

Limited Edition

# Trusted adult walk toolkit



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## Who are we?

**The Peer Action Collective (PAC)** is a network driven by and for young people across England and Wales. Together, we conduct peer research and take social action on the drivers of violence, making sure young people's voices shape real change.

Funded by the Youth Endowment Fund, the #iwill Fund (a joint investment between The National Lottery Community Fund and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport) and the Co-op, the PAC is here to support young people to take the lead.

Working across Wales, PAC Cymru is a multi-award-winning team of young peer researchers dedicated to creating positive change in their communities through innovative research and proactive action. **Our mission** is to empower local young people and underrepresented groups - including those who have experienced the criminal justice system and/or been in care by giving them a voice and supporting them to develop their passions and talents.

**As part of this work**, we carried out interviews with young people to understand their experiences of trusted adults, highlighting both the positive support they receive and the barriers where change is needed.



# **Why** did we want to create a **Trusted Adult Walk**?

We designed the Trusted Adult Walk to help people step into the shoes of young people — both those who have reliable, supportive adults in their lives and those who don't.

This experience was built from real conversations with young people during our peer research. We spoke with 166 young people aged 16–25 across Wales through interviews, focus groups, and surveys about their experiences of support, trust, and the adults in their lives.

The Walk encourages participants to reflect on the impact of their actions and decisions as trusted adults, identify gaps in how support is provided, and consider practical ways to build trust and positive relationships by applying insights from the research to their day-to-day practice



## **Our** research question

What is the impact of trusted adult relationships on the health, wellbeing, and educational outcomes of disengaged young people from care-experienced backgrounds and marginalised groups, and what pathways facilitate these influences?

The Trusted Adult Walk was shaped directly by young people's voices. Their stories and themes guided every activity and discussion, showing both the difference a trusted adult can make and the challenges when that support is missing.

That's why we created this walk: to highlight what young people are experiencing every day. But we didn't want to stop at awareness, so the Trusted Adult Walk is designed to encourage action.

By stepping into young people's shoes, participants are challenged to reflect on their own role as trusted adults and to consider what changes they can make in their work, communities, or personal lives to better support young people.

Our hope is that everyone who takes part leaves with a clearer understanding of why trusted adults matter — and a commitment to becoming that kind of support for the young people around them.

## **Research Findings and Guidance for Your Own Walk**

The activities in the Trusted Adult Walk are based on real findings from our peer research with young people across Wales.

Through interviews, focus groups, and surveys, young people told us about their experiences of support, trust, and the role of adults in their lives

Their voices highlighted themes such as:

- The difference a trusted adult can make in feeling safe and supported.
- Barriers to trust, including discrimination, broken promises, and lack of consistent support.
- The importance of safe spaces, honesty, and respect in relationships with adults.

If your organisation wants to run a Trusted Adult Walk, we encourage you to start with **your own research question**. This keeps the experience relevant to your community and ensures it reflects the voices of your young people.

You will find an example of the research questions we used in the Resources section at the end of this toolkit.

## **Tips for setting and running your own peer research:**

**Co-produce the question with young people** — ask them what matters most in their lives.

**Choose simple methods** such as interviews, focus groups, or creative workshops to gather insights.

**Prepare facilitators** — agree roles, provide training, and make sure everyone understands safeguarding.

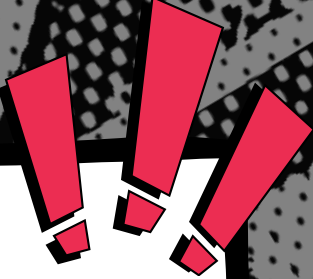
**Prioritise ethics and consent** — make sure young people know how their input will be used and can choose whether to take part.

**Create safe spaces** — offer support in case difficult issues come up, and never push someone to share.

**Running interviews:** keep them conversational, use open questions, let young people lead, and allow space for silence.

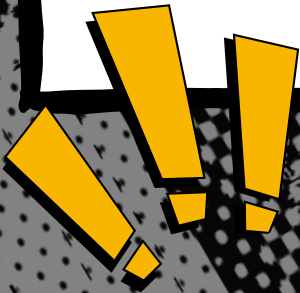
**Look for common themes** — focus on the patterns that emerge across many conversations.

**Close the loop** — share back what you learned and how it shaped the walk, so young people see the impact of their voices.



If you do your own research, your findings may be different from ours, and that's the point.

Your Trusted Adult Walk should be shaped by the **unique insights** of the young people you work with, so every version of the walk is relevant to its own community.



# **What is the Trusted Adult Walk?**

It's an interactive journey exploring how trusted adults shape young people's lives.

