

VOICES OVER SILENCE

CREATING MOOD BOARDS, POSTERS AND A FILM TO SPARK A CONVERSATION ABOUT GIRLS' RIGHTS AND FGM

WHY VOICES OVER SILENCE?

Our name 'Voices over Silence' came out of our idea that 'nothing exciting happens in silence'. It shows our belief that each of us already owns the greatest weapon of all to fight for change – our voice.

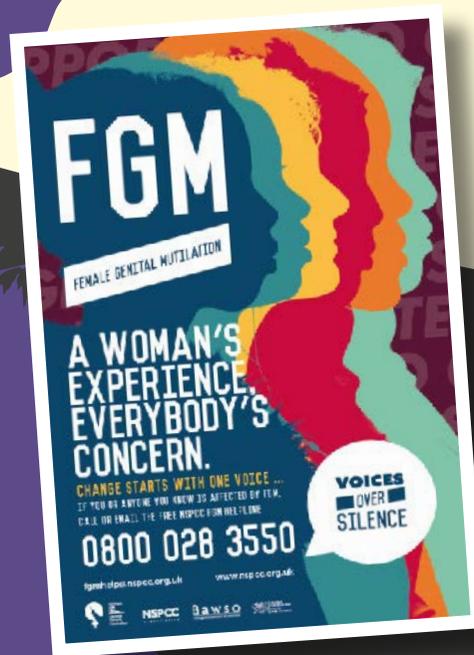
We used mind-mapping with a white-board to create our name. Everyone was shouting out their ideas – just anything that came into their heads. We had traffic-light signs– green, amber, and red and we held them up to vote on what we liked and what we didn't.



WE ARE VOICES OVER SILENCE

A group of 15 young women, we have come together from schools and colleges all around Cardiff over the last 6 months. We are united by our wish to be involved in something bigger than ourselves and to fight for a better future for every child, woman and girl.

Our mission is to help young people, families and communities to spark a conversation on girls' rights and harmful practices like Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). We are here because we want to educate and we want to challenge and ultimately eradicate FGM.



Sparking one conversation at a time, Voices over Silence are determined to make FGM everyone's business. We didn't all know each other before the project but the activities and journey we have been on is a map for activism that we want other young people to use to create change on issues of gender equality or any issue they choose!

We want young people to know they have THE RIGHT to create change and to show them how WE did it.



Our project was based on 8 sessions. We were lucky that we had 6 months – so we had an evening or a full day session every couple of weeks. These sessions could be done by other groups during a school term or at a youth club.

We held 3 information sessions where we had speakers come in and we looked at FGM through different themes and angles like health, child rights and child protection.

We did lots of activities that can be adapted and used to think about any aspect of rights and gender equality. We also think other young people could use what we have done for projects for their Welsh Bac.

1 'The Rights Tree' - Children's Rights and the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

We had a speaker who came in and told us about the 54 articles of the UNCRC. This helped us explore how FGM is against children's rights. We then used the UNCRC to draw our 'rights trees' – the roots were the problem, the trunk was the issue, the branches were the rights and the apples were where we would go for help...



2 'Body Truthers' Child Safeguarding & Child Protection

Each group drew an outline of a human body to explore how FGM is abuse. We wrote all over the body to show either what FGM represented or how the victims felt. For example next to the heart there's feeling lonely or that you don't belong. We used different words or phrases placed around the body to represent FGM and how the victims felt.



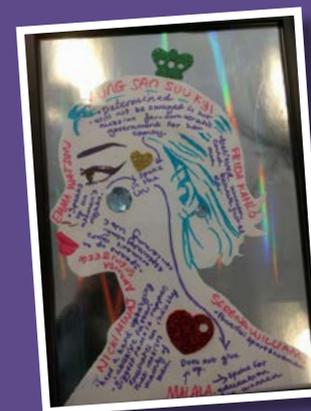
3 'A Woman's Lifecycle'

A midwife came in and she told us in more detail about FGM and how it affects a woman's lifecycle... affecting older women as well as younger women. Each group were given a different age group to think about how FGM affects women throughout their whole life.



