Gangs, Guns & Knives
A resource pack to raise awareness with young people (aged 14-19) about the risks and realities of gang related crime
“What better way to stop knife crime than by stopping young people from picking up knives in the first place?”

Former Home Secretary The Rt Hon Amber Rudd MP

Introduction
Despite reports of a rise in youth knife crime, particularly in major UK cities, the vast majority of young people in the UK are not involved with gangs, knives and guns and probably never will be. The gap between actual crime of this type and perceptions of crime are explored within this pack, along with the reasons why someone might join a gang and what they potentially get out of it, both positive and negative.

Activities challenge the mistaken belief that carrying a weapon ‘protects you’ and raises awareness about the emotional and physical risks of gang life as well as the legal consequences of violent crime, which include life imprisonment.

Finally young people are encouraged to consider the impact that gangs and violence has, not just on those perpetrating it but also their family, friends and the wider community.

Aims
- To consider why some young people join gangs
- To raise awareness about knife / gun crime in the UK and the laws related to carrying weapons
- To consider the potential emotional and physical impact that knife / gun crime can have on individual’s, communities and wider society
- To explore the impact of risk-taking behaviour on life choices
- To develop young people’s confidence and build skills to make positive choices in conflict situations to keep themselves and others safe.

Contents
This toolkit contains resources for EIGHT workshops. Where sessions are marked with a * there is a short film or clip suggested to aid or reinforce learning so internet access and facilities to show them will be required.

Step-by-step instructions are provided for each session but these can be amended to meet different learning needs or to address local issues and concerns. Similarly they can be delivered in a different order but it is recommended that a topic is completed before moving on to the next.

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### Sessions One: Introduction to the Programme and My Star

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<td>- To introduce the programme and key topic areas</td>
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<td>- To set ground rules for the sessions</td>
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<td>- To complete My Stars with all young people</td>
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<td>- To explore the concept of ‘identity’ and how the different groups that young people belong to inform this and shape self-esteem.</td>
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<td>- To consider the potential consequences of gang membership</td>
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### Sessions Four: Who’s responsible?

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<tr>
<td>- To consider the responsibility that parents / carers have for keeping their children away from gangs</td>
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<td>- To encourage personal responsibility for choices made</td>
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### Sessions Five: County Lines

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<th>Aims of session</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Session 5</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- To raise awareness about vulnerable young people targeted by gangs to deal drugs outside of the area they live in, called ‘County Lines’</td>
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</table>
To consider the impact that poor choices can have on family, friends and the wider community.

To explore the potential short and longer term consequences of choices made.

Session Six: Knife Crime

Aims of session

Session 6

To explore why some young people carry knives
To raise awareness about the consequences of carrying a knife
To give information about reporting knife crime

Sessions Seven: Gun crime

Aims of session

Session 7

To explore feelings and attitudes to firearms
To raise awareness about UK gun laws
To discuss the potential consequences of carrying a gun
To consider the effectiveness of gun amnesties.

Sessions Eight: Reducing weapon crime

Aims of session

Session 8

To raise awareness about UK laws in place to protect people from weapon crime
To discuss the potential consequences of carrying a weapon
To consider what else could be done to encourage young people not to carry weapons.

Who is it aimed at?

This resource aims to raise awareness with young people aged 14-19 about the risks and realities of gang related violence.

‘…. it is important not to ‘over dramatise’ the carrying of knives. It can be easy to inadvertently ‘glamorise’ the carrying of knives. Instead teaching should focus on helping young people to develop the understanding needed to recognise when a situation is becoming dangerous, the language and skills required to stay safe, an understanding of the law and an appreciation of the full extent of the consequences of a knife crime.’

The Ben Kinsella Trust (www.benkinsella.org.uk)

It is not aimed at those already engaged in gang activity or known to the criminal justice system for violent offences, although it could be adapted to meet specific needs.
Talking about emotive topics

Gangs and gang culture can be an emotive topic to discuss, for example the right to carry a weapon for protection and the arguments for and against. Make it clear that whilst expressing differences of opinion is to be encouraged, any actions that harass, scare or harm others are unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Be sensitive to the life experiences that some young people may have. Agree the option to pass in discussions and not to participate in an activity if it becomes too much or is emotionally upsetting. Explain that young people will not be asked to share personal experiences and where appropriate signpost young people on to additional services. If a disclosure is made, follow HCC safeguarding procedures.

Establishing a safe learning environment

Whilst some young people will have no real life experience of gangs and gang life it is likely that they will all have formed views and opinions based on things they have seen and heard growing up. This includes social media, music videos, ‘gangster’ films and video games as well as news stories and things like the opinions of family and friends.