The walk invites participants to follow a set path with real stories, reflective tasks, and interactive experiences.

Along the way, participants will explore themes like:

- Policing and stop & search
- Education and access to services
- Discrimination and intolerance
- Barriers to support
- Power dynamics and trust

## **Our purpose**

We want to show how important trusted adults are, and how their presence (or absence) can shape a young person's life.

This toolkit will help you run your own Trusted Adult Walk and reflect on the important role that adults play in the lives of young people.

## **How We'll Work Together**

These ground rules are for everyone taking part in the Trusted Adult Walk, both participants and facilitators. They should be introduced by a facilitator at the very start of the experience, during the welcome, so that everyone knows what's expected of them and feels safe to take part.





### **Be Supportive & Accountable**

- We're a team. Help each other set up, guide activities, and troubleshoot. No one gets left behind.

### **Confidentiality & Trust**

- What's shared in the space stays in the space – unless someone gives permission or there's a safeguarding concern.
- If someone discloses something serious, we'll follow our safeguarding process to support them safely.

### **Give Helpful Feedback**

- Focus on improving the work, not criticising the person.
- Be open to receiving feedback as well – we all grow here.

### **Be Present & Engaged**

- Show up fully – physically and mentally.
- Phones on silent, focus on what's in front of you – this space matters.

### **Safe Space**

- No bullying, discrimination, or aggressive behaviour
- This walk includes difficult themes. Be mindful of your impact, especially around stories that may be personal for others.

### **Listen Up & Speak Up**

- When someone speaks, listen to understand – not just to reply.
- Be open and honest, but kind. No interrupting, judging, or shutting others down.

# Planning Your Trusted Adult Walk

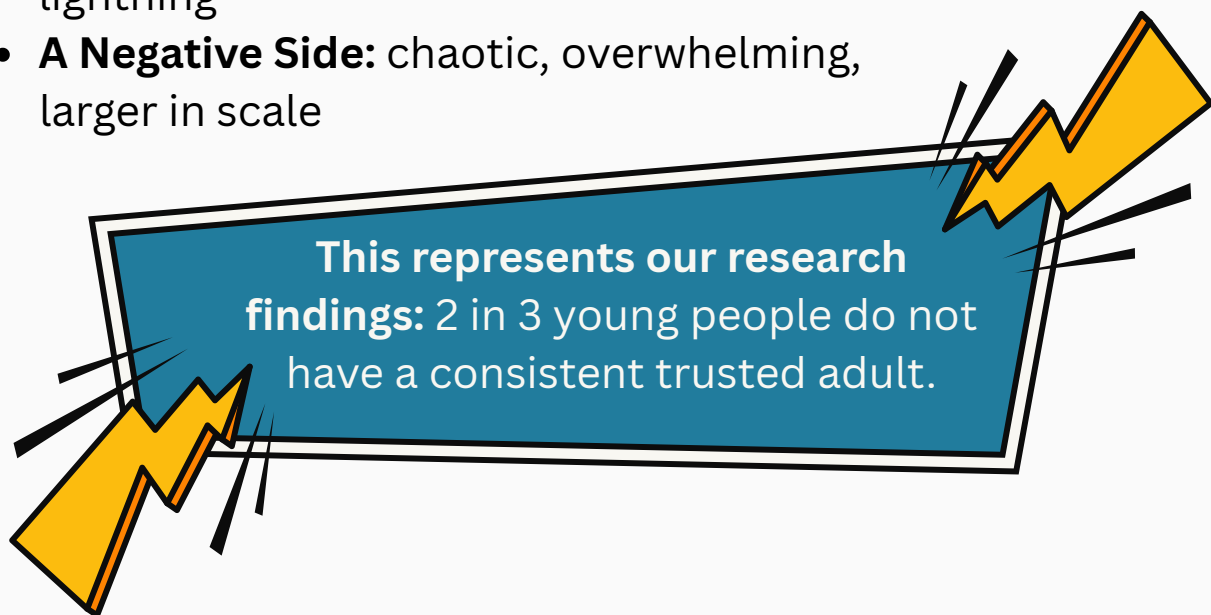
The Trusted Adult Walk is an immersive experience, and to make it as powerful as possible, planning and preparation is essential.

This section gives you a breakdown of *everything\** you'll need from setup to tech, resources and printables for your Trusted Adult Walk.

## Concept

The walk is divided into two parts:

- **A Positive Side:** calm, supportive atmosphere with natural lightning
- **A Negative Side:** chaotic, overwhelming, larger in scale



The walk follows the journey of multiple young people, through audio, visuals, and interactive installations.

