



**WrightLink**

PERFORMANCE SUPPORT,  
TRAINING & RESEARCH

*Children's Services, Youth Justice,  
Criminal Justice, Community Safety*

# **Structured Assessment of Violence Risk in Youth (SAVRY)**

## ***1-Day Specialist Violence Risk Assessment Support Workshop Information***

**2023**  
(Version 1.0)

## 1.0 Introduction

Professionals are frequently required to assess and develop plans to effectively manage the risk of violence presented by a young person, using the integrated assessment and planning tool ASSET Plus.

Following the national rollout of ASSET Plus across all Youth Justice Services (YJS) in England & Wales from 2014 onwards, numerous challenges have been identified by YJS professionals regarding the utility of the assessment and planning framework (see Picken et al., 2019); challenges noted include the framework being experienced by youth justice practitioners and managers as onerous, time consuming, and demanding to quality assure effectively.

Further challenges identified relate to the fact that no empirical research studies have been published to date which explore either the reliability or validity of ASSET Plus as a tool to assess the risk of future violence by a young person. ASSET Plus also does not adequately emphasise and offer professionals a sufficient focus upon the key risk and protective factors from the international empirical forensic and clinical literature base that may contribute to (or reduce) violent behaviour by young people, as the framework is 'generic' in nature.

Given violence against the person offences account for almost a third (32%) of the total number of proven offences committed by young people under 18 years old in England & Wales (Youth Justice Board/Ministry of Justice, 2022) YJS should further develop evidence-based practice by consistently utilising more empirically supported specialist risk assessment tools to accurately predict future violence risk, rather than utilising ASSET Plus alone.

## 2.0 Support Package Overview

This one-day course is designed and delivered remotely via MS Teams. The workshop focuses on the Structured Assessment of Violence Risk in Youth (SAVRY), with workshop content designed specifically for professionals with background knowledge and experience in risk assessment, who may also work with/support young people at risk of violence (or who may be likely to do so in future).

The SAVRY adheres to the Structured Professional Judgement (SPJ) approach to the assessment and management of violence risk in young people aged 12 to 18 years. The tool guides the assessor to consider sources of information, identify risk factors that are present and relevant, formulate the function(s) of violence, explore potential future risk scenarios, and ultimately the production of robust risk management plans.

In particular, conclusions drawn from completing specialist violence risk assessments such as the SAVRY are highly valuable when informing court reports, referral order panel reports, and community-focused risk management plans (Youth Justice Services, CAMHS teams); this is of particular importance for Youth Justice Services who have only utilised ASSET Plus to assess violence risk, when there is no empirical literature in the UK or internationally to verify the validity of the framework to assess violence risk.

### Learning Objectives:

- Define aggression and violence in the context of child and adolescent development.
- Summarise the key developmental factors relevant to understanding the pathway to violence, and specific protective factors within the empirical literature which have the greatest impact upon reducing violence risk.
- Administer the SAVRY 'in practice' to case assessment information, including how to rate both risk and protective factors.
- Conduct a functional analysis (formulation) of violence risk, undertake scenario planning and risk management planning to address identified risk factors from the completed SAVRY.

### Additional Information

- Participants who successfully complete the full support package will be awarded a certificate of attendance and contribution, and formal confirmation of CPD hours completed (e.g., HCPC registered practitioners) if requested.
- A summary report containing anonymised and aggregated 'participant evaluation feedback' will also be provided to the commissioner following delivery.

## 3.0 Biography

**Andi Myles-Wright** *CPsychol AFBPsS*

*Chartered Psychologist and Associate Fellow of the British Psychological Society*

*Teaching Fellow in Forensic Psychology & Criminology*

Andi has specialised in the provision of performance support, training/coaching, research/audit, and reflective/clinical supervision services in children's and young people's services since 2010.

His 25-year career history spans a wide range of settings and countries, including community-based services and secure residential settings for children and young people (Secure Children's Homes, Secure Training Centres, Her Majesty's Prison Service establishments, and Family Assessment Units).

In addition, Andi has delivered forensic consultancy support services in Australia, South Africa, Malaysia, and the UK, whilst also being experienced in conducting research, publishing book chapters, writing book reviews and international journal articles, and undertaking specialist teaching roles within both Further and Higher Educational settings since 1996.

In 2021 Andi was appointed as a part-time lecturer in psychological criminology at the University of Brighton; he has also undertaken the role of part-time module coordinator, pastoral care tutor, and senior teaching fellow in forensic psychology at the University of Portsmouth since 2018.

### **Andi's key areas of interest/research include:**

- Harmful sexual behaviour
- Aggression and violent behaviour
- Developmental psychopathology
- Desistance and personal change processes
- Attachment, trauma, and harm-related behaviour
- Practitioners' experiences of offender supervision
- Workforce development and organisational (systemic) change processes
- Qualitative research in forensic settings
- Whole service approaches to embedding team case formulation meetings
- Risk assessment and management strategies



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