To ensure that everyone feels safe participating take time to explain boundaries and limits to confidentiality, explaining when information would need to be passed on and what can ‘stay in the room’. To help with this ensure that there is a robust set of ground rules in place before starting. These may include:

- The right to feel safe
- Freedom to express opinions and values
- The right to respectfully challenge
- The promotion of inclusion and diversity
- To listen without interrupting
- To ask questions to help learning
- To keep information confidential (within the boundaries discussed)

Reporting concerns

Like other public bodies, schools and services for young people have a legal duty to prevent crime. If you have knowledge that a crime is about to be committed or believe a young person is at immediate risk of harm or poses an immediate risk to others, call 999.

If you consider that a young person is vulnerable or ‘at risk’ of gang related activity then assess any additional support needs and follow safeguarding protocols. Check with your line manager and record everything.

Report inappropriate content to social media providers and encourage young people to do the same.
Additional information

The Home Office provides guidance for frontline professionals on dealing with county lines, as a part of the government's approach to ending gang violence and exploitation. This was last updated in July 2018.

SESSION ONE
Introduction to the programme and My Star

Aim
The aim of this session is to introduce the learners to the Gangs, Guns and Knives programme and complete My Stars with each learner.

You will need

Time needed
2 hours

How to do it
Start by introducing the Gangs, Guns and Knives programme. Explain that it is an 8 week programme that is for people to consider the impact that gangs and violence has, to raise awareness about knife and gun crime in the UK and to develop young people’s confidence to make positive choices and keep themselves safe.

Explain that each week there will be a group session led by the Youth Workers delivering the programme that will be based around the key areas mentioned above.

Discuss and set some ground rules for the sessions. Record these on a flip chart and display them every time that the group meets.

Introduce ‘My Star’ to the group and ensure that each young person on the programme spends one to one time with a Youth Worker to plot where they are on their My star at this present time and the relevant section of the ‘Young Person’s Assessment’ is completed and any planned outcomes/goals and actions are recorded on the ‘Young Persons Action Plan’. Explain that this will be reviewed at the end of the programme to see if there has been any movement and if the outcomes/goals and actions have been met.
SESSION TWO
Identity and belonging

Aim:
- To explore the concept of ‘identity’ and how the different groups that young people belong to inform this and shape self-esteem.
- To consider similarities and differences of gangs vs. group membership
- To better understand why some young people join gangs

You will need: flipchart paper, marker pens, A4 paper, sticky notes, sets of Activity 3 cards

Film: NSPCC film
https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=85&v=dYFw6kiRkus

Time: 2 hours

Key phrases and words: individual, community and social identity, belonging and gang

Icebreaker
Give each learner a piece of A4 paper and a pen. Ask them to sign their name on it and then give them three minutes to write down four things about themselves anywhere on the page. Encourage them to move away from physical attributes to think about the inner things that make them unique e.g. likes / dislikes, beliefs and values, skills and qualities etc (e.g. motivated, committed, hardworking, practical, focussed, good time keeper, honest, committed, approachable, friendly).

Call time and then instruct everyone to hold their paper up in front of them and without speaking walk around the room to find others with similar things written down. Once found ask them to form groups of at least four and sit down with their sheets of paper laid out together in front of them.

Next ask the young people to discuss the things they have in common, selecting those they think are most important and adding additional things they have in common onto the paper sheets. Once they have found things that unite them, instruct them to move on to identifying aspects of their identity that don’t fit with the group. These are the things that contribute to their ‘individual identity’, what makes them unique, so encourage them to share these and explain their importance with other group members.

Bring the group back together and invite each to introduce their group identity, rather than the things that define them as individuals.

Ask:
What aspects of identity did you focus on to form your groups?
E.g. shared values, a common goal, shared skills or interests.

Once formed, how easy was it to discover more things in common?
As groups form individuals tend to look for similarities rather than differences, which strengthens the group identity and bonds members together.

What became more important, creating the group identity or maintaining your individual one?
Consider organisations that have a strong group or team identity, for example the army, sports teams or uniformed organisations where the uniform signifies membership at a glance.

Conclude that all membership groups, formal or informal, are made up of individuals that come together for a common purpose. Discovering shared interests and beliefs brings people together and creates a sense of belonging and security, which in turn can raise self-esteem. As the group identity grows, showing who belongs to outsiders can become important, for example wearing a uniform. Group thinking can influence the behaviour, attitudes and values of individuals in positive or negative ways.

Activity 1
Explain that this activity moves on from individual identity to look at how membership of a community affects behaviour and beliefs. This can be described as a ‘community identity’.

Ask young people to call out things that they think bring people together to form a ‘community identity’. This could include:
- Faith
- Culture
- Family
- School / college / work
- Place you live
- Ethnicity
- Gender

Ask:
Can you assume these identities or do you have to be born into them?

On a large sheet of paper write up ideas under the two headings ‘Assume’ and ‘Born into’. A couple may go across both columns, for example you may be born into one faith but convert to another, but most will fit into one or the other.

After a short discussion, divide into groups of four and give out flipchart paper and pens. This time ask them to think of groups that young people belong to. These should be groups that contribute positively to someone’s ‘social identity’, i.e. that they feel affiliated to, that reflects their values, likes / dislikes etc and contributes to how they want to be seen by others. These can be anything from a uniformed youth organisation to a sports team to a group on social media.

