



# AN INTRODUCTION TO CURRENT RISKS TO YOUTH

KNIFE CRIME, GANG CULTURE, CCE, CSE, COUNTY LINES & DRUGS

## Who We Are

Always An Alternative. We are a non-profit organisation created with the ultimate aim of reducing serious youth violence: Knife crime, gun crime and gangs by engaging the youthful minds of today.

## What we do

We deem education as vital in order to achieve our goals, offering a variety of educational routes to inform young people about the risk of serious youth violence. All routes have two main topics, knife crime and gun crime/gangs. Both start with an engagement session to allow students to decide some of the non-mandatory topics of decision. The routes include:

- Focused workshops (2-8 students)
- Assemblies/ year groups (Large)
- 1-2-1s

We also provide guest speakers at events, as well as talks with parents/carers and professionals.

We are always working in new projects to help engage young people. For more information visit [www.alwaysanalternative.org.uk](http://www.alwaysanalternative.org.uk), like Always An Alternative on Facebook and follow @AAAMINDSET on Instagram.

## Introduction

Our work with people that have felt the impact first hand of serious youth violence has enabled us to gain great knowledge on the issues. Giving greater depth, the engagement with young people and their feedback, means that we are able to think about the issue from the young person's point of view. So, we thought it would be useful to combine the two points of view and collate information into a booklet for your use.

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# Knife Crime

## What is Knife Crime?

Knife crime is any crime that involves a sharp or bladed instrument, including anything from a kitchen knife to a knitting needle. Basically, any object that can be used to pierce or cut the skin.

Examples of knife crime includes:

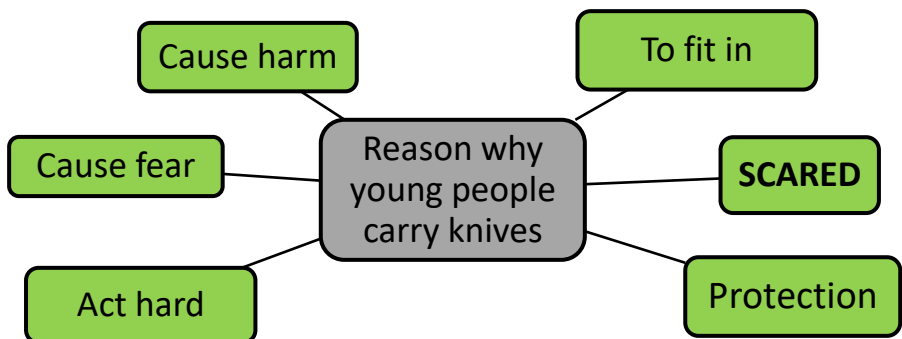
- Buying a knife if you're under 18
- Carrying or attempting to carry a knife
- Threatening someone with a knife (without having one)
- Harming someone with a knife (Murder, attempted murder, manslaughter)
- A robbery or burglary where a thief carried a knife as a weapon



## Why Do Young People Carry Knives?

Research has shown that often, young people carry knives as a form of protection. Unfortunately, those that carry knives for their protection are three times more likely to have it used on them.

There is no evidence to suggest that the young people carrying knives are in gangs. Our research has shown that the reason for this is for protection or to gain respect.



## What to look out for

If you have a suspicion about a young person carrying a knife. They may be wearing black a lot, wearing a rolled-up balaclava or covering their face, here are some helpful tips:

- Listen out for the kitchen drawer when the young person is leaving the house
- Check your knife block
- Stand in the kitchen when they are leaving the house
- Look under their bed and other places they may hide it
- Look behind the wheelie bin and other places around the house
- Look on their online account for purchase'

## I've found a knife, what should I do?

If you find a knife or a sharp weapon you should move it someplace safe to ensure the young person does not get it back. To get the weapon removed safely you could call the police (101) or a local anti-knife crime organisation, who should be able to fulfil your request. Failing that, you could use a knife amnesty bin which are becoming quite popular.