4 'Inspirational Women' Activity

We watched clips and were given a booklet to learn the stories of lots of inspirational women like Aung San Suu Kyi, Mary Seacole and Malala. We each had a silhouette of a woman (which reflected our own silhouette design idea) and we each chose an inspirational woman who personally motivates us to stand up and make a change. We enjoyed being really creative and decorating our inspirational women using colour, glitter and stickers.



5 Suffragette Movie

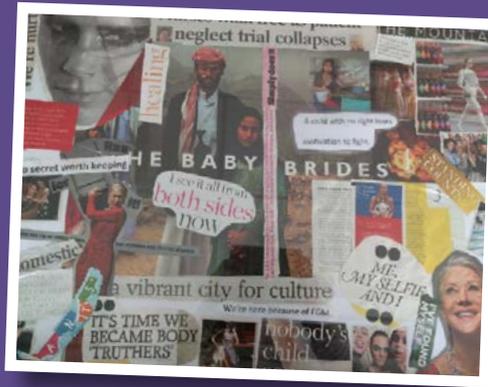
We got to go and see Suffragette which was in the cinema at the time. It was amazing to learn about how women fought for the vote and Emily Wilding-Davidson sacrificed her life. It was a really emotional movie that made us cry and showed how important it is to fight for our rights.

DIY MOOD BOARDS

Using pictures, graphics and words, mood boards can help capture and represent feelings and ideas.

Here's how to do it:

- 1 Get a big blank piece of paper, the bigger the better.
- 2 Think of a topic and write it at the top of the sheet.
- 3 Use magazines and/or newspapers or find images online – basically anywhere you can find a mixture of different text and pictures.
- 4 Pick out words and quotes and images that help to express people's emotions. Used in this way images help to express feelings and emotions.



What you'll need:

- Paper
- Magazines/Newspapers
- Scissors

Before you begin adapting this activity for the children and young people in your setting, read the section on **Safety and Support**.

"We wanted to give people who don't have a voice, a voice"

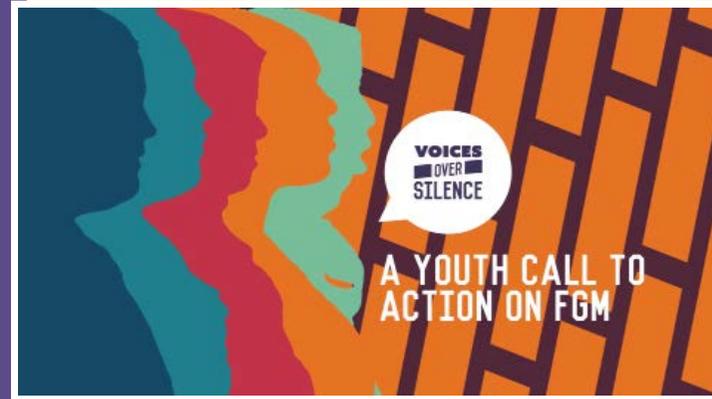
"We want our materials to show there is always light at the end of the tunnel. There are ways you can get help"

"The whole point of the project was to show people that they matter and that they have a say in what happens to them"



SCRIPTING AND SHOOTING THE FILM...

Using all our ideas from all of the project sessions and our mood-boards we each wrote a small piece about what we thought about FGM. We practiced them and put them all together to make the script for the film. We each did a 'take' in the studio to shoot the video of our silhouettes. We were each recorded performing the piece we had written. We sat in a special booth with a microphone and lighting designed to make the silhouettes.



We needed quite a few takes to get used to the equipment and to not fluff our lines! Our words made clear what we thought of FGM and girl's rights. We used our voices in the film to say what we want to see changed and how we can end practices like FGM.

Fonts, colours, design concept...

- We picked fonts and colours that are bold, bright and colourful, to show that out of darkness there is always hope.
- The design is clean and precise, bold and clear - so the message comes across to people and they understand straight away what we mean by it.
- Our poster is open to interpretation, so people can see what they want to see in it, there's no right answer. We wanted the colours, fonts and the design to reflect that.