Ideas should be explored on flipchart paper under the following headings:
Example:
Group = name of group or collective description, e.g. Scouts
Identification = things group members wear, say or do to demonstrate membership, e.g. a Scouts uniform
What you gain from membership = what someone gets or can achieve from belonging, e.g. friendship, shared interests, opportunities to learn new skills and work towards Scouts badges.
What you give in return = commitment, time and loyalty to your Scout troop.

Allow up to 30 minutes for discussions and then invite groups to present one idea at a time, encouraging questions and discussion as you go along.

Facilitate a whole group discussion that invites young people to reflect on the different groups they belong to using the following prompt questions:

1. What groups do you belong to?
2. How do they influence who you are?
3. Do you behave differently in different groups? If so, how?

Conclude that young people can belong to one or more groups, reflecting the different interests they have. Within each, their individual identity contributes to a group identity, which becomes a blend of all members and the things they have in common, for example shared values, beliefs and aspirations. New members are likely to try and fit in with the culture of the group and adopt the things that identify them as part of it. In some cases this is formalised into a ceremony where members pledge to sign up to the shared vision and abide by the group rules, e.g. joining the Air Cadets or Guides.

Activity 2
Pose the following question:

‘What’s the difference between being a member of a group and a member of a gang?’

Explain that this is what you are going to explore now.

In pairs, ask young people to come up with 10 similarities and 10 differences and write them onto sticky notes. Give them up to 15 minutes to complete the task and stick their ideas up on the wall in two separate areas.

These could include:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Similarities</th>
<th>Differences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A sense of belonging</td>
<td>Not breaking any laws in group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An identity</td>
<td>Gangs seen as outside society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared experiences</td>
<td>Unlikely to be harmed or harm others in a group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security / safety</td>
<td>Gang rivalry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>Can be hard to leave a gang</td>
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<tr>
<td>Something to do</td>
<td>Gang links to weapons</td>
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<tr>
<td>Loyalty</td>
<td>Negative media images of gangs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Respect</td>
<td>Perceptions by family / community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has rules</td>
<td>Disrespect for non-gang members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides role models</td>
<td>Harder to say no in a gang</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Once these have been stuck on the wall begin to cluster similar ideas together. As a whole group review suggestions, looking at things like the concept of respect and what it means within both contexts.

Example: respect

Gang = ‘respect’ can mean ‘feared’ based upon a reputation for aggressive behaviour / violence. Once gained, having the respect of gang members can provoke the need to preserve it, which can lead to more extreme behaviour. Being ‘disrespected’ is seen as a something worthy of punishment and revenge.

Group = ‘respect’ in this context is much more likely to mean respecting that people have differing points of view based on a range of things including faith, culture, gender and life experience and a right to be who they are without judgement. Showing respect would include listening, empathy and celebrating diversity.

Conclude that whilst there are similarities in what can be gained from both group membership and becoming part of a gang there are some fundamental differences. These include the increased risk of being harmed or getting involved in criminal activity, which could lead to a criminal record and other consequences that negatively impact on the life choices someone can make.
Activity 3
Give this definition of a gang to ensure a shared understanding:

‘The definition of a gang is a group of people with a shared interest, or who share a common identity.’ (BBC 2018^2)

The word ‘gang’ can mean different things to different people. It could be:
- a "crew" who breaks the law
- a criminal organisation in which the law is broken regularly
- a group of friends hanging around in the street, parks or shopping centres

Ask: ‘How might you know that someone is a member of a gang?’
Encourage discussions about how someone might be identified as belonging to one gang as opposed to another as well as any distinguishing behaviour and/or attitudes.

Record ideas that could include:
- Using the gang name as part of their identity
- Tags that members use to show territory
- Wearing colours
- Tattoo that members have
- Initiation ceremony
- Promotion of share beliefs (e.g. tagging slogans, use of flags, social media, YouTube videos)
- Support of share cause
- Music
- Language
- Codes

Point out that it’s not just young people that join gangs some adults do too. Membership can be generational with older family members having gang involvement or loyalties to gang members from previous associations.

Move on to look at some of the reasons why individuals join gangs. Explain that this is not necessarily the same as what they get out of it. Divide into small groups and give each group a set of Session 1: Activity 3 cards. Explain that on each of the cards is a reason for joining a gang. Their task is to read the card, discuss what’s on it and then agree whether they think this is the most likely reason or not. The cards should be ranked with the most likely at the top going down to the least. There is an extra card for young people to write down anything they think has been missed.

Allow 20 minutes for discussion and then bring the whole group back together to share ideas and opinions.

^2 http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/pshe_and_citizenship/pdf/mymurder_resources/handout4.pdf
Show the NSPPC film (available on YouTube https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=85&v=dYFw6kiRkus). In the film young people talk about their experiences of being in a gang, why they joined and how it affected their family.