The experience ends with a confession booth and a roundtable reflection session.

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*\*You will find all of the resources you need for the Trusted Adult Walk — from printable materials to equipment — in the resources section **at the end of this toolkit.***

These final elements give participants space to process what they've experienced.

- The confession booth offers a private moment of reflection, where individuals can connect the walk to their own memories of trusted adults.
- The roundtable session then brings everyone back together to share insights, ask questions, and turn reflections into practical actions.

## Setup



**Make sure the space allows for:**

- ☒ Two separated zones (positive and negative)
- ☒ A booth or enclosed space for audio recording
- ☒ A roundtable reflection area

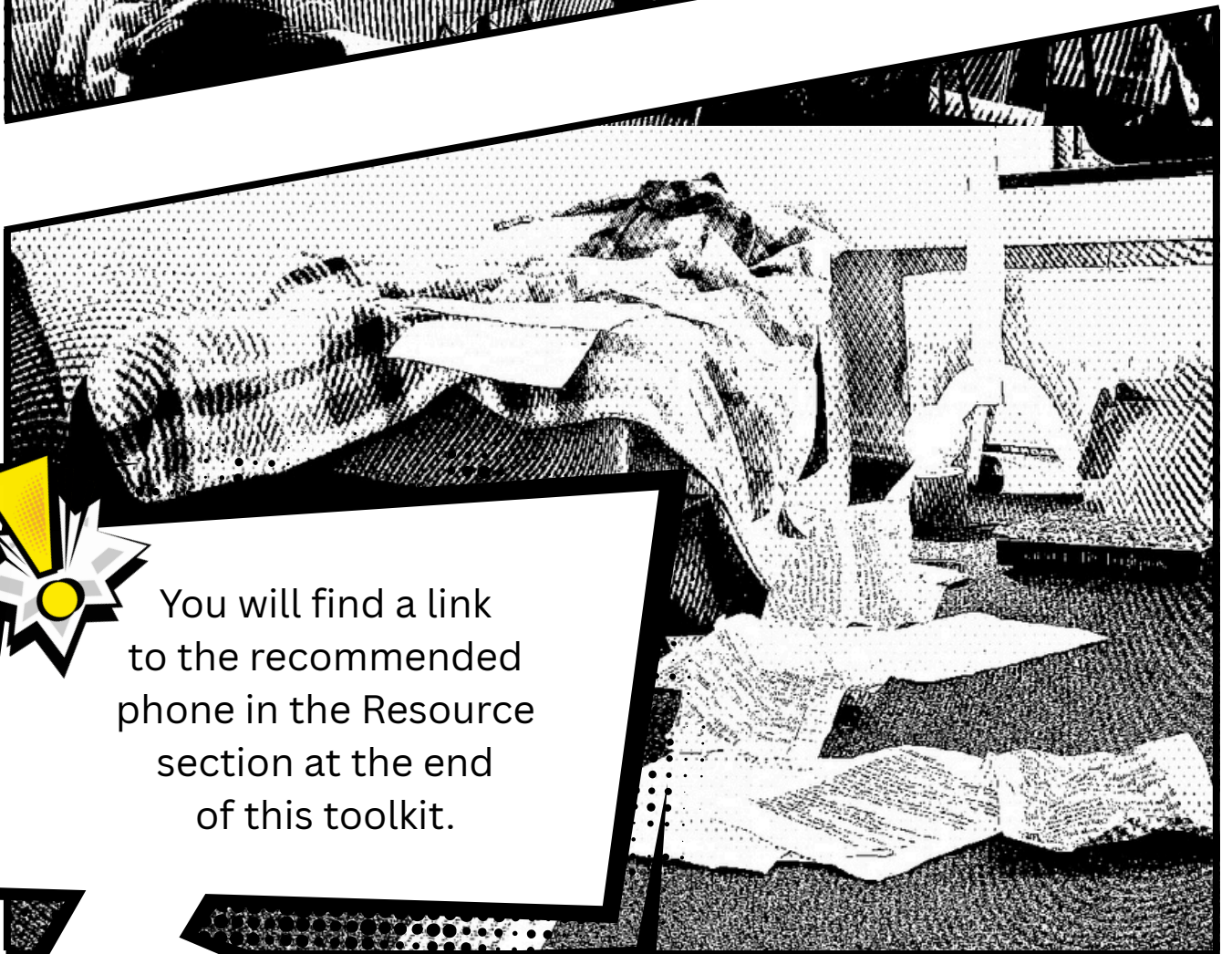
### Venue setup essentials

<b>Room Dividers</b>	Split positive/negative areas
<b>Chairs &amp; Tables</b>	For installations, reflection area
<b>Lighting Setup</b>	Lights (positive), bulbs (negative)
<b>Audio Setup</b>	Speakers , phone booth
<b>Props &amp; Decor</b>	Create lived-in environments

For the confession booth, you'll need a recording device. We recommend using a retro-style phone recorder so participants can pick up the phone, listen to a young person's story, and then leave their own message after the beep. This makes the booth feel private and personal.



