

Community Fire Safety Strategy for Children & Young People



2004-2005
Services for Older People

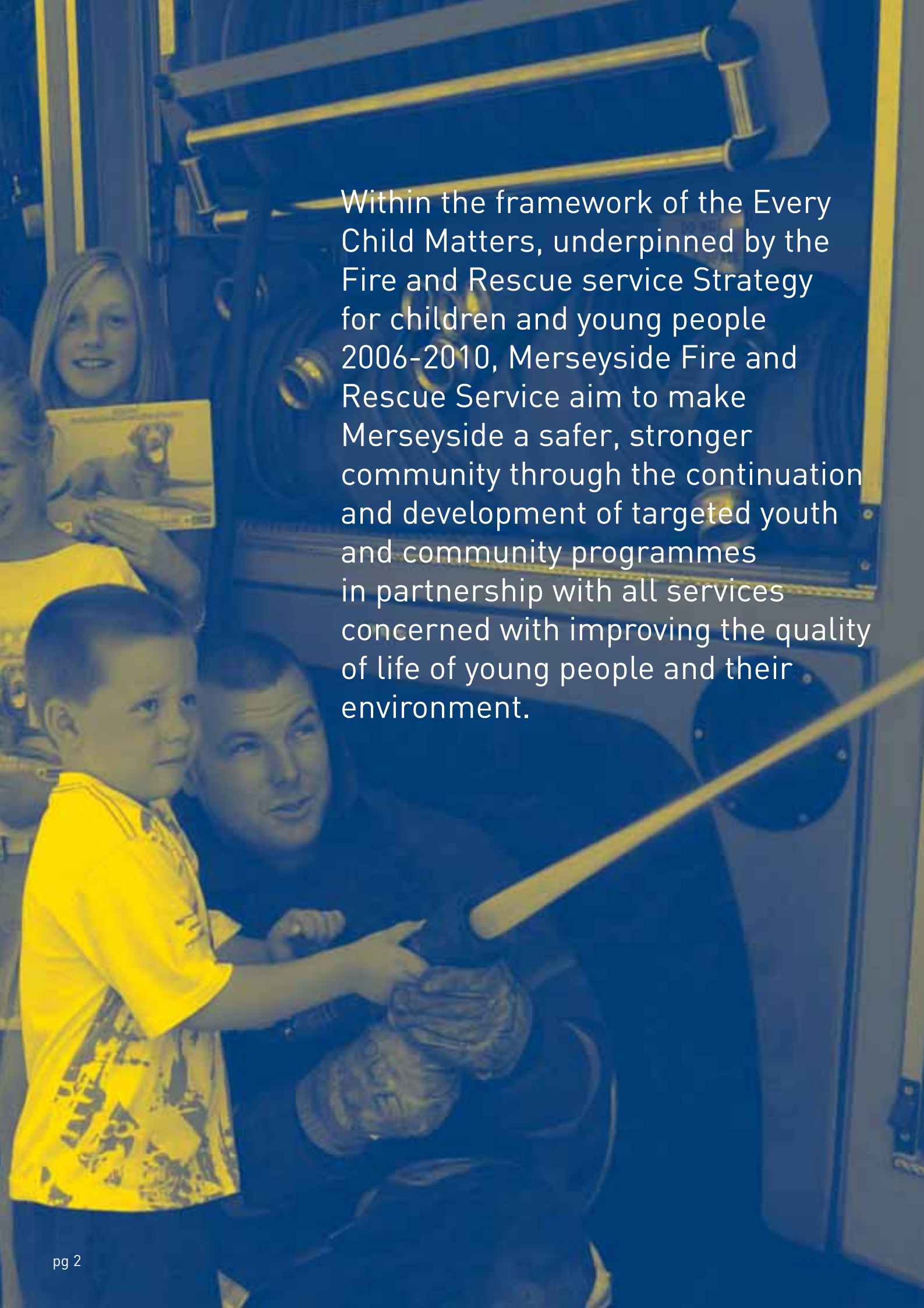


2006-2007
Early Intervention
(Children at Risk)



"An Excellent Authority"

www.merseyfire.gov.uk



Within the framework of the Every Child Matters, underpinned by the Fire and Rescue service Strategy for children and young people 2006-2010, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service aim to make Merseyside a safer, stronger community through the continuation and development of targeted youth and community programmes in partnership with all services concerned with improving the quality of life of young people and their environment.