At the end go back to the card activity and ask if this changes any of their assumptions or where they positioned the cards. If any of them want to move a card now they’ve heard the reasons given in the film encourage discussion about why.

**Review points**
- What have you learnt about individual, community and social identity?
- Give three similarities and three differences between belonging to a positive social group and a gang
- Why do young people join gangs?
- What risks are associated with gang membership?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Power and status</th>
<th>To make money</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shared interests</td>
<td>Fear of intimidation</td>
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<tr>
<td>To belong</td>
<td>Protection from rival gangs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boredom</td>
<td>To be respected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loyalty to friends</td>
<td>To fit in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer pressure</td>
<td>To be with partner</td>
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<tr>
<td>Excitement</td>
<td>?</td>
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SESSION THREE
Gangs, stereotypes and gender

Aim:
- To differentiate between gender based stereotypes and recorded evidence
- To consider the different risks and vulnerabilities associated with gangs for young men and young women
- To consider the potential consequences of gang membership

You will need: flipchart paper, marker pens, facilities to show infographic

Films: Channel 4 clip from the Grayson Perry programme ‘All Man’ series https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VB0EqEnadOc and the BBC3 documentary, ‘Britain’s toughest girl gangs’ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xHKccU2NYDQ

Time: 2 hours

Key phrases and words: gangs, stereotypes, discrimination, gender, peer exploitation, consequences

Icebreaker
Divide into small groups and task young people with drawing a ‘typical’ young person that belongs to a gang. Only allow 5 minutes for the task and encourage people to go with their first ideas. The drawing can be labelled to draw attention to key features that identify this person as a member of a gang. This could include:
- Where they live
- What they wear
- How they look
- What their home life is like
- What they do
- Who they are likely to be with

Call time and without sharing what has been drawn ask the following questions, asking a representative from each group to raise a hand if this is something they have drawn or written:

1. How many drew a young man?
2. How many drew the gang member wearing a hoodie?
3. How many drew or wrote something related to alcohol or drugs?
4. How many thought they were likely to live in social housing or in a deprived area?
5. How many thought they were unlikely to be in education, training or employment?
Now invite them to share pictures with the nearest group and to look at similarities and difference. It is likely that in addition to the stereotypes outlined above others including ethnicity will be highlighted.

Suggest that stereotypes like this are unhelpful, as they don’t show the full picture and can lead to prejudice and discrimination against some groups. For example black working class young men are far more likely to experience ‘Stop and Search’ by the police than their white peers but in 2017 white offenders had the highest conviction rate\(^3\).


**Activity 1**
This activity explores gender stereotypes and discriminatory attitudes and how this impacts on peer pressure to conform to gang culture.

Divide into small groups with a large sheet of paper and a pen for each person. Show the clip ‘Young Gang Members on What Makes a Real Man’ taken from the Grayson Perry programme ‘All Man’ on Channel 4. Part of a series, Grayson Perry explores contemporary masculinity, visiting ultra-male worlds to explore the changing lives and expectations of men in Britain today.

Whilst it is playing ask young people to notice and make notes on:

1. What they say about gang membership and the culture they share
2. Any gender stereotypes identified
3. Discriminatory attitudes to others expressed by the young men

When it has finished, invite each group to share their findings encouraging them to identify any stereotypes and how their discriminatory attitudes, for example to those living in another town, might lead to gang clashes / anti-social behaviour.

**Activity 2**
This follows on from the previous activity, this time looking at young women in gangs.

Show the BBC3 documentary made in 2017, ‘Britain’s toughest girls gangs’ (13.01 minutes).

**Tutor note:** Please be aware that the young women in this film talk about sexual exploitation and it contains frank and graphic conversations so please check that it is appropriate for your group.

Afterwards facilitate a whole group discussion that asks:

1. Do you think the documentary is representative of ‘girl gangs’? Why / why not?
2. How are they different to the way young men in gangs are portrayed?
3. The documentary says that loneliness is a big factor in the choice to join a gang. Why do you think this is?
4. Do you see the young women as victims or perpetrators? Why?
5. What else could be done to support these young women and discourage others from making similar choices?

**Activity 3**

Divide the young people into small groups and give out flipchart paper and markers.

Read out the following arrest scenario to set the scene. Write tasks a) and b) on a large sheet of paper and display it where everyone can see.

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**Arrest scenario**

This young person has been arrested in connection with gang related crime. They are charged with assault and intimidation and have been bailed to appear in court in two weeks time.

You will shortly be given an extract from the police statement that they made. They say this explains why they got involved in the gang and criminal activity and want it taken into account in court.

Your task is to read the statement and assess:

a) How much you think it explains their choices and why
b) If you think it should influence any sentence or fine they receive.

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Give each group an Activity 3 court statement to study. They should read it and then discuss making notes under the headings ‘Reasons for’ and ‘Reasons against’ before deciding if they think their application to have this submitted to the court should be upheld or if they think it should be denied.