Participants must give consent before recording. A simple form should explain that recordings are for research only, will be anonymised, and participation is voluntary. The roundtable reflection session is not recorded – it is a live discussion only.



You will find a link to the recommended phone in the Resource section at the end of this toolkit.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Do participants experience both the positive and negative sides?**

*Yes, everyone should experience both sides to be able to compare them.*

## **Does it matter which side they start on?**

*No, participants can begin on either side. A facilitator will guide them where to start, and if one side is busy, participants may be invited to begin on the other. Participants start on one side and then move to the other once they've finished, so everyone experiences both.*

## **Do participants have to join in every activity?**

*No, participants can pause, skip, or step out if they feel uncomfortable.*

## **Is the Walk supposed to feel uncomfortable? What if people don't like that?**

*Yes, some discomfort is intentional – it reflects real young people's experiences and helps spark reflection. Facilitators should reassure participants this is normal, and safeguarding support should be available if anyone feels overwhelmed.*

**What if a participant feels overwhelmed or needs to step away?**

*That's okay, a quiet space should be available and facilitators can offer support.*

**Is there a set order for the activities?**

*Not really, participants can move through each side in their own way. To help, they'll be given a leaflet with a checklist so they don't miss any activities.*

**Do participants go through the Walk on their own or in groups?**

*It's flexible, participants can move through together as a group and discuss what they see, or experience the Trusted Adult Walk individually at their own pace.*

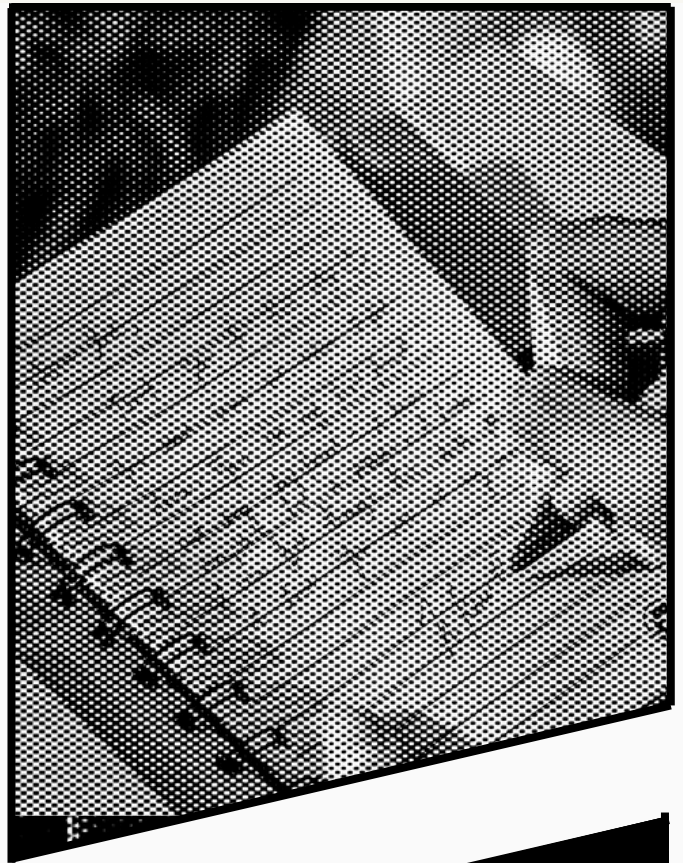
**What if participants rush through and skip activities - is that okay?**

*Yes, that's okay. Everyone will engage differently. The leaflet with a checklist helps them see what's available, but they can choose how much time to spend at each station. The important part is the overall experience, not ticking every single box.*



