

# Knife Crime

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# What is it?

Knife crime includes stabbing someone. But it's also illegal to:

- carry a knife
- threaten someone with a knife or gun
- commit a crime with the use of a weapon - like a robbery
- commit a crime by pretending you have a real knife or gun

While some young people pick up a knife to feel safer, they don't realise that carrying makes them more likely to get into serious danger. A knife can escalate things way out of your control and make a bad situation much worse.



# Why are young people carrying knives?

National and local research continues to determine root causes of why young people are carrying knives to inform the work needed to tackle the issue and reduce the risks posed. Although not exhaustive, below are some common factors known to influence young people to carry knives:

- County lines – organised drug networks
- Gang affiliation – protection/status
- Media attention/glamorisation
- Fear of crime – being attacked/self-protection
- Victim of bullying – self-protection
- Peer pressure – perception that most young people carry knives

The common factor is the 'vicious circle' young people find themselves in, for example – in a gang/drug network it is an expectation to be armed: 'fear or be feared' 'live or die' – regarding fear of crime and thinking 'I need to defend myself' highlights the absence of thinking or disregard that they are committing a crime to prevent a crime which is not a defence in law – also risking the knife they carry being used on them in a confrontation or causing injury to themselves.

The biggest concern and risk is that if a young person carries a knife they will almost definitely use it in situations where they feel the need to protect themselves, commit a crime, cause fear or reinforce their status/reputation.

Source: <https://www.safe4me.co.uk/portfolio/knife-crime/>



# The Law



The law takes a robust approach to dealing with knife crime – adults charged with possession of a knife will automatically go before a court.

In cases where the carrier is 10-17yrs, they will automatically be referred to the Youth Offending Team – a charging decision will be made by a multi-agency panel, based on a range of factors relevant to the incident.

Outcomes vary and range from participation in a 20 week programme to educate and prevent repeated behaviour, to being sent to court.

Where a young person is found in possession of a knife for a second time, the case will automatically be sent to court.

Source: <https://www.safe4me.co.uk/portfolio/knife-crime/>

# Consequences of knife crime



## Legal consequences.

**\_1**

Carrying a knife can mean four years in prison, even if you don't use it.

**\_2**

You can get a criminal record just for carrying a knife.

**\_3**

Carrying an offensive weapon, like a knife, is a serious offence and carrying it for self-protection is not a defence.

**“ I was outside the guy's house thinking, 'Do I do this?' I wasn't prepared for those consequences, so I took another path. ”**

**\_Sammy**

# Consequences of knife crime



## Emotional consequences.

**\_1**

Carrying a knife doesn't just have an impact on you; it can affect your family and friends too.

**\_2**

No parent or grandparent would ever want to see their child get injured, go to prison or be killed.

**\_3**

It will also impact on your brothers or sisters, if carrying a knife leads you to having serious injuries or losing your life.

**“ You have to take a step back from the madness, and think: is it worth it? ”**

**\_ Aliya**

# Consequences of knife crime



## Personal consequences.

**\_1**

Carry a weapon and it could be used against you.

**\_2**

Employers may be less likely to employ someone with a criminal record.

**\_3**

Countries such as the USA and Canada may not allow someone with a criminal record in, even just on holiday.

**“ I pulled my knife thinking it would protect me. It just made the situation worse and I was stabbed. ”**

**\_Ben**



# **What to do if you are worried:**



Let the young person you speak to know...

That by carrying a knife, they:

- Have false sense of security.
- Could be increasing the risk of getting stabbed or injured.
- Are breaking the law.

That by not carrying, and walking away from confrontation:

- Is the smart thing to do.
- Is the safer thing to do.
- Is the stronger thing to do.



# Who to call:



- NSPCC Helpline: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk) **0808 800 5000**
- Contact the police immediately if you're worried the child is in danger
- Contact Children's Services – you can find them through [your local council](#)
- Talk to the safeguarding lead at the child's school and ask for support. At Christ the King our safeguarding team are:
  - Mrs Carter
  - Mrs Marshall
  - Mrs Glassford
  - Mrs Wheeldon
  - Mrs Hansrani
  - Miss Hurren

# Other resources:



#knifefree – Dean's Story

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bRwkmczAcdw>



#knifefree – Aliya's Story

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YIRhXlGKqNU>