Allow 20 minutes for discussion and then bring everyone back together. Invite each group in turn to read out their statement and then present their findings ending with their decision to deny or uphold the request.

Once everyone has presented and time has been allowed for questions point out that all of the names assigned to the statements are gender neutral, meaning that they could be from a young man or woman. Ask each group to say whether they assumed the request they were assessing was male or female. Make a note of how many of each gender to count up at the end.
Ask:

- What led you to assume the person making the statement was male or female?
- What assumptions did you make because of this?
- How did it impact on your discussions?
- Would this have been different had you known the gender? Why / why not?

Conclude that although far more young men than women are reported to be in a gang, women and girls can be linked to gang-related criminal activity. In addition to the all-female gangs previously looked at, research suggests that young women and girls often enter gang life whilst still at school and are likely to be introduced by boyfriends who are already involved.

According to Home Office reports their role within the gang is not just as perpetrators of crime but also victims:

- Carrying or storing weapons and/or drugs as young men are more likely to be searched
- Committing or inciting violence
- Sexual exploitation and as victims of physical and sexual violence

**Extension activity**

*‘By the time she was 14, Nequela Whittaker had been arrested for actual bodily harm (ABH) and grievous bodily harm (GBH).’*

To read about her journey from bullied child to violent gang member and now respected youth worker go to [https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/stories-43377380](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/stories-43377380)

*Everybody thinks it’s only boys who join gangs* (Nequela Whittaker 20.03.18)

Or hear her story ‘Off the rails’ on BBC Radio 4 ‘Woman’s Hour’ podcast [https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0610ldy](https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0610ldy)

Nequela is open about the risk factors that led to her gang-related offending, including a difficult home life, that led to a nine year prison sentence and how she turned her life around. Now working with vulnerable girls and young women at risk of grooming and sexual exploitation, she offers a frank account of what it’s really like and her struggle to make positive life choices.

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Session Three Activity 3: Court statements

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<tr>
<th>Statement 1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘I didn’t fit in so got in with a group of known troublemakers for protection, to become someone who wasn’t a victim of homophobic bullying any longer.’</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sam (age 17)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement 2</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘It was expected of me because of where I live. It made life easier just to conform to the stereotype.’</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jess (age 14)</td>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement 3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘My brother does it so everyone assumed I was a drug dealer too. In the end I thought I might as well make some money as I was accused anyway.’</td>
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<td>Jet (age 19)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Statement 4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘I got in with older boys from the estate, I liked the culture, the music, the money – then I found myself in something I couldn’t get out of.’</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sasha (age 16)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Statement 5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Everyone looked to me to sort it out as I’m the tallest, and then I had a reputation to protect. I don’t want to lose face but I wish things were different.’</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charley (age 15)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Statement 6</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘I was put in care when I was five and never saw my mum. I was lonely and being with a gang gave me a new family that cared for me.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nat (age 16)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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SESSION FOUR
Who’s responsible?

Aim:
- To raise awareness about different types of gangs
- To consider what makes some young people more vulnerable to gangs than others
- To consider the responsibility that parents / carers have for keeping their children away from gangs
- To encourage personal responsibility for choices made


Film: The Liverpool Echo [https://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/news/liverpool-news/modern-day-slavery-warning-video-14856953](https://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/news/liverpool-news/modern-day-slavery-warning-video-14856953)

Time: 90 minutes

Key phrases and words: vulnerable, risk factors, parental and personal responsibility

Icebreaker
Use this 'feet first' activity to reinforce learning from the previous sessions about identity and gang membership and consider some of popular misconceptions about gangs.

Read out the following statements, asking young people to move to one side of the room if they think it is true, the other side if they think it is false or to move in between the two poles if they are not sure. Encourage discussion in between each one.

Points to make:
- Most young people do not belong to a gang and never will do
- Being in a gang does not automatically protect you from harm. In fact there is research that shows it makes you more likely to become a victim or target for crime.
- Some researchers think that there are specific risks and vulnerabilities that make a young person more susceptible to gangs than their peers. However just because you are at risk doesn't mean you will definitely join a gang.

Icebreaker Statements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Over 46% of young people in the UK say they belong to a gang</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>False: according to the Centre for Social Justice's report <em>Dying to Belong</em> only 6% of young people (under 19) say they belong to a gang.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not all gangs are involved in crime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>True</em>: a group of friends that hang round together can be described as a ‘gang’ but the term is often used to describe those involved in criminal activity. This can include carrying a weapon and fighting with other gangs over things like territory, a perceived lack of respect or linked to crimes like drug dealing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Being in a gang is against the law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>False</em>: being in a gang isn't against the law. But being involved with illegal activities could be an offence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>In England and Wales the age of criminal responsibility is 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>False</em>: it is 10 years old in England and Wales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Research shows members of a gang (with a name and a territory) are far more likely to be victims of crime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>True</em>: according to the Metropolitan Police*[^5]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Some young people are more vulnerable to gangs than others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>True</em>: research suggests that this is true and that some factors make it more likely. In Activity 1 we will look at this in more detail.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Activity 1**