Vision

To make Merseyside a safer, stronger community

Mission

To work in partnership to provide an excellent, affordable service to all the diverse communities of Merseyside that will:

- Reduce risk throughout the community by protective community services
- Respond quickly to emergencies with skilful staff
- Restore and maintain the quality of life in our communities

Our aim

Is to work with children and young people across Merseyside to reduce:

- Fire crime and antisocial behaviour
- Accidental injury and death

To achieve this aim we will:

- Engage actively with children and young people and their families
- Prevent and reduce fire crime and fire setting by children and young people
- Divert children and young people from fire crime and antisocial behaviour
- Educate children and young people and their families in fire safety, road safety and wider responsible citizenship
- Ensure the fire and rescue service staff working with children and young people are effective and professional
- Identify and disseminate good practice in working with children and young people

Engage actively with children and young people

Methods:

- 1 We treat all children and young people with understanding and respect.
- 2 We will develop participation by children and young people with the focus on those most at risk or most in need.
- 3 We will involve children and young people in the design, delivery and evaluation of programmes for the children and young people.
- 4 We will involve children and young people in developing policy and practice on prevention of accidental fires, fire crime and antisocial behaviour.
- 5 We will recognise the contribution of children and young people through an annual award





Prevent and reduce fire crime and fire setting by children and young people

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service recognises that early multi-agency intervention is the key to preventing repeat offences and breaking dangerous patterns of behaviour.

Methods:

- 1 We will work with families, carers, and partner agencies, to deliver age-appropriate fire setter programmes and other interventions for children and young people who are becoming involved in fire crime or fire setting.
- 2 We will work with partner agencies to identify at the earliest opportunity, those children and young people who are becoming involved in fire crime and fire setting.
- 3 We will work with partner agencies to identify at the earliest opportunity, those children and young people who are becoming involved in fire crime or fire setting.
- 4 We will work with partner agencies to target fire and rescue expertise and resources on those children and young people for whom they are most effective, and ensure that others are referred to the most appropriate agency.
- 5 We will increase awareness and understanding of the work of the Fire and Rescue Service with children and young people, particularly among partner agencies.

Divert children and young people from fire crime and anti-social behaviour

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service can offer young people at risk help with developing life skills and setting a path to a successful future.

Methods:

1. We will work with parents and carers, the Fire Service Youth Training Association, the Fire and Rescue Service Prince's Trust Support Association, Connexions, Children and Young People's Service departments and other partners, to offer youth engagement programmes and other initiatives which improve life skills and divert young people from fire crime and antisocial behaviour.
- 2 We will participate in the work of Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships, Youth Offending Service and Youth Inclusion and Support Panels (YISP), and other initiatives to tackle youth crime and antisocial behaviour.
- 3 We will work with partner agencies to identify at the earliest opportunity, those young people who are at risk of becoming involved in fire crime and antisocial behaviour.
- 4 We will work with partner agencies to bring together information sharing arrangements which support effective inter-agency working, ensure confidentiality and meet legal requirements.
- 5 We will work with partner agencies to target fire and rescue expertise and resources on those children and young people for whom they are most effective, and ensure that others are referred to the most appropriate agency.
- 7 We will increase awareness and understanding of the work of the Fire and Rescue Service with children and young people, particularly with partners.

Educate children and young people in fire safety, road safety skills and responsible citizenship

The Fire and Rescue Service recognises that prevention is the best protection for children, and their families and communities.

Methods:

- 1 We will work with parents, carers, schools, colleges and other partners to educate all children and young people about the risks of fire and fire safety and to develop lifelong fire safe behaviour.
- 2 We will work with parents, carers, Sure Start and other partners to protect children from death and injury from fire, especially those of pre-school age.
- 3 We will work with parents, carers, schools, colleges and other partners to educate children and young people about the consequences of fire crime and antisocial behaviour and develop safe and responsible citizenship.
- 4 We will develop children and young people as co-workers and volunteers in promoting fire safety, citizenship and mentoring in families and communities.
- 5 We will work with parents, carers, schools, colleges and other partner agencies to include fire safety awareness and skills as a part of an integrated approach to risk education.
- 6 We will increase awareness and understanding of the work of the Fire and Rescue Service with children and young people, particularly among partner agencies.



Ensure that Fire and Rescue Service staff working with children and young people are effective and professional

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service recognises the need for specialist skills to work effectively with children and young people.

