

# CARRY YOUR DREAMS, NOT A KNIFE

## A GUIDE TO KNIFE HARM FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

Facts to help you feel more confident when talking to your child about knife crime, as well as practical help and guidance, and where to find support.



# If you're worried your child is involved in knife crime.

## IT CAN BE EXTREMELY WORRYING TO THINK THAT YOUR CHILD IS INVOLVED IN SOMETHING AS DANGEROUS AS KNIFE CRIME

They may not be carrying a weapon themselves but are associated with people who are. The natural reaction is to panic – but this won't resolve the situation and could push your child away.

Whatever the reason a young person is involved in knife crime, it is likely to have something to do with fear. Even if they don't admit it, a young person getting involved in weapons will be frightened, and continuously looking over their shoulder. They will be waiting for the police to stop and search them, or to be confronted by others, and in the end will be grateful for a 'way out' of that lifestyle.



This guide is designed to help provide a glossary of facts, practical advice as well as tips on how to speak to your child about the dangers associated with carrying a knife and where you can seek further help or support.

# What you can do.

## LEARN ABOUT THE LAW

- It is an offence to carry a knife\* and/or a bladed article in a public place (such as a road or in a school) or to carry any article which has a blade or is sharply pointed.
- It is an offence to carry an offensive weapon in a public place. This includes any article made, adapted, or intended for causing injury as detailed below:

Made: Made to cause injury, such as a knuckle duster or bayonets

Adapted: Something innocent that has been adapted to cause injury, such as a broken bottle or a chair leg with nails

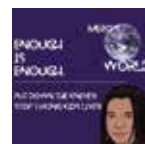
Intended: Anything else, such as an umbrella or pen that is intended by the person to be used to cause injury to others

\* Unless it has a folding blade 3 inches long or less.

A list of illegal knives can be found here: [gov.uk/buying-carrying-knives](http://gov.uk/buying-carrying-knives)

## MAKE YOUR CHILD AWARE OF THE CONSEQUENCES

- Carrying a weapon increases the risk of them being injured themselves.
- They could go to jail for up to 4 years if they're found in possession of a knife, even if they're carrying it for someone else
- Carrying a knife includes in your hand, a pocket, in the boot of your car or if someone else is carrying a knife for you.
- Exceptions include if you are carrying the knife as part of your job, such as a tool for a trade. However, forgetfulness, ignorance to the law or general self-defence (protection) are not reasonable excuses if you are caught carrying a knife.
- It is an offence to use any knife in a threatening way (even a legal knife)
- It is an offence to sell a knife to anyone under 18
- They will get a criminal record, which could stop them entering university or getting a job, and places restrictions on countries that they can travel to, such as the USA, Australia and Canada.
- In a worst-case scenario, they could end up using the weapon and seriously hurting someone.



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# If you're worried your child is involved in knife crime.

## TALK TO THE PARENTS OF YOUR CHILD'S FRIENDS

- If you're worried, parents of your child's friends probably are too. They may see your child in different places, hanging out with different friends and could help you get a better understanding of the situation
- By working together, you could raise awareness of the issue.



# Practical tips on identifying knife crime.

- Know what knives and how many you have in the kitchen and in toolkits at home.
- Monitor any unusual online purchases arriving at your home. Online retailers and deliver companies should ask for age verification when they deliver or when they ask you to collect age restricted goods.
- Keep engaged with your child or young person and their use of social media.
- Think about searching their bag Encourage them to 'hang out' in and room (is there evidence of drugs, extra money, or new clothes?). Think of other hiding spaces that may be used in your home and remember it might not be a knife but some other weapon.
- Know where they are and who they are with (do they have a new circle of friends and are they becoming less engaged with their family?).
- Encourage them to 'hang out' safe areas wherever possible and talk to your child about places they can go if they are feeling vulnerable.

## HOW TO DISPOSE OF A KNIFE IN THE CORRECT WAY

Before disposing of a knife, make sure to wrap it securely in bubble wrap and/or a box to avoid injury.

You can dispose of a knife at your local police station. Some local authorities and charities offer knife amnesty bins and these may be placed in prominent locations in your local area. Search online to see what's available in your local area.