Read out this quote from an interview with an ex-gang member talking about why he got involved:

‘When your basic needs are not met you are likely to go elsewhere to find them. My basic needs were not met by society or at home. I got them from these people who were not good for me.’[^6]

Ask:

What basic needs do you think he is talking about?
*For example: love, loyalty, respect, money, culture and identity*

Why are they considered important?
*For example: to feel good about yourself, to have something to do and someone to do it with and belonging.*

Show the short video (6.04 minutes) posted on the Liverpool Echo website (link given above). The film shows a 15-year-old young man’s involvement

[^5]: [https://safe.met.police.uk/gangs_and_violence/consequences_and_the_law.html](https://safe.met.police.uk/gangs_and_violence/consequences_and_the_law.html)
with a gang that deals drugs and the difficulties he has when he wants to get out.

Divide into small groups and give each group flipchart paper and marker pens. Ask a volunteer from each group to draw the outline of a large gingerbread person in the middle of the paper. Set them the task of reflecting on the film to identify factors that made this particular young man more vulnerable to targeting by an older gang member. External factors can be written outside the gingerbread person and internal factors on the inside.

Once they exhaust ideas for this part of the activity invite them to add their own suggestions about what makes a young person at risk of gang membership. Encourage them to use their own ideas as well as those they may have seen in real life, online or on TV documentaries like BBC2’s ‘Gang Life’ and ‘Violent Britain’ on ITV. Suggestions could include:

**External:** local area / housing, attitude to crime by community, hanging around with older peers, peers involved with offending, poverty, education, peer group, parental substance misuse, lack of parental boundaries / too strict boundaries, money / poverty, lack of education, training and employment etc.

**Internal:** impulsive behaviour, challenging relationships at home, self-esteem, assertiveness skills, mental health, substance misuse etc.

Allow time for discussions and then invite each group to present their findings back to the rest of the group.

**Activity 2**

On the link to the Liverpool Echo page is the headline, ‘The video every parent must watch on how drugs gangs target children’

Ask:
1. Do you agree that ‘every parent’ should watch this, or something similar? Why, why not?
2. What responsibility do you think parents have to prevent their children getting involved with gangs?
3. How much influence do you think they have over the choices their child makes?

Point out that parents have a responsibility for their child until they are 18. Examples of parental responsibilities include:
- providing a home
- protecting the child and looking after their property
- making any decisions about medical treatment and education
- financially providing for the child
- naming the child and agreeing to any name change
- disciplining the child.

Define ‘parent’ as any adult that has parental responsibility for the child, which may be one or more biological parent’s but could also mean a foster carer,
older sibling, grandparents or other family member or a corporate parent like a social worker for those in the care of a local authority.

Divide the main group into groups of four, giving each group paper, pens and one of the ‘Activity 2 case study scenarios’. The concerns shared by the different parents’ may or may not be founded but the situation is causing arguments and stress at home. The task for each group is to write a response, advising the parent(s) how to resolve the situation. To do this they will need to:

a) identify any risk factors for the young person
b) consider what the consequences might be for both the young person and the parent if nothing is done
c) advise the parent(s) what to do next

Invite each group in turn to read both the scenario and their advice and then ask the rest of the group:

- How practical is this advice?
- How do you think the child / young person will respond?
- Do you think it will reduce the risks?
- Is there anything else that could be done to reduce tension, keep everyone safe and resolve the situation?

Advice for parents about talking to their children about gangs could include:
- Reminding their child that they do have a choice, even if it doesn't feel like it
- Staying calm
- Not making accusations or threats
- Asking questions and showing interest in the answers
- Listening without interrupting
- Trying to understand the situation from their point of view and why they have joined the gang
- Asking what they can do to help, rather than telling them what to do
- Pointing out the risks and consequences of carrying / using weapons
- Presenting choices of what to do next
- Offering to help find appropriate support, including from the police
- Supporting decisions made
- Working with them to find alternatives to being in the gang

For more advice for parents go to the NSPCC website. The NSPCC also has a gangs helpline and information for young people on their website.

**Activity 3**

Bring young people together in a seated circle. Explain that they will be looking at a range of gang related scenarios that will need an assertive approach to make a positive choice. Suggest that this can be especially

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difficult when it involves standing up those you are close to and consider to be friends.

Give everyone an Activity 3 ‘taking responsibility scenario’, but at this stage ask that they do not read it. In turn invite each person to read theirs and then respond, explaining how someone could take responsibility for his or her actions and make a positive choice.

Explore attitudes to loyalty, betrayal and blame using these prompts:
- How easy is it to stand against the crowd? What makes it harder / easier?
- If you are paid to do something should you do it, even if you know it’s wrong?
- Is ‘carrying out orders’ ever a justification for breaking the law?
- Is it reasonable to expect complete loyalty from a friend?
- Can there be a ‘collective blame’ when something goes wrong?