# positive side

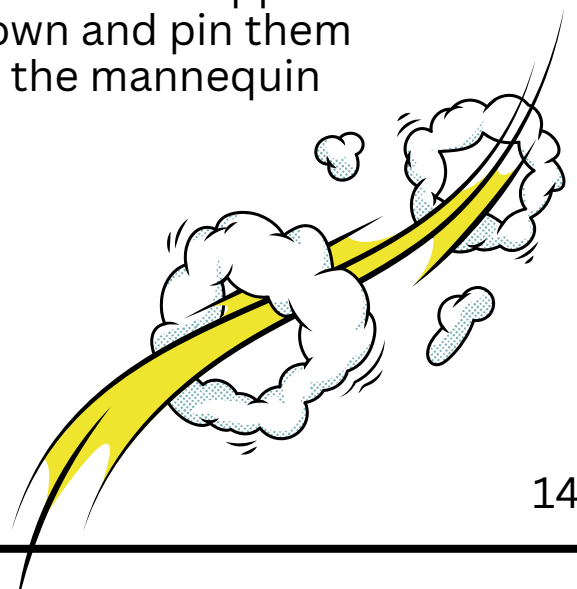
- **Quality Mirror:** Participants will be styled by a facilitator to dress as a trusted adult before looking in the mirror and receiving cards about what young people want from that trusted adult.
- **Dollhouse:** There will be negative situations in each room, participants will be supported in putting in the interventions to address the situation
- **Trusted Adult Diary:** It will display session notes with a young person and at the end ask participants to write in what they do for young people
- **Services Map:** Receive support from facilitator to identify services available to young people
- **Skills quiz:** A quiz going through skills young people want trusted adults to have so participants can identify what they do have





## negative side

- **Pledge Board:** Participants will write a pledge on what they will do for young people after leaving the booth
- **Dollhouse:** There will be negative situations in each room, participants will be putting in the interventions to address the situation
- **Deciphering:** Participants will decipher a coded message to read why a young person is being investigated - based on young person who was never being told why.
- **Stop and Search:** A facilitator will stop and search people who's first names begin with a randomly drawn letter
- **Mannequin Pinniing:** Participants will pick diary entries from their coat hangers, read them and pin them to the appropriate mannequin
- **Jar activity:** Participants will put trusted adult name cards into either a supportive or judgemental jar.
- **Barriers to Support:** participants will write barriers to support down and pin them to the mannequin



## Activities

In this section we provide detailed descriptions of each activity, explaining why we chose to include it and how it reflects our research findings.

You will find all of the related resources and templates at the end of the toolkit.

## Positive side

### **The Access to Services/Asset Map**

The Access to Services/Asset Map is a printed colour map showing different areas of Wales, tailored to where the workshop or trusted adult walk takes place.

Young people use the map to identify where they can find local services that support them, such as violence prevention, youth services, council services, education, and other support options.

After the activity, we go through the answers together, correcting any mistakes. This makes the map a practical learning tool, helping young people and professionals understand where to access help and support in their local area.

### **Dollhouse**

You find cards in the dollhouse describing negative situations and work with a facilitator to find a constructive solution. The situations are based on interview descriptions, and the solutions are based on real-world examples.



## **Quality Mirror**

You look at yourself in a mirror and draw icons on it to represent different positive qualities identified in the research, such as a heart for empathy. Drawing icons like a heart for empathy makes the research findings visual and personal, reinforcing that qualities such as kindness, resilience, or empathy are not abstract but part of the young person's identity.

## **Trusted Adult Journal**

Participants read through session notes in a journal and then write about what they do for young people in their own role. The notes describe the positive things young people said trusted adults do for them, with a special emphasis on support from youth workers.

The notes highlight what young people said trusted adults do well, reflecting the research finding that young people value care, listening, and consistent support.

Writing about their own role creates a bridge between research and practice, encouraging participants to reflect on how their work aligns with what young people identified as helpful, with emphasis on the role of youth workers.

## **Booth & Pledge Board**

As the final stop, you pick up a phone in a booth and reflect on who your trusted adults were. Upon exiting, you write a pledge to young people and add it to the pledge board.

## Negative side

### Stop and Search

The role involves embodying a stop and search officer and targeting specific participants based on their name. Each participant will be given a name tag and a random selection of letters will be made before the event.

Depending on the letters, participants will be selected to be stop and searched based on the first letter of their name.

The point of choosing letters at random is to show how young people are often stopped and searched suddenly and without warning. This helps participants feel the same sense of unfairness and confusion that young people told us about in our research, and shows why these experiences can damage trust.

### Jar activity

The hidden cipher keys show how information is often withheld, echoing the experience of young people who felt left in the dark during police processes.

### Dollhouse

Inside a destroyed dollhouse, you identify negative situations and are asked to build a constructive intervention on your own. The scenarios on the cards come from negative experiences described by young people in interviews.

The solutions are based on real-world interventions that young people identified as helpful.



