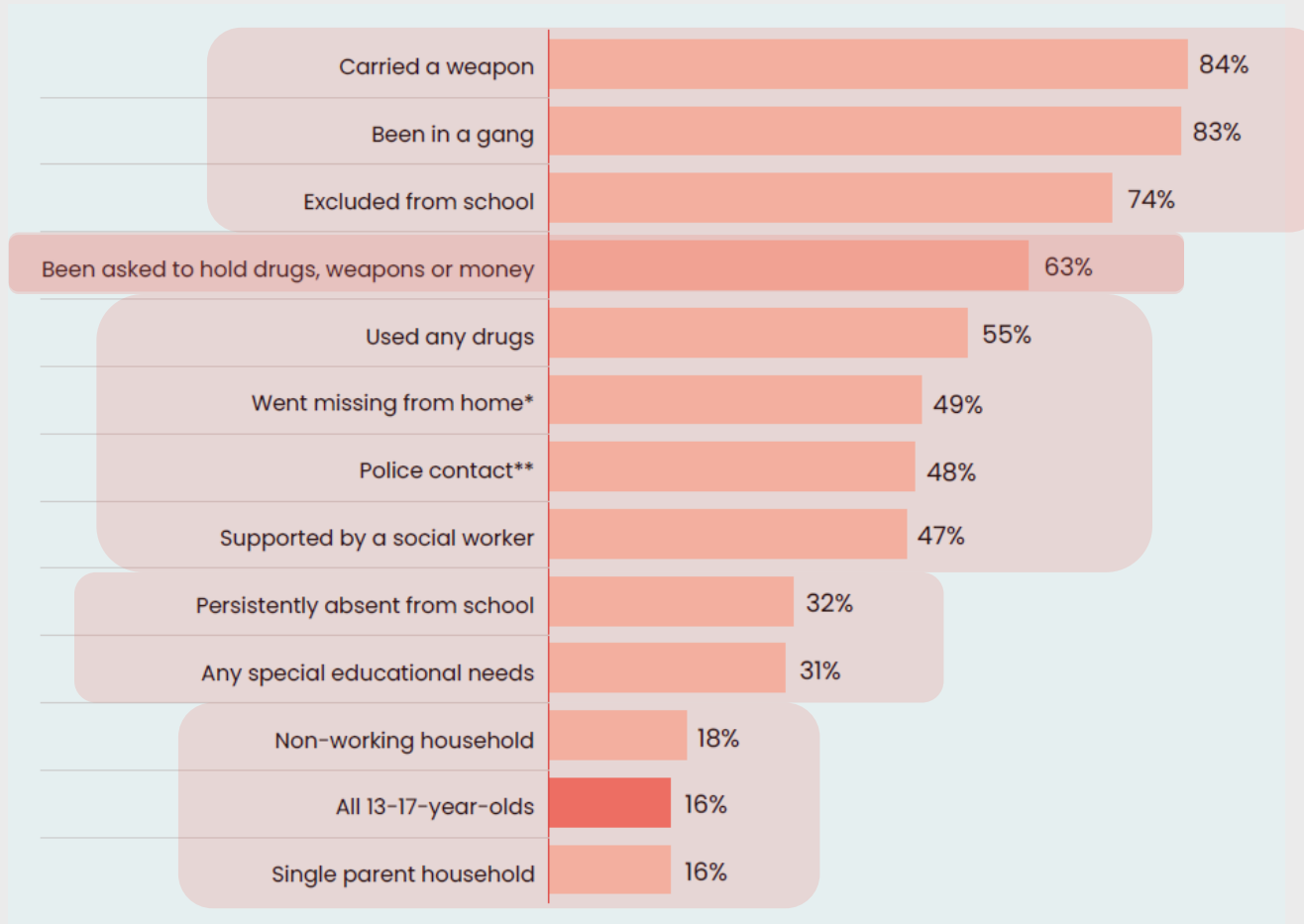
of Black African children say they perpetrated violence, compared to

20%

of Black Caribbean children

Experiences of violence are concentrated among the most vulnerable

Proportion of 13-17-year-olds who perpetrated violence in the past 12 months:



of children asked to hold drugs, weapons or money...