Facilitate a short discussion that moves on to look at the issue of passing the blame and taking responsibility for our own actions. Discuss the difficulties involved in standing up for what you believe is right, especially if this goes against what others are doing.

**Extension activity**
Let young people know about local support agencies they can access if they are concerned about gangs or peer pressure to engage in criminal activity.

Set the online task of finding National organisations that offer advice and support. These could include:

Childline  
https://www.childline.org.uk

Grow Against Violence (GAV)  
http://growingagainstviolence.org.uk

Run Away Helpline  
https://www.runawayhelpline.org.uk/advice/gangs/

Metropolitan Police Safe  
https://safe.met.police.uk/gangs_and_violence/done_something_youre_worrie d_about.html

The Mix  

YC Hertfordshire  
https://www.ychertfordshire.org/advice-and-support/
SESSION FOUR Activity 2: Case study

Scenario 1

**Nick (father) and Sunni (aged 15)**

Nick is very worried about his 15-year-old son, Sunni. Always a good football player who played at county level until a few months ago, Sunni now has no interest in sports and gets angry if Nick asks him why. Instead, Sunni spends most of his time roaming about with a large group of young men that Nick doesn’t like.

Nick says: ‘I don’t know the lads, but they have a reputation on the estate for being troublemakers. I’ve been told that most of them have a criminal record and I don’t want Sunni wasting his life hanging about with them.’

Sunni says: ‘I don’t know why Dad hates them so much but he gets angry if I even mention their names. I’ve decided it’s easier not to tell him where I’m going than telling him and having a row. It’s my life and I can live it how I choose.’

Scenario 2

**Laura (Foster carer) and Evie (Aged 16)**

Laura is concerned about Evie’s much older boyfriend, Will. She sees him every night, coming home very late smelling of alcohol and refusing to say where she’s been. Laura has heard that Will is part of a gang and that he was arrested for an assault on another young man, but Evie swears Will didn’t do it.

Laura says: ‘Evie is constantly looking at her phone – it’s like she can’t even stand up if he hasn’t told her she can. I’ve tried talking to her but she doesn’t want to listen, she’s obsessed with him.’

Evie says: ‘Will treats me so well, he really cares for me – more than anyone else ever has. He looks after me and I just want to be with him. Laura is just jealous because I have someone that loves me and she doesn’t. He talks to me like an adult and I’m sick of being treated like a kid.’
SESSION FOUR Activity 3: Taking responsibility scenarios

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your friend had an argument with someone, which nearly led to a fight. They expect you to go with them to seek revenge, regardless of the consequences.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your friends are chanting racist abuse at a group of young people. You don't agree with the message but feel pressured to join in.</td>
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<tr>
<td>You know who is dealing drugs to younger children. You want to stop it but don't want to get in trouble with the gang he works for.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Your brother comes home with blood all over his clothes, which clearly isn't his. He asks you to say that he was at home with you all night.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Your friend never has any money. You keep lending cash, which they have not paid back. Now they want to borrow more.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pressure is being put on you to steal alcohol from home. You don't think this is such a good idea but don't want to lose face amongst your peers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Your friend has 'borrowed' their mum's car. They only have a provisional licence but ask you to get in the car and go for a drive.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Your boyfriend is putting pressure on you to keep a package at your house for safekeeping. He says the police are less likely to find it there.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You borrowed money and are being pressured to pay it back, along with high interest. When you say you can’t pay they threaten you with violence.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your foster parent tells you about a local street robbery. You know who is responsible but have been sworn to secrecy.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Your friends are responsible for graffiti in the local park. The police stop you but the only way to prove your innocence is to tell them who really did it.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Some young women are exchanging sexual favours for drugs. You think it’s wrong but if you say something you are likely to lose their trust.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You are the youngest in your peer group. A robbery is planned and because of your size they are counting on you to get in through a side window.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your sister’s ex is bribing you to deliver drugs to a gang in the next town. If you don’t they will post intimate pictures of her all over social media.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You had a fight and your dad threatens to find the other person involved and get revenge. You are too scared to tell him you started it.</td>
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SESSION FIVE
County Lines

Aim:
- To raise awareness about vulnerable young people targeted by gangs to deal drugs outside of the area they live in, called 'County Lines'
- To consider the impact that poor choices can have on family, friends and the wider community.
- To explore the potential short and longer term consequences of choices made.

You will need: flipchart paper, marker pens and online access for the research activity

Films: Trapped – County Lines
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pLhGpS1f-F0

Time: 90 minutes

Key phrases and words: ‘County Lines’, vulnerable, exploited, choice and consequences, positive role model

Tutor note: Activity 3 provides an example of a young man who was involved in gangs and crime but went on to become a sporting hero, providing a positive role model to other young people. Other examples can be used but Anthony Joshua has been chosen because he comes from Watford so his story has a local connection. To learn more about him in advance go to his website https://www.anthonyjoshua.com/my-story/

Reiterate confidentiality boundaries before starting this session and be clear on reporting procedures should a disclosure be made.