It is vital that you or someone the young person trusts can talk to them about having the knife. This will not only allow you to talk to them about the risks around carrying knives (See facts). But you will also have the opportunity to find out the reason behind them carry a knife; is their life in danger, are they holding it for someone else, are they scared.

This conversation might be difficult and you may hear things that you were not expecting but it is the first step in getting the required support for the young person to prevent them from making a decision that could have a terrible impact on their life and those that are the closest to them.

## Facts

- ✓ Carrying any kind of offensive weapon can get you time in prison.
- ✓ An object sharpened such as a comb, or a lighter or a pen hiding a blade is an offensive weapon.
- ✓ Carrying a knife is NOT self-defence.
- ✓ Possession of a knife carries a prison sentence of up to 5 YEARS even if the knife is not used.
- ✓ Attackers often regret their actions.
- ✓ A person can bleed to death in 1 minute if they are stabbed in the heart.
- ✓ Victims and attackers can suffer from PTSD.
- ✓ It is ILLEGAL to carry a knife (unless it is for work).
- ✓ You are up to 3 times more likely to be stabbed if you carry a knife.
- ✓ If you are caught with a knife, you may receive a CRIMINAL RECORD.
- ✓ There is NO SAFE PLACE on your body to get stabbed.
- ✓ The police can search you if they believe you have a knife.
- ✓ If someone is injured/killed by a knife while you're there you could be prosecuted even if it's not you who uses it. You could be sent to prison for murder for JOINT ENTERPRISE.



## Gangs

### What is a Gang?

The word gang has different meanings. However, for the purpose of simplicity a gang will be referred to as:

**Street Gangs** - A group of people that represent an area or colour who use crime and violence as a part of their identity.

**Organised Crime Gang** - A group of people that use crime for their personal gain and is seen as a way of income.

There is no law against being in a gang. Still, if the young person's membership within a gang is linked to illegal activities, they may face criminal charges.

### What activities do gangs get involved in:

Different types of gangs often engage in different types of illegal activities. For example, street gangs are known for selling drugs and violent crime. Whereas organised crime gangs are known for people trafficking and counterfeit goods. The following are examples of activities gangs may get involved in:

- Drug dealing
- Drug trafficking
- Stolen goods
- Violent crime: Gun crime & Knife crime
- People trafficking
- Counterfeit goods



- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
- Cuckooing

## Getting into a Gang

There are three main reasons why people are recruited into gangs: they want to, they get groomed into it or forced by fear and intimidation. Young people want to join gangs because:

- They feel they are protected
- Gives them an identity
- Have someone to look up to
- Earn money
- Get attention
- To follow (Family or friends)
- Its normal



## Groomed or recruited by gang leaders

Grooming is when a victim is coerced into thinking that they are friends with the groomer. Often, the victim will be given gifts from the groomer. At the beginning the gifts will be small, such as food or drinks. Over time, to build trust in the relationship, the value of the gifts will increase to clothes and jewellery. Once the groomer has the trust of their victim, they will get them involved in illegal activities. To prevent the victim from leaving, the groomer will put them in a position where the victim thinks they owe the groomer. A prime example is setting the victim up to think they have had drugs stolen. More information on grooming can be found on pages 13-15.

## The risk of being in a gang

Despite the glamorisation of being in a gang, there are dangerous risks that come with it:

**Committing crimes** - Unfortunately, once involved in a gang young people do not get to choose which activities they are involved with.

**Drugs** - A popular income for gangs is drugs. This includes dealing, trafficking or using them. Due to the amounts of money to be made from drugs it is often the reason for gang violence.

**A criminal record** - If the police get involved the young person may get a criminal record. A criminal record holds information on any cautions, warnings and any orders of the court. This can have serious implications further on in life.

**Prison** - Depending on the frequency and severity of the crime, if caught, the young person could face going to prison (6 months to 30 years).

**Violence (Knife crime, Gun crime)** - Violence is the most common way to settle disputes between rival gangs and between the same gang. Opening up the young person to be targeted by rival gangs.

**Death** - When young people are in a gang, they can become targets from rival gangs. Unfortunately, targeted attacks can end in life changing injuries or death.