94%

have seen violence on social media

79%

of those in relationships have experienced violent or controlling relationship behaviours

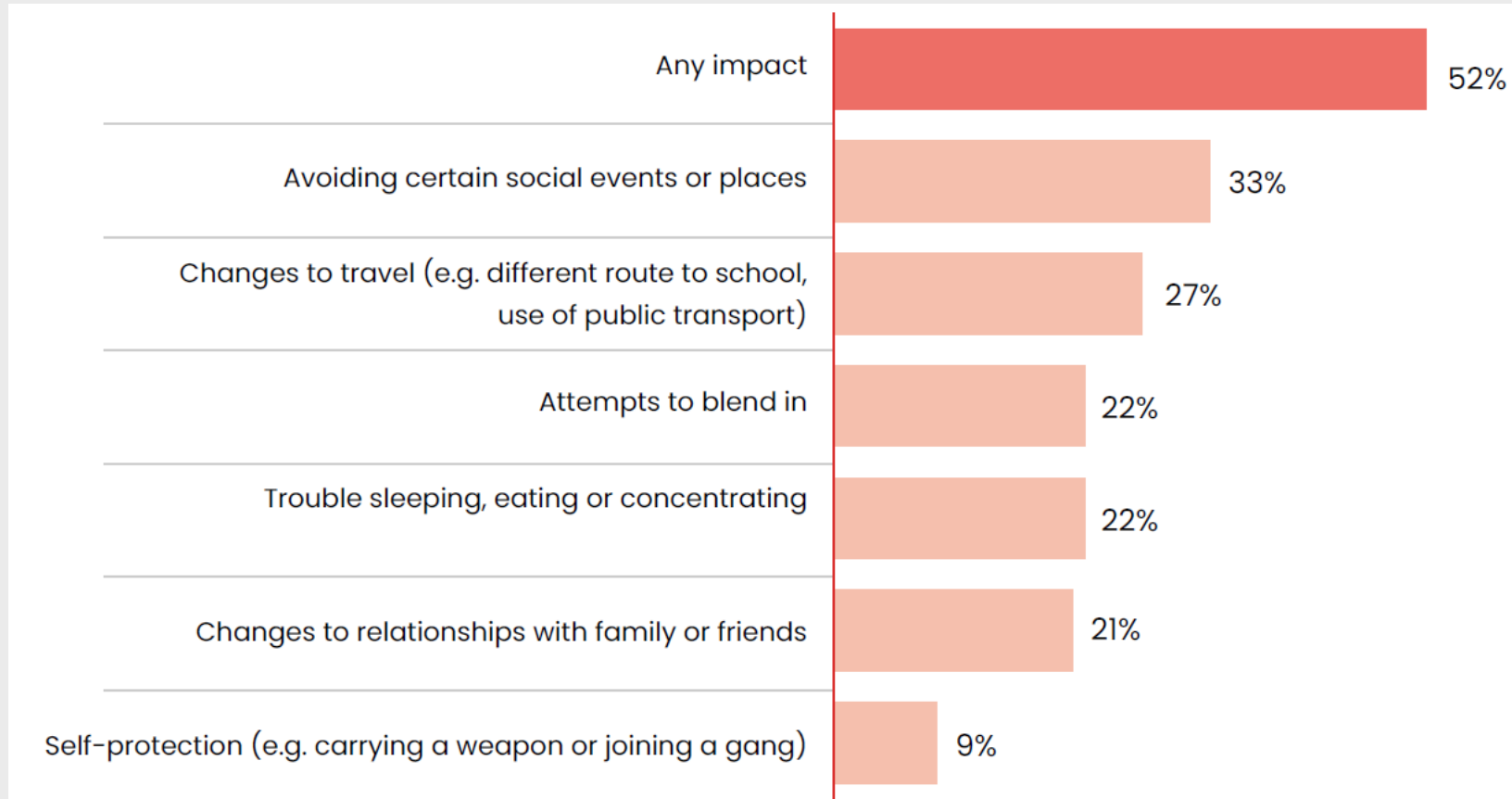
How widespread are the effects of violence?

1. The majority of children feel the effects of violence.
2. Social media content impacts how safe children feel.
3. Some of these fears are putting them at greater risk.



