



## **Welcome to 2024- A New Year Message from Mary Jane Roberts, Mary's CEO**

It's a beautiful blue sky today. So Primrose Hill is likely to have some of its mesmerising moments, where you feel that in this little patch of London you can feel present. Immersed in views and the trees.

But we're feeling differently: worrying about our teenagers being out with friends, thinking about crowd control, and wondering how it can be safer.

In recent days Mary's has worked with police in the response to the 29<sup>th</sup> December Abbey Road stabbing and New Year's Eve stabbing. This is part of our 24/7 approach to violence reduction, as with the 5 other deaths of young people we experienced in 2023.

On average over the past ten years, between 2-5 young people we work with have died related to serious youth violence per year. The majority are stabbings. Our service is needed.

Mary's reduces knife carrying. In the local area over the last two years we have removed 1032 knives from circulation in our knife bin. 69 knives were one to one amnesties with young people.

Mary's achieves amnesties through personal connection, grounded in what the knife carrier is thinking, and knowledge of local effects of knives. To change behaviour we address the person's situation holistically, dealing with fear and adverse events. Siblings and friends are supported who are reeling from the effects of violence.

Mary's is part of the Safer Parks Panel for Primrose Hill. The Parks need to be held to account for an area not patrolled from 10pm each night. Denial about how social forces such as TikTok directing people to Primrose Hill, or levels of use of recreational drugs have affected the way the space is being used at night cannot continue.

Mary's has a 12 person team of youth workers who are a powerful and proven means of reducing knife carrying locally.

This horrible situation of two December deaths will sit with us all for a long time. But I believe that in 2024 Primrose Hill will join together in its connection to our work for knives removed and lives saved.

Mary Jane Roberts  
CEO, Mary's

A technical note is available alongside this letter, available at [www.maryscharity.org](http://www.maryscharity.org)