**Harm to family member** - In many cases, when gang members cannot be located family members and friends are targeted.

**Family members in debt** - To help get the young person out of a gang. Family members sometimes take out loans to repay money owed by the young person.

## Gun crime and gangs

Unlike knife crime, gun crime has a direct link with gangs. This is because guns are not as accessible as a knife. In order to obtain a gun, the young person will need to know someone that can get one, more often than not, gang members.

## Signs of gang membership

It is hard to get concrete evidence that a young person is in a gang. But here are some examples to look out for:

- Always in and out of the house
- An increase in cash
- New items (Clothes, technology or jewellery)
- A burner phone (see page 11 - An inexpensive phone that can be disposed of easily)
- Spending time with known gang members
- Will not go to other areas
- Out at unsociable hours
- A change in attitude/behaviours

A good idea to keep up to date with young people is by following them on social media (Facebook, Instagram, Tiktok).

## How to exit a gang

Once young people become established within a gang it can be very difficult to leave it. However, the following steps may help:

- Reduce their involvement with the gang
- Spend less time with the gang and their friends that are members
- Spend more time with their friends that are not in gangs
- Avoid areas where gang members go
- Get a hobby (Education, Sports, Music)
- Encourage them to tell someone you trust (family member, friend or teacher)
- If they are in immediate danger call the police 999
- Move area/city

Please note that the stage where a young person has left a gang is when they are most vulnerable to retaliation. Although they may have left that life, there is still a risk of revenge, heightened by the loss of safety from gang association.

## CCE

Criminal exploitation is child abuse where children and young people are manipulated and coerced into committing crimes. Crimes associated with being in a gang.

### Signs of CCE:

- Missing school/college
- Being emotionally 'switched off'
- Use of new or unknown slang words
- An increase in cash, clothes, jewellery or technology
- The young person may become withdrawn from their family
- Staying out late / not returning home
- Idolising gang members and the life style
- Cuts and bruising: signs of physical violence
- Answer to a nick name
- Has a new set of friends
- Does not want to leave the area
- Has a burner phone



SMS 1/1

Burner phones are used by criminals as they are cheap. Once used, the phone is wiped, the sim card is taken out and snapped. The pieces of sim, the phone and the battery are thrown away in different locations.

# County Lines

## What is County Lines?

County Lines is a police term used for gangs that exploit young people or vulnerable adults into moving illegal items from a large city to smaller cities or towns. Original members of the gang will travel down and create a 'Line' (a number for drug users to call). The original members will then return and send young people, including children to sell drugs from that phone. They stay in accommodation until they are able to leave; get sent back home, run off or are caught. Types of accommodation include:

- Airbnb
- Short term private rental properties
- Budget hotels
- Drug users house

Young people and vulnerable adults are lured in to county line schemes by being promised to be put up in nice hotels, be paid a substantial amount of money and a short stay. Unfortunately, they often end up in a drug users house, and never have enough cash to return back home. As they have no money to get home, in most cases they are forced to stay until the police find them.

When the home of a drug user, or other vulnerable person, that is taken over by a criminal gang- this may be referred to as cuckooing.

## Cuckooing

This is another police term where organised gangs occupy the house of a vulnerable person to complete their illegal activities. This may include selling or storing drugs. The gang will agree to give the tenant drugs, money or pay for their utility bills.



# Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

## What Is CSE?

Child Sexual Exploitation is the sexual exploitation of anybody under the age of 18. This involves the exchange of gifts such as alcohol, drugs, mobile phones etc in return for sexual activities, from the person who gave the gifts (The Groomer) or any number of their associates.

## What Are Groomers and What Do They Look Like?

Groomers are people that lure in victims to exploit them sexually. They can be:

- Male or female
- Tall or short
- Any skin colour
- Any age
- From any background
- Follow any religion
- Stranger or relative



## What Is Grooming?

Grooming is a process in which victims are showered with gifts or bullied into engaging in sexual activities.

