

## Introduction

### In this issue...

#### Introduction

#### Worried about your child?

#### Having the conversation with your child

*The Achieve and Learn Trust believes that nothing is more important than safeguarding the young people in our schools.*

*Thankyou to all the parents who have completed the short Safeguarding Survey which was sent out last week—your feedback will help us to decide the emphasis next year, in our assemblies, bulletins and staff training.*

*This is the final bulletin this half term focussing on knife crime and antisocial behaviour—I hope you have found the resources and information useful. Next half term the focus will be online safety*

## Worried About your Child?

It can very frightening to think that your child is involved in something as dangerous and life changing 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.

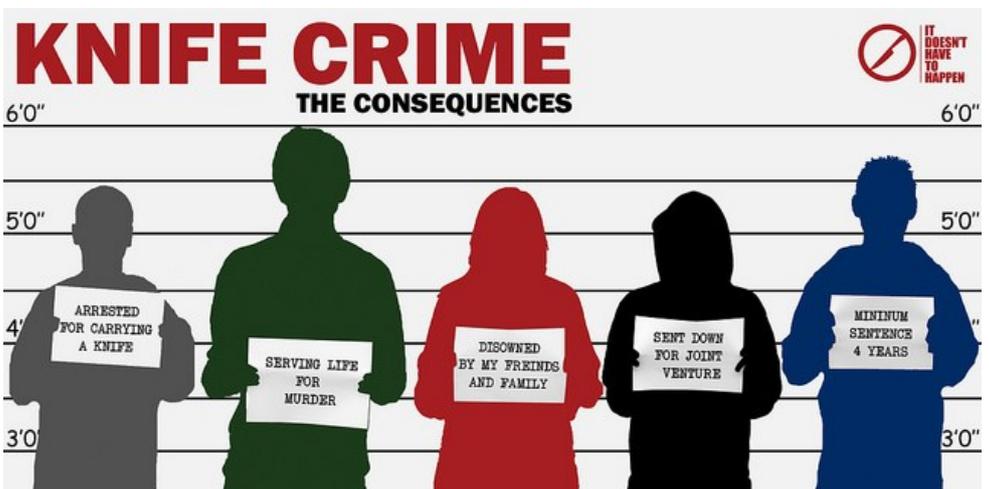


## Make your child aware of the consequences



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.

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.



## Talk to the parents of your children'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.

# 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.

## 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.

## 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?



### 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?

## 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.



### 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.

## 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