# Deciphering Activity

In this activity, participants must work together to decode two sections of a hidden message. The aim is to replicate the confusion and frustration that young people feel when they are questioned by police without being told what they did wrong.

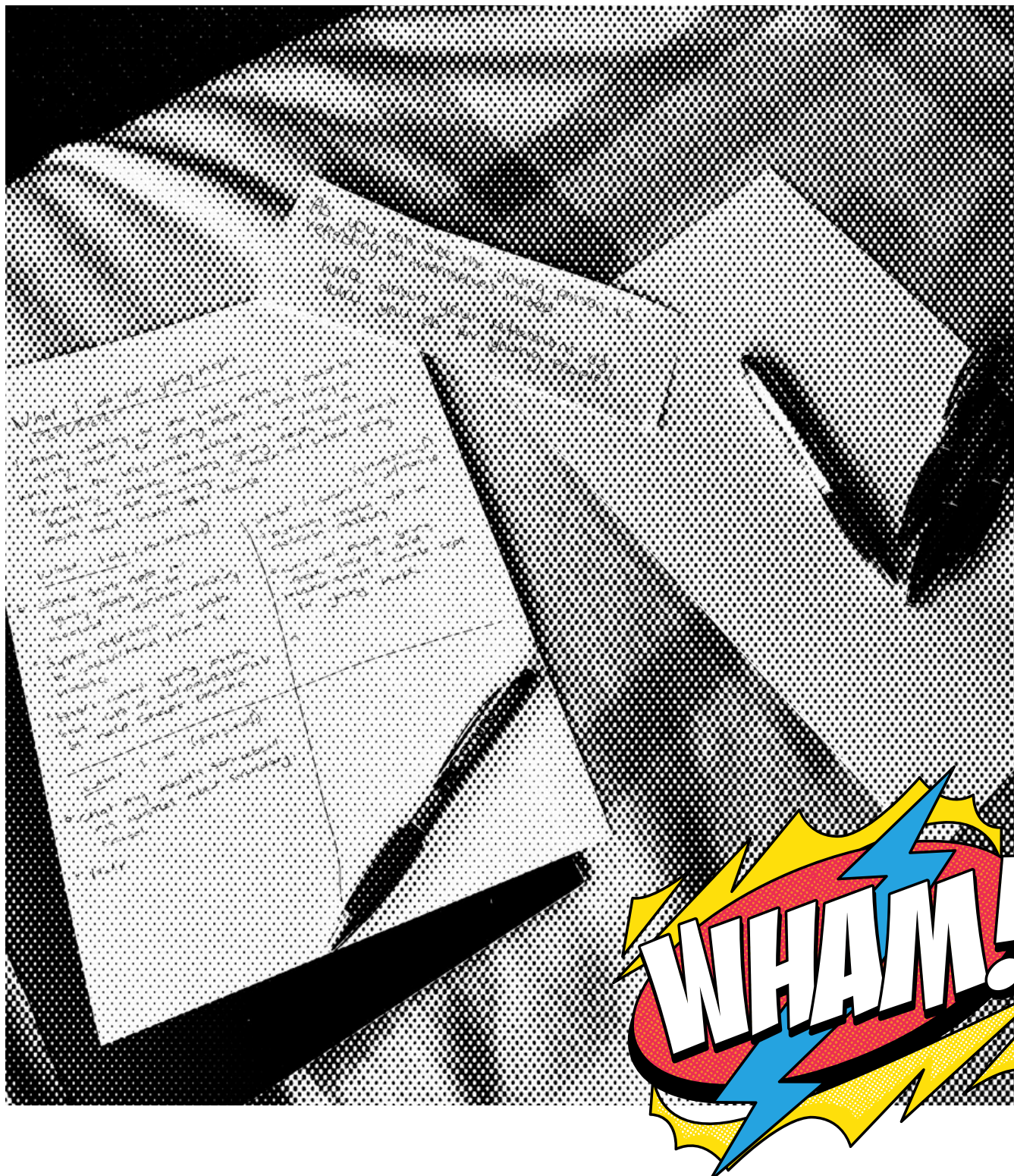
- **Part One (Shapes):** Each shape corresponds to a single word. Cut out the shapes and leave them near a placard that explains the task and indicates which section of the message participants are working on. Around the negative side of the room, hide a sheet showing which shape matches which word. Participants must find and match these to uncover the first sentence.
- **Part Two (Cipher):** The second sentence is discovered by decoding a message using a simple alphabet cipher, where each letter in the code is shifted one place forward (e.g., A = B, B = C). Cipher keys are hidden around the room, forcing participants to search for information that is deliberately kept from them.