There are five models of grooming; The Party, Peer, Boyfriend/ Girlfriend, Gang and Groups.

### The Party Model

This model commonly happens at after parties possibly set up by the groomers. Victims are invited to the party, the groomer will pay for transportation and give them alcohol, drugs and/or cigarettes in order to gain power. Once the groomer feels they are in the position of power they will engage in sexual activities. The groomer will most likely be a stranger but will be good at manipulation so the victim doesn't tell anyone and is made to feel that the groomer owns them. This gives the groomer the opportunity to keep the victim.



### **The Peer Model**

Groomers use this model to gain victims through their peers. The peers are school friends, or friends of friends. The peers get forced to find victims out of fear, the peers may also be getting groomed. The peers will start talking to the victim, meeting up with them, introducing the victim to drugs. When the peer feels they are in place of power over the victim, they will introduce them to the groomer/groomers. The peers themselves can also groom the victim.

### **The Boyfriend/ Girlfriend Model**

In this model the victims are made to believe that the groomers are their partner. The partners which are generally older gain the trust of the victim and make them fully dependent on them. They will then purchase them gifts and initially be the only ones having sex with them. Once the partners feel the victims are fully depending on them, they will manipulate them to have sex with others.



## The Gang and Group Model

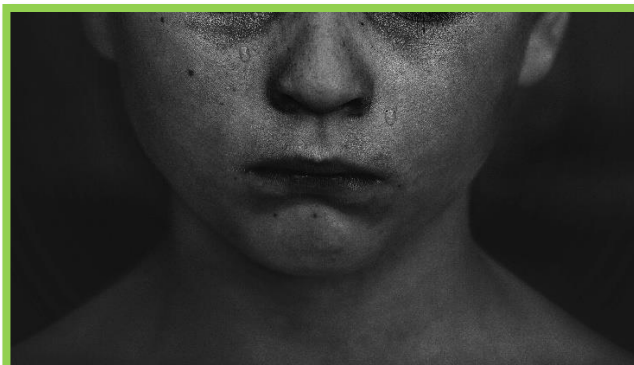
This model is for some sort of gain from the groomers. Gangs may have victims that are forced to have sex with others for money or the victim may be from a rival gang. There are groups of groomers that pass victims through a large network of groomers.

Another type of CSE can happen online, this makes it easier for groomers to hide behind fake profiles and build relationships with victims. It also helps groomers keep an eye on the whereabouts of their victims.

### The warning signs of CSE

There are different signs of Child Sexual Exploitation:

- Mood swings
- Missing school
- Staying out late
- Change in appearance
- Gifts: New clothes, mobiles, nails, trainers
- Late night phone calls
- Unexplained marks and/or bruises
- Under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs
- Always on the phone
- Hiding things





## Drugs awareness

This section will discuss the most common types of illegal drugs, their street names, description and signs of use.

### Class A

Types: Crack cocaine, cocaine, ecstasy (MDMA), heroin, LSD, magic mushrooms, methadone, methamphetamine (crystal meth).

The most common class A drugs are:

**Cocaine** (Coke, Sniff, Powder, Flake) which is white and either in a rock or powder form. It is often sniffed but it can also be smoked.



Signs: White powder on nose, runny nose and nose bleeds, Over confident, talkative, Aggressive, Poor judgment, Paranoid.  
Addictiveness is **HIGH**.

**Crack Cocaine** (Crack, whites, Rock) is the crystal version of cocaine. It is normally heated up and smoked by using some sort of pipe.



Signs: Dilated pupils, Aggressive, Restless, Unexplained disappearances, Blistered lips, Burns on fingers, poor hygiene.  
Addictiveness **HIGH**

**Heroin** (Smack, Brown, H) is of white or brown, it is heated up and injected.



**Ecstasy** (MDMA, MD, Diz, Dizzle) is in tablet form or a brownish crystal, it is taken orally.



Signs: Tendency to nod off, pale skin, sleepy eyes, small pupils, vomiting, difficulty speaking, scratching, poor hygiene, covered arms.