Two-thirds of children are worried about being the victim of violence

Proportion of 13-17-year-olds reporting day-to-day impacts of fears of violence:

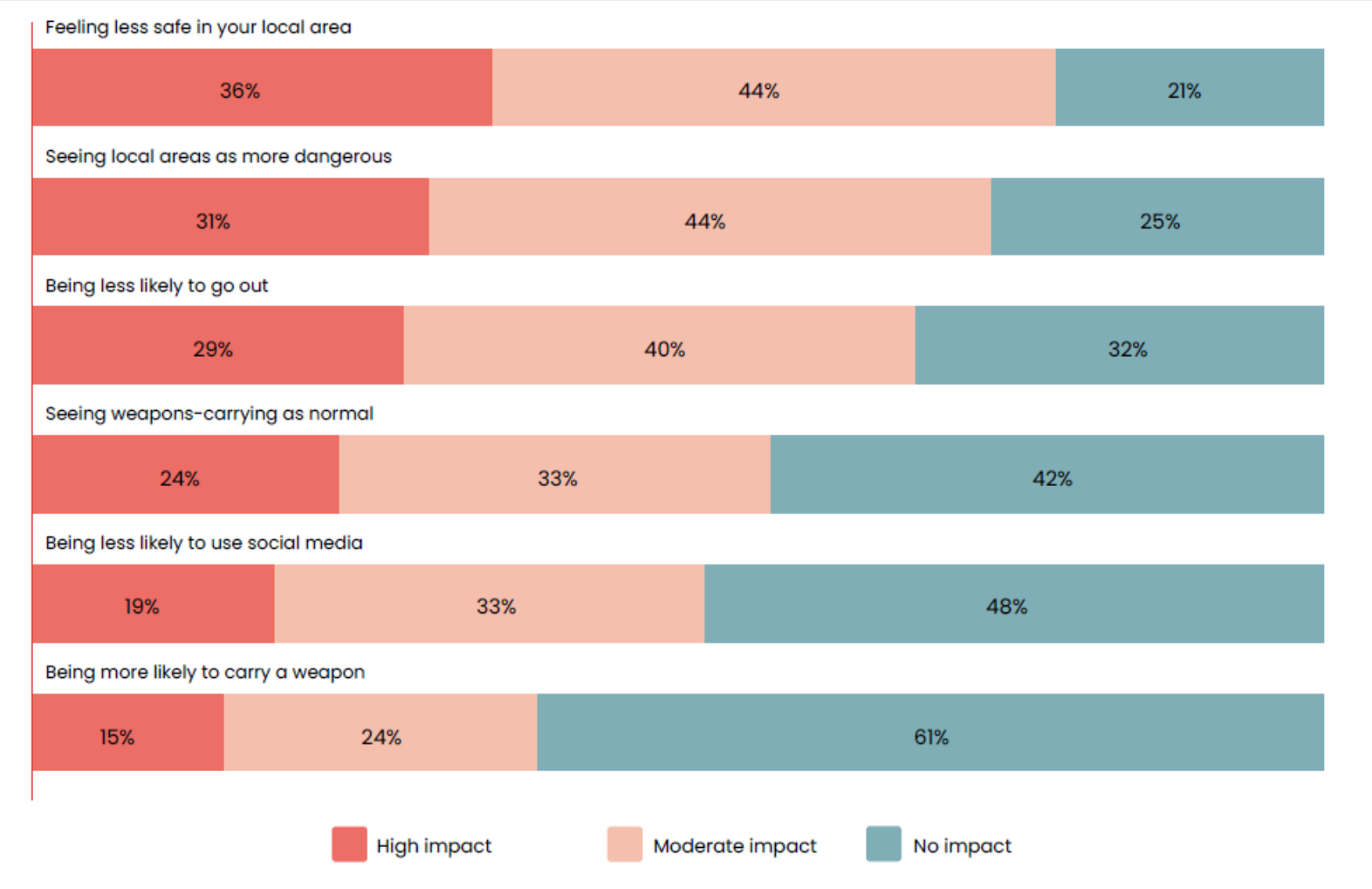


52%

say fears led them to
change their behaviour
or impacted their
wellbeing

Social media content affects feelings of safety

Day-to-day impacts of seeing weapons content on social media:



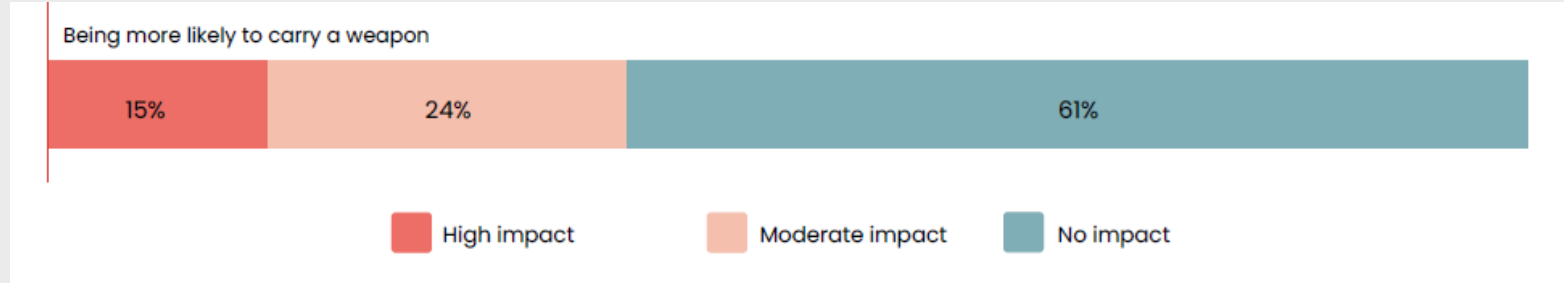
80%

seeing weapons online
say it makes them feel
less safe in their area

68%

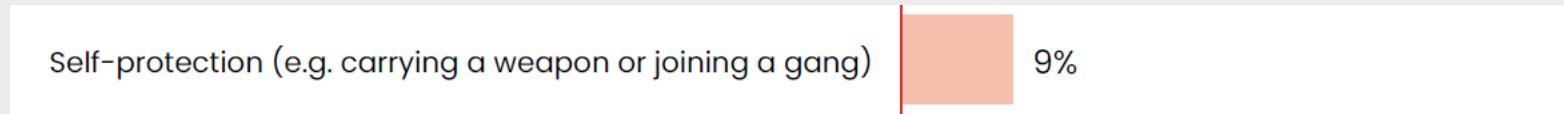
seeing weapons online
say it makes them less
likely to go out