This activity is based on a real experience of a young person who was investigated by police but never told why. It highlights the research finding that young people often feel “kept in the dark” and that police need to be more transparent to build trust.

Once the message has been fully decoded, participants are led into the roundtable discussion space. Here, they are made to feel as though they are “guilty” for knowing what the young person did wrong, replicating the discomfort and vulnerability that young people often experience. Because of its intensity, this activity should always be placed last in the sequence, linking directly to the Stop & Search role.

# Mannequin Pinning

Participants read diary entries, which are found scattered around the room, and pin them to a mannequin representing the corresponding trusted adult figure, such as a police officer, teacher, or social worker. The diary entries are taken directly from interviews conducted with young people.



# Roles and responsibilities

**Coordinator** - leading and managing the whole process.

## Responsibilities:

- Oversees the whole Trusted Adult Walk
- Makes sure everyone knows what they're doing
- Coordinates timelines, space, setup, and resources
- Checks all equipment, materials and printouts are ready
- Supports the team before and during the walk

**Stop and Search facilitator** - This role requires confidence, and it's essential that the person understands the purpose behind the activity and feels comfortable navigating discomfort.

## Responsibilities:

- Carries out the stop and search simulation during the negative side of the walk
- Randomly selects participants using a letter or prompt (e.g. "first names starting with C")
- Delivers the experience in a safe but impactful way - confident but not aggressive

**Facilitators (young people)** - to guide, support during the Trusted Adult Walk.

## Responsibilities:

- Welcoming participants and explaining the process
- Supporting participants with interactive activities (e.g. diary, dollhouse, mirror)
- Offering support or clarification if needed, encouraging reflection through conversation or questions



**Roundtable discussion lead** - this person helps turn emotional reactions into actionable ideas and learning.

**Responsibilities:**

- Hosting the group reflection and helping people process their experience
- Asking questions to draw out thoughts and insights
- Linking back to the research findings
- Closing the experience with the key takeaways

**Safeguarding support** - to make sure staff members are safe during the event.

**Responsibilities:**

- Being available to anyone who feels overwhelmed, upset or needs to step away
- Creating a safe space
- Supporting other team members emotionally

**Tech & audio support** - in case something goes wrong

**Responsibilities:**

- Save all required audio files onto the phones, tablets, or speakers you'll be using, test them to make sure they play correctly, and ensure everything is fully charged before the Walk.
- Help during the walk in case anything breaks or stops working



# Setup guide

## Pre-Event Checklist

### Materials to Print

- Diary entries (positive & negative)
- Quotes for walls, floors
- Name tags
- Infographics & research findings
- Service maps
- Labels (barriers, adult roles, doors)
- Pledge cards
- Agenda for roundtable discussion
- Evaluation forms/feedback sheets

### Equipment to Bring

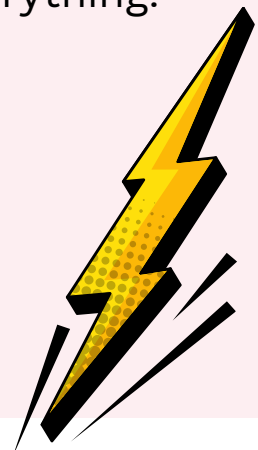
- Room dividers
- Lights, exposed bulbs
- Tables, chairs, mannequins, beds
- Confession phone
- Mirror, dollhouses
- Tablets & chargers
- Speakers, audio devices
- Police/teacher uniforms (for mannequins & stop/search)
- Magazines, racks, trusted adult costumes

### Roles Confirmed

- Coordinator
- Facilitators (positive and negative sides)
- Stop & Search facilitator
- Roundtable discussion lead
- Safeguarding lead
- Tech support

### Audio & Video Files

- Load recordings to the devices.
- Charge everything.



# Welcoming Participants

Your welcome should feel warm, calm, and clear.

Let them know:

- There is a space to relax available at any time.
- They don't have to do everything, it's okay to pause, skip, or step away.
- There will be a discussion space at the end.

This prepares participants emotionally without overwhelming them.

# During the Walk

- Check in on participants by asking them “How are you finding it so far?”, “What do you think about this activity”, “What does this remind you of?”, “Have you ever seen something like this?”
- Create space for silence – don't rush them.

## Don't:

- Try to explain the experience
- Over-guide or interpret things for them
- Push anyone to engage with uncomfortable content

## **After the Walk - Roundtable Discussion**

The roundtable is the final step of the Trusted Adult Walk. Its purpose is to give participants space to process what they've experienced, share reflections, and turn insights into action.