Addictiveness **HIGH**

Signs: Sweating, dilated pupils, swinging jaw, very happy, high levels of stimulation and energy.

Addictiveness **LOW**

## Class B

Types: Amphetamines, barbiturates, cannabis, codeine, methylphenidate (Ritalin), synthetic cannabinoids, synthetic cathinones (e.g. mephedrone, methoxetamine), ketamine

The most common class B drugs are:

**Cannabis** (Bud, Ammy, Star dog) comes from a plant, it is usually crumbled up, rolled into a cigarette along with tobacco and smoked.



Signs: Potent smell, red and sleepy eyes, giggles, eating, relaxed, deep thoughts, low motivation, paranoid.

Addictiveness **MEDIUM - HIGH**

**Ketamine** (Ket, Jet, Special K,) is used as a medical anaesthetic, it is usually snorted.



Signs: Difficulty concentrating, dilated pupils, dissociation from body, mellowness, changes in perceptions of colour or sound.

Addictiveness **HIGH**

## Class C

Types: Anabolic steroids, benzodiazepines (diazepam), gamma hydroxybutyrate (GHB), gamma-butyrolactone (GBL), piperazines (BZP), khat

The most common class C drugs are:

**Anabolic** steroids (Steds, Roids, Juice) are used for performance enhancement.



Signs: Frequent visits to gym, short tempered, aggressive, depressed, self-conscious.

Addictiveness **MEDIUM - HIGH**

**Khat** (Chew) is a green plant. The leaves and stem can be chewed or dried out and made into a tea.



Signs: Emotional, irritable, inability to focus or sleep.

Addictiveness **MEDIUM - HIGH**

## Slang words

### Knife crime

Bora, borer – Knife

Carve - cut

Chief—stab

Ching - knife

Chinging – stab

Dippaz - knives (little)

Dipped or Dip - stab

Dipper – knife (little)

Flicky - flick knife

Kweng - stabbed, cut

Points - stab

Rambo - knife (big)

Ramsey - knife (big)

Samurai – knife

Shank – knife

Splash – stab

Sword – knife

Wet - stab, cut



### Gun crime

38 – Hand gun

50 - .50 Calibre hand gun

9 - 9mm hand gun

Back-out - pull gun out

Bells - bullets,

Bootin - shooting

Broom stick - Shot gun

Bruckshot - Sawn off shotgun

Burner- gun

Corn - bullets

Crash - shoot

Dots, Dotty - shotgun

Drill - shooting

Hand ting - hand gun

Head-top - Shot in head (headtopped)

Leng - gun

Long one - Shot gun

Scrams - guns

Short one - Hand gun

Skeng - gun

Spray - shouting with an automatic weapon

Spinner - Hand gun

Stick - gun

Strap - Gun



Waps - guns

Woosh – shoot

## Gang or friends

Boys – Gang members or friend

Bredrins - Gang members or friend

Gang Gang – Gang members or friend

Gs – Gang members or friend

Man dem – Gang members or friend



## Drugs

Am, Ammy, Amnese - good weed (amnesia)

Bill - roll (a zoot or joint)

Bits\* - anything over 7 grams

Box - prison or kilo of cocaine

Buj\* - Heroin

Bun - burn (zoot) or shoot

Cat - fiend, customer

Charlotte/Charlie – cocaine

Chop – cocaine

Cling - as in cling wrap

Coke – cocaine

Draw - inhale zoot or pull weapon

Food – drugs

Grub - weed or drugs

Link – plug



P or P's – money

Pack - brick of coke or pack of drugs

Pebz – crack / heroin

Piff – marijuana

Pures - Cocaine

Rere/reup – collect more drugs

Sniff – cocaine

Stones - bullets or crack

Strip - area drugs are sold

Zoot – joint



## CCE

Cuckoo – The house of a vulnerable person that is used to sell drugs from

Bando – place to sell drugs

Trap house – Place to sell drugs

Country – A place out of the London where drugs are sold

Cunch – A place out of the London where drugs are sold

Fly down – Drive to a location where drugs are sold

Line – phone number used for drugs

## Other

10 toes - in the streets, on road or run

2 man step - 2 people ride out

Active - one who puts in work

Bally - mask (balaclava)

