

Working effectively with young women affected by gangs



3-day training, June 2019

A B I A N D A

Abianda is a social enterprise which works with gang-affected young women, and delivers training and professional development to those who work with them. Our training is co-facilitated by Abianda Founder Abi Billingham, and Abianda Young Trainers, who are young women who have been affected by gangs in some way. Our 3-day training is also co-facilitated by our Solution Focused Therapist.

Our 3-day training is an intensive and practical three-day training programme that improves the skills of practitioners so they are more able and confident to support gang-affected young women. Practitioners practice tools and techniques and develop skills to:

- Respond to gang-affected young women who can be both 'victims' and 'perpetrators'
- Bring about a culture shift in the way services are delivered to young women who have a history of non-engagement
- Address barriers and safety issues that prevent young women engaging in our services
- Support young women to increase their knowledge of: the risks for gang-associated young women; sexual violence, exploitation and domestic violence in the context of peer groups and gangs; anger; and healthy relationships
- Work in a more effective and reflective way with young women whose behaviour can be seen as 'aggressive', 'risky', and difficult to engage with and to support them to develop skills to navigate risk

Practitioners leave our training with the theory, techniques and tools from the Abianda model that can be used straight away in their day-to-day practice – including participatory and solution focused therapy techniques.

Quantitative data

Participants were asked to rate their confidence and skills **out of 5** at the start and end of the training:

Topic	Before	After	Diff
My ability to respond effectively to young women affected by gangs and county line activity	3	3.8	0.8
My confidence to work with young women affected by gangs and county line activity	2.8	3.8	1
My skills to work effectively with young women affected by gangs and county line activity	2.7	3.8	1.1

	Score
Average seminar rating	9 out of 10
% of attendees who would recommend the training to colleagues	100%

	Impact of the training
% of attendees who will cascade information to colleagues and managers	100%
% of attendees who will change their practice	100%

Other changes attendees said they would make after training

- Reflect on strengths and weaknesses. Catalyst for change/reflection.
- Interpret the activities into our group work programme and explore SFBT as a team so that we meet the needs of gang associated/affected YW.
- Use the tools in my practice - healthy/unhealthy exercise. Use more SF questioning.
- I would like to improve my confidence in SFBT so that I use it every day. I will be informing colleagues of my learning and suggest that we as a service adapt SFBT.



Best Hopes

Participants were also asked to define their own three “Best Hopes” for the training, reflecting our participatory model of practice, in which we ask young women to determine their best hopes from their work with Abianda.

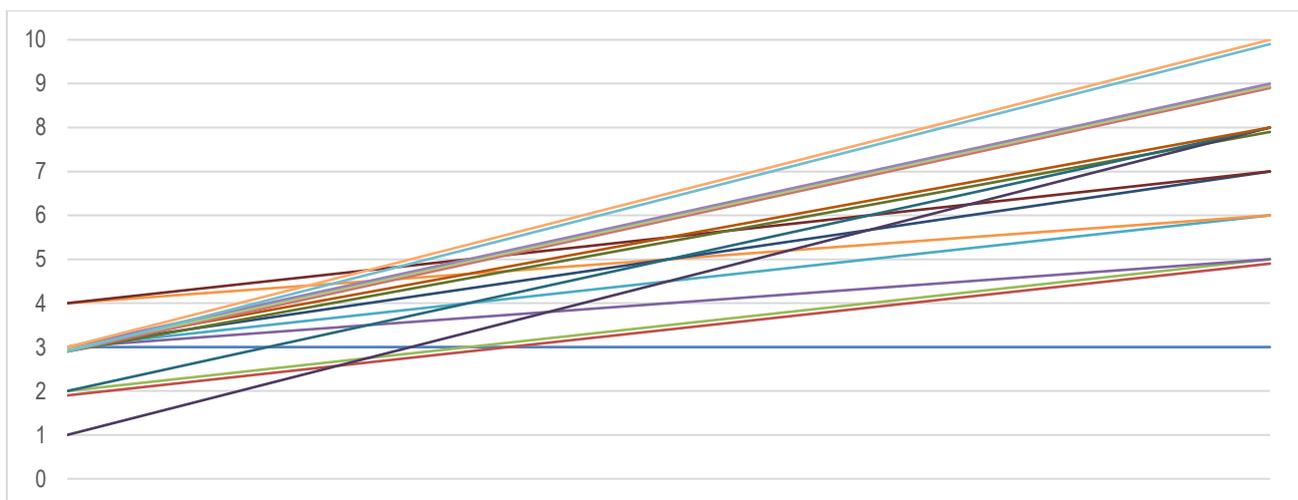
Participants’ best hopes included:

- Increase knowledge on county lines activity and how it affects YW.
- To feel more confident in being able to support YW/YP to achieve an effective outcome.
- Develop skills to identify and respond to county line disclosures
- When we are working in schools, ability to identify gang involvement. Language to talk to schools about the issue and to explore issues with young women.
- To develop tools and skills to explore gang association with young women.

We asked participants at the start and end of training “On a scale of 0 – 10, where ‘0’ is the worst things have ever been and ‘10’ is where you’ve got your best hopes, where on the scale are you now?” The table below shows the average score for each Best Hope at the start and end of the training:

Best Hopes	Before	After	Difference
1	4	7	3
2	4.7	6.8	2.1
3	4.3	8.5	4.2

This chart shows the change in scores for all participants’ Best Hopes from the start to the end of training:



Qualitative data

Participants were asked to provide feedback on the 3-day training – highlights are presented here:

- The young trainers are really engaging, insightful and so articulate. I feel like I learnt loads from them.
- I think the training was very informative, interactive and engaging. It was useful to hear experiences from young trainers who have used the service and hear genuine support received.
- Very interactive and practical. Learnt new skills and loved the young trainers. Good to have training from real experts and loved that the training was specifically YW focused.
- The voice of the young trainers were inspirational. It was great to see the relationship between them and Abi. Their contributions were powerful and effective. The resources provided were great. Very interactive.
- All the trainers were excellent sharing life and work experiences.
- Amazing! inspiring stories. Really made me think and challenged me to do differently in my work.
- Really enjoyed training, first training in a long time that has allowed me to really think about my practice and make dynamic change to support YW by their sides.