Some of these fears are putting children at greater risk



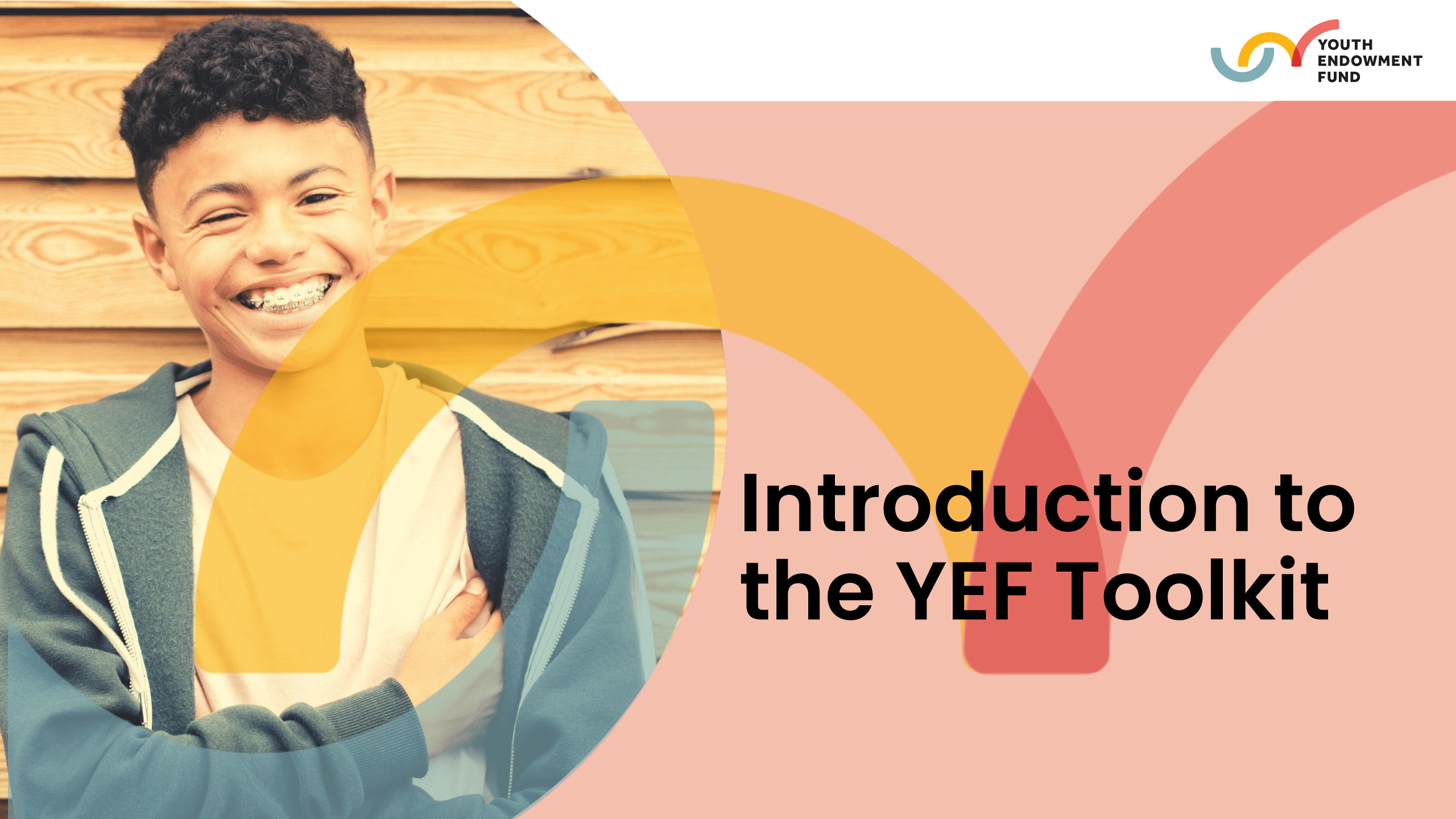
39%

of children who've seen weapons online say it has an impact on making them more likely to carry a weapon themselves



9%

of all children say they've done things to protect themselves like carrying a weapon or joining a gang



Introduction to the YEF Toolkit

What does the YEF Toolkit aim to do?



Summarise research
making it accessible and
actionable



Support professional
decision making with
'best bets'



Create a foundation for
change

YEF Toolkit

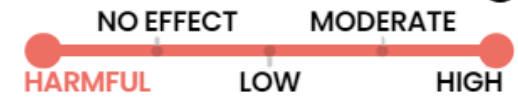
An overview of existing research on approaches to preventing serious youth violence.

Filter by:

EVIDENCE QUALITY



IMPACT



COST



Social skills training

Aims to develop children's ability to regulate their behaviour and communicate effectively.

COST

£ £ £

EVIDENCE QUALITY



ESTIMATED IMPACT
ON VIOLENT CRIME

HIGH

OTHER OUTCOMES

HIGH increase in Self-regulation



Mentoring

Mentors provide children and young people with guidance and support.

COST

£ £ £

EVIDENCE QUALITY

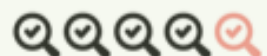


ESTIMATED IMPACT
ON VIOLENT CRIME

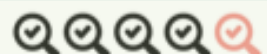
MODERATE

HIGH IMPACT

Focused deterrence



Social skills training



Cognitive behavioural therapy



Sports programmes



Trauma-specific therapies



A&E navigators



HIGH IMPACT

Focused deterrence 

Social skills training 

Cognitive behavioural therapy 

Sports programmes 

Trauma-specific therapies 

A&E navigators 

MODERATE IMPACT

Pre-court diversion 

Relationship violence prevention 

Custody aftercare & resettlement 

Mentoring 

Multi-systemic therapy 

Restorative justice 

Hot spots policing 

Stop and search 

Bystander interventions 

Functional Family Therapy 

HIGH IMPACT

Focused deterrence	👍👍👍👍👍
Social skills training	👍👍👍👍👍
Cognitive behavioural therapy	👍👍👍👍👍
Sports programmes	👍👍👍👍👍
Trauma-specific therapies	👍👍👍👍👍
A&E navigators	👍👍👍👍👍

MODERATE IMPACT

Pre-court diversion	👍👍👍👍👍
Relationship violence prevention	👍👍👍👍👍
Custody aftercare & resettlement	👍👍👍👍👍
Mentoring	👍👍👍👍👍
Multi-systemic therapy	👍👍👍👍👍
Restorative justice	👍👍👍👍👍
Hot spots policing	👍👍👍👍👍
Stop and search	👍👍👍👍👍
Bystander interventions	👍👍👍👍👍
Functional Family Therapy	👍👍👍👍👍

LOW IMPACT

After-school programmes	👍👍👍👍👍
Interventions to prevent school exclusion	👍👍👍👍👍
Parenting programmes	👍👍👍👍👍
Adventure and wilderness therapy	👍👍👍👍👍
Anti-bullying programmes	👍👍👍👍👍
CCTV	👍👍👍👍👍