Methods:

- 1 We will work with children and young people as a mainstream activity for the Service, which may be undertaken by staff with the appropriate skills and training, including retained and non-operational staff.
- 2 We will ensure that all staff understand how to work with children and young people they may encounter in their ordinary duties and that they are aware of their Service's Child Protection Policy.

3 We will ensure that staff who have substantial access to children and young people meet all requirements for child protection, including a Criminal Records Bureau check and assessment for suitability.

4 We will identify and meet the specific training needs of staff who work with children and young people.

5 We will ensure that training provided for work with children and young people is high quality.

6 We will examine how best to recognise and reward work with children and young people appropriately.

7 We will develop a specialist role of working with children and young people within the Fire and Rescue Service Integrated Personnel Development System.

Identify and disseminate good practice in working with children and young people

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service recognises the need for policy and practice to be supported by research into what works and effective dissemination of the results.

Methods:

- 1 As a basis for developing good practice, to improve understanding of fire crime and fire setting by children and young people, and of accidental fires in which children and young people are involved.
- 2 We will identify good practice in the development of local strategies, including needs assessment, targeting and working with partners.
- 3 We will identify good practice in the design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of work with children and young people in the Fire and Rescue Service and transferable good practice elsewhere.
- 4 We will identify good practice on equality and diversity in working with children and young people.
- 5 We will encourage innovation and creativity in working with children and young people, while building on existing good practice in the Fire and Rescue Service and elsewhere.
- 6 We will recognise good practice and effective innovation through an annual award for excellence in working with children and young people.
- 7 We will disseminate good practice effectively to the Fire and Rescue Service and partner agencies, using existing networks and groups where possible.
- 8 We will increase awareness and understanding of the work of the Fire and Rescue Service with children and young people, particularly among partner agencies.

Partnerships

Internal

- We will Contribute to Local Area Agreements, IRMP and Station Plans for effective youth and community engagement in collaboration with Area Managers, Group Managers, Station Managers/ Locality Managers
- Support the development of a learning culture enabling all fire service personnel, volunteers and advocates to better understand; and further their awareness, confidence and skills for youth and community engagement as professionals (IPDS).

External

- Contribute to the development of effective partnership working by engaging with and contributing to the Local Authority Children and Young People's strategic partnerships
- Contribute to the development of the Local Authority Children's and Young People's Plan
- Work at strategic level with 'identified' partners for the purpose of joint planning, service delivery and sustainability by developing our role in the Local Area Agreement
- Support the development of flexible outreach initiatives to influence agendas for prevention, safety and engagement
- Raise the profile and image of Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service as a service that is innovative and has a community focus
- Develop the opportunities for volunteering opportunities
- Engage with the Youth Parliament and other children and young people's consultation forums.

Organisation

All strategies need staff and resources to implement them. The fire service has uniformed and non uniformed staff to deliver the growing range of programmes we have developed. We will continually seek further funds from partners and funding bodies to further expand and develop the staff and resources available to deliver the programmes. The staff are supported in the delivery of the strategy by volunteers from the Fire Support Network. Appendix A describes the initiatives and programmes currently run by Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service.

Measuring Performance

Annual performance measures are set for each programme and are included in the service IRMP, community safety and station performance management systems.

Evaluation

Evaluation is the systematic and objective review of an ongoing or completed project or programme, its design, implementation and results. The aim of evaluation is to determine the value, impact, sustainability and relevance of the work compared to some predetermined objectives. All youth engagement programmes are subject to periodic independent evaluation. The service has a contestable research fund; Liverpool University and John Moores University have previously evaluated service initiatives.

Monitoring and Review

Programmes and initiatives evolve through feedback received from customers, funders and service users. Our initiatives are subject to pre- and post course evaluation with regular management group meetings to assess and, as required, amend packages and strategies.



External review and reporting

Many of our programmes are funded by partners. To obtain and maintain funding, programmes give regular feedback and are evaluated to ensure they are providing best value.

Budget management

All programmes are subject to the provisions of the Authority financial standing orders.

We share our practice with other best value authorities committed to the reduction of road death and injuries.

Appendix A - Programmes and activities

Prince's Trust

MF&RS is a Delivery Partner for the Prince's Trust with the teams operating from fire stations. The four teams are each run by a team and an assistant team leader. The programme helps young people who may not otherwise have had the chance to succeed, including young people marginalised through lack of qualifications, a criminal conviction or unemployment. The aim is to give young people aged between 18 – 25 yrs self confidence, motivation and resilience to overcome difficult circumstances and assist them to economic independence and employment. Teams currently operate from Bootle Netherton, Huyton, Old Swan and Southport Community Fire Stations.