While the booth provides a private moment of reflection, the roundtable brings people back together to:

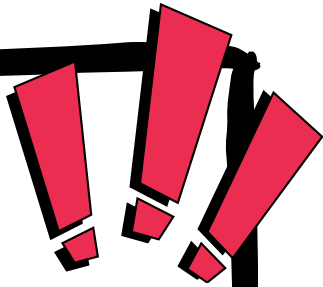
- Make sense of the emotions and themes raised in the walk.
- Share perspectives and learn from each other.
- Connect personal experiences with the wider research findings.
- Identify next steps they can take in their work, communities, or personal lives.

To make this space work, one facilitator guides the conversation so everyone has an equal chance to speak. Prepare by choosing a few themes (ideally drawn from your research question and the themes of your own walk), writing open questions, and setting a simple agenda. Sharing this agenda in advance helps participants know what to expect and prepares them to contribute.

When leading the session:

- Start with a friendly welcome and an icebreaker.
- Set some ground rules and explain the plan.
- Use open questions, invite quieter voices, and manage the timing.
- End with a quick summary, reflection, or short survey to capture impact.

Good discussion themes could include: barriers to support, mentorship, different types of trusted adults, education and careers, or wellbeing. Creative activities (like drawing, writing a letter to your younger self, recording a short message, or making a collage together) can also help people express their thoughts. If things get awkward, give people space to think, use a lighter back-up question, or gently bring the group back on track.

- 
- Icebreaker.
  - Everyone gets a fair chance to talk.
  - Host guides with themes and agenda.
  - Share questions before the session.
  - Sit in a circle for equal feel.
  - Start friendly, set rules, and keep things moving.
  - Ask open questions and include quieter voices.
  - Wrap up with a summary and quick feedback.
  - Pre-planned questions.
  - Creative options: drawings, letters, recordings, collages
  - Handle awkward moments with space, lighter prompts, or redirection.



## Tips from the team

- Reflect on why you're doing it, and why it matters
- Do a practice walk through before the main trusted adult walk
- Assign roles for the team
- Be flexible on the day. Things might change last minute, but that's okay
- Prepare snacks and drinks
- Prepare agenda for the trusted adult walk and the round table so participants know what to expect
- Test any materials or tech you plan to use beforehand to see if it works correctly.

## Impact

The Trusted Adult Walk is more than just an interactive workshop, it's a way to start real change. But to turn it into a large scale project that influences participants, we need to gather stories, feedback, and data.

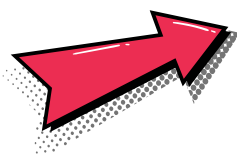
## Before & After Surveys

To understand the impact of the Trusted Adult Walk, we use a reflection survey. It helps capture what participants knew, felt, and understood before and after the experience.

Here's a survey we created that you can use to check in with participants before and after the walk.



Scan the QR code to explore the questions we ask participants – you can adapt them or use them as they are!



To understand the impact of the Trusted Adult Walk, we use a reflection survey. It helps capture what participants knew, felt, and understood before and after the experience.

“The PAC Cymru Trusted Adult Walk was an insightful and thought-provoking experience, which gave me **a chance to consider how small acts of kindness and treating people with compassion and fairness can make a big difference** to how young people experience the world and their own sense of self...

I would recommend this walk to all adults who work with young people, as **it powerfully demonstrates the real impacts our actions or inaction can have,** and it is something I am still reflecting on now!”

*Bryony Parry, Communications Lead  
for the Wales Violence Prevention Unit*



## Resources and templates



Resources & Templates

“I think it went well. I liked the positive side more than the negative side because the negative side made me feel uncomfortable.

I would do it again if I could. **If felt really emotional and powerful to see the lives of different young people** throughout an interactive showcase.”

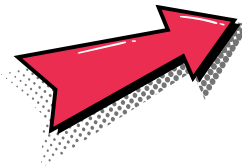
*young person, Trusted Adult Walk participants*



## Learn more about PAC Cymru

Scan the QR code to explore  
PAC Cymru's Linktree.

Here you can find more information  
about our project, see updates, and  
keep up with the latest news.



PAC Cymru linktr.ee

## Your feedback is important to us!

We would appreciate if you could answer a few questions. It will only take a few minutes, but will help us assess the impact of our toolkit and to see how we could further help organisations develop their own Trusted Adult Walk.



# We hope you enjoyed our Trusted Adult Walk Toolkit!

If you would like any further info or would like to have a discussion to explore us delivering a session for your organisation or service, please **contact our coordinator**  
**[Stephanie@mediaacademycymru.wales](mailto:Stephanie@mediaacademycymru.wales)**