# Reasons some children decide to carry a knife.

**THIS LIST IS NOT EXHUSTIVE, BUT GIVE REASONS WHY CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE MAY CARRY KNIVES.**

- They fear being a victim of knife crime – this could be from a specific threat, or a perceived fear, and are carrying the knife for protection. This is the most common reason that young people give us for knife carrying.
- General self-defence – the ‘just in case’ reason.
- They may feel marginalised or alienated.
- Peer pressure or being pressured into carrying it for someone else.
- They don't know it's wrong or they don't know it's illegal.
- To intimidate others (by way of protection).
- To earn respect or street cred.
- There may also be some involvement in other criminal activities.



# Having the conversation with your child

**SPEAKING TO YOUR CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON ABOUT KNIFE CRIME REQUIRES A DIRECT, AND FRANK CONVERSATION. HERE IS SOME GUIDANCE YOU MAY FIND USEFUL.**

**THE CONVERSATION YOU HAVE TODAY, COULD SAVE A LIFE TOMORROW. IT'S COOL TO TALK!**

## **GETTING STARTED**

Find the right time. The conversation needs to take place wherever they feel safest, which could be inside the family home. Be available and ready to listen, as well as reassuring them that they can be honest with you and let them know you are not there to judge them.

## **LISTEN**

Don't expect or demand them to talk. If they do, be patient and try not to react straight away to what they tell you. Give them the voice in this conversation and don't rush to give advice that they may not be ready to hear. Be empathic.

## **ENCOURAGE THEM TO SHARE THEIR FEARS**

Create a non-judgemental and empathic relationship as this will enable your child to share their fears and feelings. This will help you to better understand their situation.

## **BE POSITIVE**

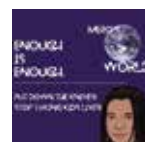
Show them that they are being listened to. Reassure them that the vast majority of young people don't carry a knife. If they are fearful of someone or something specific, tell them that it can be dealt with without the need for them to carry a knife.

## **STICK TO THE FACTS**

They might not think you know what you're talking about so a little preparation can really help here.

## **BE CLEAR ABOUT FALSE 'BRAVERY'**

Walking away from confrontation or a fight is the braver thing to do. If someone pulls a knife on them, the safest and wisest thing to do is to run away. Young people fear backlash from their peers, and fear being targeted by a wider group for not stepping up to a situation or individual. Remind them that this moment will pass, and attention will move away from them in time.



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# Having the conversation with your child

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COULD SAVE A LIFE TOMORROW.  
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## **THE IMPACT**

Help them reflect on how their actions could affect the people who care for them the most. Using a knife is only the beginning. It could place others at risk of being brought into the situation against their will. If they were injured, who will be affected?

## **GET HELP AND SUPPORT FOR YOURSELF**

It may be that you learn some worrying things about your child and the things they're involved in. Try not to overreact but don't feel you have to deal with this on your own – help is available

## **BE REALISTIC**

If you start the conversation, be prepared to hear answers you might not like. Your child may feel you have no experience of knife crime or the challenges they face. Are there any examples from your own childhood that you can draw upon? Has there been anything in the news recently or something that's happened locally that you can refer to?

## **TRY SOMETHING DIFFERENT.**

It doesn't have to just be a conversation; you know your children and what they respond to best. Try thinking beyond a 'chat' and try helping them understand the risks with knives.

## **SUGGEST ALTERNATIVES**

Find out about safe, fun activities for children and young people in your local area by searching the internet or your local council's website. Ask other parents and local community leaders about activities and safe spaces they know about in your local area.



# Having the conversation with your child

## HERE ARE SOME FACTS TO HELP YOU FEEL MORE CONFIDENT WHEN TALKING TO YOUR CHILD

### GETTING CAUGHT WITH A KNIFE

If you get caught with a knife, even if it was for your own protection or you were carrying it for someone else, you will be arrested and prosecuted. See page 3.

### STOP AND SEARCH

Police can and will search you if they believe you are carrying a knife.

### JOINT ENTERPRISE

If someone is injured or killed by a knife in your presence, you could be prosecuted even if did not commit the crime. You could be sent to prison for murder in what is referred to as 'joint enterprise'.