EARLY

EARLY (Educating Alternative Reaching Local Youth)

Young people with a taste for adventure in the Sefton area are being offered an exciting new opportunity. MF&RS runs a 12 week development course which is completely free and is open to anyone who is aged 16 to 19 and unemployed. It is delivered from Kirkdale and Speke Community Fire Stations. It is funded by Neighbourhood Renewal funding, the young people are referred through Connexions. The course is being supported by Liverpool Community College, Merseytravel and the Criminal Information Agency.

LIFE

(Local Intergration Fire Education)

The Local Intergration Fire Education programme is based at local fire stations that are in the heart of communities. It is a five day course that runs during the school holiday periods, a time when diversionary activities are crucial. We attend more deliberately set fires and encounter more antisocial behaviour during these times. The children who access the programme are those generally deemed 'at risk' by our partner agencies. LIFE is designed to help young people understand fire safety, prevent arson, provide positive role models and help youngsters develop confidence, resilience, and self esteem.



Beacon Project Interface

The course involves one day a week for 12 weeks and is designed to help young people understand fire safety, prevent arson, provide positive role models and help youngsters develop confidence, resilience, and self-esteem and ultimately lead them back into mainstream education. Referrals are taken from Local Education Authorities, Youth Offending Teams, Youth Inclusion Programmes, Juvenile and Magistrates Courts.

Is a pilot partnership with Knowsley Enterprise Academy, Children's Services Directorate and Greater Merseyside Connexions, Interface is an innovative means of tackling key financial and IRMP3 issues faced by MFRS. The project uses a business focused approach to engage with young people, encouraging communication skills and provide possible solutions to problems such as antisocial behaviour, attacks on operational personnel, hoax fire calls and deliberate fire setting. The programme concentrates on MFRS as a business, examining the various functions and finding business solutions. The Interface Programme is a 2 year programme, the young people participating in the course are ages 14-16 years old. The young people attend Knowsley Enterprise Academy and Kirkby Community Fire Station for 3 days each week.

Antisocial behaviour task force

Is a joint fire and police service initiative developed to target, catch and convict people becoming involved in persistent antisocial behaviour. Based at Police Headquarters, Brunswick Dock, the team act proactively and imaginatively, responding dynamically with other partners to target known offenders and work to intervene when first offenders are identified. They further help to support victims and witnesses to ensure resources are directed appropriately and conviction rates are improved.



Road traffic collision reduction Drive 2 Arrive

75% of children and young people killed or seriously injured between the age of 15 and 25 do so as a result of road traffic collisions. Of these collisions police on Merseyside estimate that excessive speed is a factor in 70% of the collisions. Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service has developed a road traffic collision reduction strategy to target the issues of speeding, drink/drug driving, inappropriate use of mobile phones, not wearing a seatbelt and showing off amongst young people. Drive 2 arrive is a series of interactive presentations devised with young people to highlight the hazards of inappropriate driving and change attitudes and behaviour.

Bikesafe

Is a joint police and fire service initiative to inform and educate motorcyclists in safe riding techniques. Bikesafe on Merseyside is a joint working partnership with Merseyside Police, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service and Wirral Road Safety. Primary funding has been sourced via the NRF up to year end 2007. By encompassing and promoting advanced riding groups such as IAM, RoSPA and commercial training organisations a highly motivated pro active strategy now exists. This strategy will expand in 2007 by supporting further initiatives to strengthen the infrastructure groups needed and targeting at risk segments of PTW users throughout Merseyside. Advertising campaigns include posters and banners on the Mersey tunnel entrances and bus advertorials. Since the inception of the scheme over 10 workshops have been run with several being oversubscribed all run from fire service premises. Support has also been provided to other Bikesafe initiatives nationally demonstrating the success and quality of the product.

Streetsmartz

Street Smartz is an interactive DVD and associated presenter support material aimed at year 9 young people. It features a gritty and realistic DVD the purpose of which is to give young people awareness of risk as a pedestrian and the simple measures that can be taken to reduce the risk. It was developed by Liverpool University, Liverpool Highways Department and Rivermedia. Its effectiveness in affecting attitude change has been independently evaluated.