**Bare** - a lot, many

**Burner phone** - Cheap phone that can get thrown away

**Can** - prison

**Civilian** - a non-combative

**Crud** - lying (talking rubbish)

**Dash, dasheen** - run away from conflict/police

**Dead up** - murdered

**Diligent** - On road

**Dinga** - unregistered cars used for shootings

**Ends** - area

**Feds** - cops

**Field** - war zone

**Flashed** - pulled over

**Got** - assaulted or robbed

**Juice** - blood

**K** - kill, adding a K at the end of ones name means have been murdered

**KMT** - kiss my teeth US says 'sucking teeth'

**Lack(in)** - slip, slippin

**Leggin, legs, legged** - see dash

**Manor** - area

**Neek** - nerd + geek, not a drilla, not on road, not active

**Nicked** - caught by police

**Nuff** - a lot, enough

**Obo, Ob\*** - short for observation - covertly monitored by the police

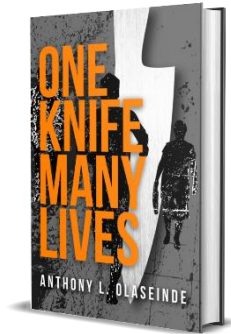




On road - in the streets/field  
Opp - opponent, opposition  
Opp-block - opponents area  
OT\* - outta town – Out of town  
Pagan - non believer, snake, two faced person  
Par - offense, generally any sort of misfortune  
Pave - the streets  
Peak - climactic point or bad (see comments)  
Peds – bicycle or moped  
Pen - prison, jail  
Push, pushy, pusha – bicycle  
Put them in a spliff - Murder  
Road - the streets  
Sideman - sidekick, co-conspirator  
Social, Socy - social media outlets  
Undys - undercover cops  
Wah gwan - what's goin on  
Wahn fi da yute - what's goin on with these kids  
Washed\* - overused/referenced topics  
Wass - junk talk, see 'crud'  
Wasteman - loser, waste of space, useless  
Wing - prison section

## One Knife Many Lives

One Knife Many Lives captures the hard-hitting story of those who feel the devastating impact of knife crime. Through personal experience and engagement with victims, the author gives you an insight into the challenges that many young people face depicting the brutal realities, while highlighting depression, domestic abuse, and suicide. Although this book is fictional, the dangers of knife crime are VERY REAL.












All profit from sales will be donated to our cause, tackling issues explored in the book. Visit [www.alwaysanalternative.org.uk](http://www.alwaysanalternative.org.uk) to purchase your copy.

## Youth American Flag Football

We have partnered up with Sheffield Forge to create a grassroots Youth American Flag Football Team. The aim of the team is to engage and support players with any difficulties that they may be challenged with as they grow up. We hold training sessions every Saturday 11:00 – 13:00. Currently we are at Don Valley Bowl (S9 2DF) but get in touch as this might change. We welcome any children ages 7 – 17 to come along to our training sessions.

Reasons to join:

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
|  Build confidence |  Get stronger  |  Talk          |
|  Make friends    |  Manage anger |  Get Mentored |
|  Get faster      |  Have fun     |  Excel        |



## Project X

We specialise in delivering sessions to young people who are involved in, or who are at high risk of becoming involved in serious youth violence, antisocial behaviour and gang crime. We work with young people using modalities such as Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) and Neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) to develop strategies with the young person to enable them to reach their personal and educational goals.

We support our young people to be the best version of themselves by delivering tailored support to help them achieve their goals and realise their aspirations. We adopt a student-centred supported learning approach to engage, educate and enable our students to understand their learning and think realistically about their futures.

Our ethos is to explore every possible avenue to ensure we never have to give up on any of the young people we support. This requires tenacity and resilience in staff, alongside genuine care and concern for the wellbeing of young people accessing our support.

Visit [www.projectx.education](http://www.projectx.education) for more information.