HIGH IMPACT

Focused deterrence	👍👍👍👍👎
Social skills training	👍👍👍👍👎
Cognitive behavioural therapy	👍👍👍👎👎
Sports programmes	👍👍👎👎👎
Trauma-specific therapies	👍👎👎👎👎
A&E navigators	👍👎👎👎👎

MODERATE IMPACT

Pre-court diversion	👍👍👍👍👎
Relationship violence prevention	👍👍👍👍👎
Custody aftercare & resettlement	👍👍👍👍👎
Mentoring	👍👍👍👎👎
Multi-systemic therapy	👍👍👍👎👎
Restorative justice	👍👍👍👎👎
Hot spots policing	👍👍👍👎👎
Stop and search	👍👍👍👎👎
Bystander interventions	👍👍👎👎👎
Functional Family Therapy	👍👍👎👎👎

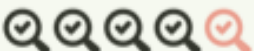
LOW IMPACT

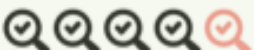
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Interventions to prevent school exclusion	👍👍👍👎👎
Parenting programmes	👍👍👎👎👎
Adventure and wilderness therapy	👍👍👎👎👎
Anti-bullying programmes	👍👍👎👎👎
CCTV	👍👍👎👎👎

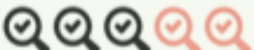
NO EFFECT

Street lighting	👍👍👎👎👎
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HIGH IMPACT

Focused deterrence 

Social skills training 

Cognitive behavioural therapy 

Sports programmes 

Trauma-specific therapies 

A&E navigators 

MODERATE IMPACT

Pre-court diversion 

Relationship violence prevention 

Custody aftercare & resettlement 

Mentoring 

Multi-systemic therapy 

Restorative justice 

Hot spots policing 

Stop and search 

Bystander interventions 

Functional Family Therapy 

LOW IMPACT

After-school programmes 

Interventions to prevent school exclusion 

Parenting programmes 

Adventure and wilderness therapy 

Anti-bullying programmes 

CCTV 

NO EFFECT

Street lighting 

HARMFUL IMPACT

Boot camps 

Prison awareness programmes 

HIGH IMPACT

Focused deterrence	👍👍👍👍👎
Social skills training	👍👍👍👍👎
Cognitive behavioural therapy	👍👍👍👎👎
Sports programmes	👍👍👎👎👎
Trauma-specific therapies	👍👎👎👎👎
A&E navigators	👍👎👎👎👎

MODERATE IMPACT

Pre-court diversion	👍👍👍👍👎
Relationship violence prevention	👍👍👍👍👎
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Functional Family Therapy	👍👍👎👎👎

LOW IMPACT

After-school programmes	👍👍👍👍👎
Interventions to prevent school exclusion	👍👍👍👎👎
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Anti-bullying programmes	👍👍👎👎👎
CCTV	👍👍👎👎👎

NO EFFECT

Street lighting	👍👍👎👎👎
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HARMFUL IMPACT

Boot camps	👍👍👍👍👎
Prison awareness programmes	👍👍👍👍👎

NO CLEAR EVIDENCE

Police in schools	Knife surrender schemes
Trauma-informed training	Arts programmes
Media campaigns	Summer schools
	Knife crime education

Summer employment programmes

What is it?

- Paid work placements during the summer holiday, around 25 hours/week
- Pre-work training, and coaching or mentoring

How might it work?

- Diverting or distracting young people away from situations and peer groups that increase risk of violence, during a higher risk time of the year.
- Development of skills, self-esteem, career aspirations.

Impact

- High impact on violence during the summer 🔍🔍🔍🔍🔍
- Low impact on violence longer term 🔍🔍🔍🔍🔍
- Mixed outcomes for other crime types 🔍🔍🔍🔍🔍

Cost

- High cost

Existing topics we're scoping for updates this year

Social skills training - Universal - Targeted	School attendance - Behaviour management - Whole-school approach or supporting attendance	Pre-court diversion - Outcome 22 - Community resolution - Conditional cautions
Sports programmes - Team sports - Combat sports	Cognitive Behavioural Therapy - Clinical provision - CBT techniques	Trauma-specific therapies - Breakdown by types

New topics we're scoping for adding to the Toolkit this year

Gang exit programmes	Interventions to prevent criminal exploitation	Poverty reduction interventions, e.g. cash transfers
The 'Cardiff Model' of multi-agency data sharing	Community sentences	Community level investment
Youth clubs	Detached youth work	Custody Navigators

Thank you



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