Kerbkraft

Kerbkraft is delivered in schools and is aimed at key stage 1 and 2 pupils. It is designed to develop children's awareness and risk assessment skills whilst route planning and walking within their community.

Streetcage Soccer

Is a diversionary soccer skills related programme delivered at the heart of challenging communities. Trained football coaches run skills camps for children and young people during evening times at weekends and school holidays.

STAMP

Is a community programme operated from St Helens fire station and is targeted at young motoring offenders. The group meet one night per week and work with motor vehicles in the purpose built workshop.

Bromborough Market Garden Dig-it

A large semi-derelict piece of land to the rear of Bromborough Community Fire Station has been transformed into a working market garden by over forty children and young people. The young people assisted in its conception; design and now operate and maintain it. The initiative promotes healthy living and citizenship.

Embedded Firefighters

This initiative involves a firefighter from the local station working in a secondary school one day per week on one of their rota days. We are proud to be the first fire service in the country to implement this scheme. Our pilot has been an incredible success and is now operating in more schools. They are located in areas that have been subject to the highest number of deliberate fires and reports of antisocial behaviour towards fire crews.



Fire Service Rangers

Groups of young people and fire service uniformed, non uniformed and volunteer staff meet one night per week at Croxteth and St Helens Community Fire Stations to engage in community projects, team building and traditional fire service physical activities. The young people are aged 13-17 years and carry out two community projects and go on one outward bound trip a year.

School Fire Liaison Officer

This works in 7 secondary schools across Liverpool delivering a message of fire safety and tackling such issues as arson and hoax calls. This is an intensive programme designed to remove barriers between young people and the fire service. A group of students are identified from each school who participate in a 13-week programme covering such topics as attacks on firefighters, school arson and firework safety with a view to educating young people on the consequences of anti-social behaviour.

Fire Awareness Child Education

This scheme was developed in response to the large number of fires in dwelling houses being caused by young children. This programme has been a part of our commitment to protecting young people and their families for over 10 years and several other fire services now run similar schemes.

FACE-UP

Is an arson programme for convicted offenders. A Restorative Justice approach for offenders aged 10-25. Offenders convicted of arson by the courts are required to attend the programme as part of their Supervision Order. During an intensive one-week course, the offender is confronted about their crime, challenged about their behaviour, and helped to understand the effects of their offence on individuals, families and communities.



Climbing Wall

Three climbing walls have been erected at Wallasey, Toxteth and with funding received for walls at Kirkby and Huyton fire stations. The walls are used to: support the existing youth programmes we have in place; develop closer links with local groups of young people; develop closer links with local schools: help young people acquire new skills; help fire-fighters develop new skills; encourage the community to view their local fire station as a pro active resource as opposed to just a reactive one.

Firefit Kids

Tackling childhood obesity is a major government priority. Firefit Kids is a non-sports related, fun, high energy physical activity programme during which children and young people take part in a variety of physical activities. Using firefighters as positive role models, the programme's aim is to promote healthy eating and participation in exercise. Sefton Primary Care Trust use Firefit kids as part of its year one and year six baseline assessment programme. Children identified as being obese are given the option to join a Firefit Kids programme.

Duke of Edinburgh drop in centre-Bootle Netherton

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme, MFRS has been invited by Sefton Youth Service to become registered as open award holders to deliver the full award. This pilot project is based at Bootle and Netherton fire station (N1) and aims to reduce incidences of Anti-Social Behaviour Fires taking place in the local area.



60s+ Livesafe

The Livesafe Project was set up in 2003 and demonstrates how we are able to motivate young people to support our vision of making Merseyside a fire safe community. The project team visit schools and youth groups to work with young people to generate Home Fire safety Check referrals for their elderly family and friends.

Volunteers

This Service delivers its diverse range of youth initiatives through a combination of full time staff and staff giving up their own time to work with young people. We have people from both within the fire service and outside carrying out voluntary work on our programs. Their work is co-ordinated by the Fire Support Network.

Streetbeat

Is a Key Stage 3 and 4 multi-media educational resource, produced by MFRS in partnership with Liverpool Film Academy and Liverpool Capital Company of Culture, developed to deter young people from engaging in antisocial fires, attacks on firefighters and hoax calls. This innovative resource will provide teachers and Youth Offending Teams and embedded firefighters with a valuable resource that directly links to the Personal, Health Social Education (PHSE) curriculum.



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