### PRISON

If you get caught with a knife you can be sentenced to prison of up to 4 years – even if you have no intention to use the knife..

### ALCOHOL

Alcohol will lower your inhibitions and increases the chances that you will take a risk.

### KNIFE CRIME CAN KILL

There is no 'safe place' to stab someone. A wound to the arm or leg can still be life threatening. A small blade can be enough to cut an artery leading to death within minutes.

### CRIMINAL RECORD

If you have a criminal record, you might not be accepted into a college or university, get a job, or travel to some countries, like the USA, Canada or Australia.



# Services and support for young people and families and how to report a crime

## CITIZENS ADVICE

If your child has been illegally sold a knife, you can report this to Trading Standards on 03454 04 05 06 visit <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/get-more-help/report-to-trading-standards>

## CRIMESTOPPERS

Is an independent charity that gives you the power to speak up to stop crime, 100% anonymously. Telephone: 0800 555 111 Website: [www.crimestoppers-uk.org](http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org)

## CHILDLINE

Your child can call Childline on 0800 1111 at any time if they are worried about their own safety.

## FAMILY LIVES

Gives advice on all aspects of parenting and is open 24/7. Calls are free on 0808 800 2222 or visit [familylives.org.uk](http://familylives.org.uk)

## VICTIM SUPPORT

A national charity which helps people affected by crime. Web: [victimsupport.org](http://victimsupport.org)

## FEARLESS

Fearless is a service that allows young people to pass on information about crime 100% anonymously. <https://www.fearless.org/>

## NSPCC

NSPCC (The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children): Their helpline provides information and advice to parents and others concerned about young people who may be involved or affected by gang activity. Their helpline is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Freephone: 0808 800 5000. Email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk) Web: [nspcc.org.uk/gangs](http://nspcc.org.uk/gangs)

## THE POLICE

To find details of your local team and find out more about the work they are doing in your area, type your postcode at [www.police.uk](http://www.police.uk). You should call 101 to report crime and other concerns that do not require an emergency response. Call 999 in an emergency.

## VIOLENCE REDUCTION UNIT MANCHESTER

The Greater Manchester VRU is a team of subject leads and experts from Greater Manchester Police (GMP), Calls are free on 0161 778 7000 or visit <https://gmvru.co.uk/>

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## TRAINING

### First aid for knife attacks

If you see someone being stabbed DO NOT video the event or take photos; you can be prosecuted under the Joint Enterprise Law



Phone 999 or 112. You can set your phone up to text call through 112 so you don't have to speak. Set your phone up: Text 'Register' to 112 ; reply 'yes' to the message you get. You are registered. Families of people murdered in lockdown during Covid 19 wished they had known this.

If the person has been stabbed through clothing it is important to remove clothing from that area so that you can inspect the area properly. It is really important to wear sterile gloves or at the very least have clean hands.

If the knife is still in the body leave it in. If you have sterile gloves from a first aid kit PUT THEM ON. Protect yourself by guarding against potential contamination from blood.

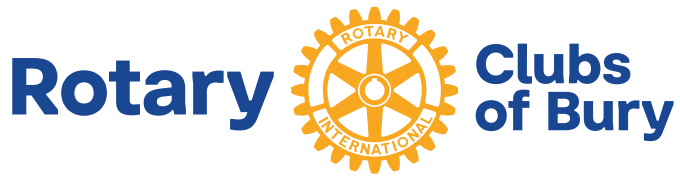


If you have dressings or a tee shirt or socks apply pressure around the sides of the knife.

If the knife has been pulled out apply pressure directly over the wound and keep pressurising. Lift the limb in the air to slow down blood loss. If you are having trouble finding the wound entry run water over the limb and you should see oozing or air bubbles. Pressure can be increased if you use an unrolled dressing directly onto the wound and then dressing that with another dressing. A hand, arm, neck or leg stabbing would benefit from this approach. If possible raise the limb above the heart.



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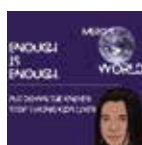
[www.lifesavingbleedkits.co.uk](http://www.lifesavingbleedkits.co.uk)



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