Icebreaker
Ask if anyone knows what the term ‘County Lines’ means and listen to responses to assess levels of knowledge and understanding within the group.

Definition: 'County Lines' is a criminal strategy first identified in 2014. It describes the approach taken by gangs originating from large urban areas, including London and Manchester, who travel to locations in county or coastal towns to sell class ‘A’ drugs. This includes reports of towns in Hertfordshire. Gangs typically recruit and exploit children and vulnerable young people to courier drugs and cash as they are less likely to be suspected of breaking the law and the real criminals can remain anonymous. They also use local property as a base for their activities, and this often involves taking over the home of a vulnerable adult, for example care leavers, young parents and those with disabilities who can feel unable to challenge them. This is known as ‘cuckooing’.

It is reported that the name ‘county lines’ refers to a single phone number used to order drugs, which is operated outside of the area, making it harder to trace those responsible.
For more information about this go to the Youth Justice Resource Hub [https://yjresourcehub.uk/yjb-effective-practice/youth-justice-kits/item/358-county-lines.html](https://yjresourcehub.uk/yjb-effective-practice/youth-justice-kits/item/358-county-lines.html)

**Activity 1**

Ask each person to share an experience of being asked to do something they did not want to do with the person sitting next to them. This could be at home / school / college or something that happened within a friendship group.

For each example, encourage each person to explain to their partner why they didn’t want to do it, how it felt to be asked and the tactics the person asking used to try to persuade them, especially if it became clear they didn’t really want to say yes.

Persuasion tactics could include:

- Asking nicely
- Gentle persuasion
- Repeating the request until the person gives in
- Emotional blackmail
- Bullying
- Bribery
- Telling them they will be in trouble if they don’t
- Offering a reward
- Threatening to withhold friendship / love
- Coercion
- Threats of violence

Write in one column on flipchart paper the name of the task and in another the methods of persuasion used. Once everyone has contributed go back to the list and ask young people to score each persuasion tactic as acceptable, ‘A’ or unacceptable, ‘U’. Review and compare answers and ask: ‘What are the ‘driver’s’ i.e. the things that make it more likely that someone will say yes?’

1. Personal gain
2. Loyalty
3. Friendship
4. To belong / fit in with a group
5. To be loved
6. To be admired
7. To be left alone

Suggest that these are all powerful drivers that can be used in both positive and negative ways.

Ask:
If you give in and say yes, does it make it harder to say no next time? Why / why not?
Move on to look at more serious examples of someone going along with something they later regret. This could include gang crime and county lines.

Conclude that there are many different forms of persuasion and that it is not always easy to say no, especially if you like or respect the other person. This can be even harder in situations where not complying could result in threats or violence.

**Activity 2**
Divide into three groups and give out paper and pens and allocate them a different character to focus on. These are:
   a) the young man
   b) his girlfriend
   c) his mother

Show the film – Trapped - County Lines (8.28 minutes)

As they watch the film each group should make notes on what they see from the perspective of their allocated character on the following:

What were the risk factors that made this character vulnerable?
What positives did they have in their life?
At what point did things change for them?
They all say they had ‘no choice’. Do you think this is true? How / why?

Point out that although the film is just a story and not based on real life it does demonstrate how choices made by one person can go on to affect everyone around them.

Back in their small groups ask young people to think of more positive choices that:
   • the young man could have made
   • his girlfriend could have made
   • his mother could have made

Then to mind map the likely consequences of these to a conclusion where the young man and his family are able to start again free of gang involvement. This might not be an easy task so allow as much time as required to resolve the situation.

If someone is concerned about or has information about ‘County Lines’ they can report it directly to the police or anonymously to Crime Stoppers by calling 0800 555 111 or go online to complete and submit an anonymous form at [https://crimestoppers-uk.org/campaigns-media/campaigns/drug-gangs-and-county-lines](https://crimestoppers-uk.org/campaigns-media/campaigns/drug-gangs-and-county-lines)
Activity 3
Write the headline below on a large sheet of paper and display it where all of the young people will be able to see it.

Anthony Joshua was the bad boy from a Watford council estate. Now he takes on Wladimir Klitschko with golden fists

MailOnline 29 April 2017

Explain that so far we have been looking at young people who feel trapped in gang life and gang related crime but this person proves that it is possible to make different choices and turn your life around. Read out the headline and ask who knows anything about Anthony Joshua. In pairs, set young people the task of researching him to discover how he managed to achieve so much, despite being given a prison sentence. In particular ask them to find out:

How he got into crime?
What influenced him to change?
How he did it?

Alternatively ask each pair to research and then create either a presentation using PowerPoint or to curate an Instagram or Pinterest board based around the same questions.

Invite each group to share their findings and then facilitate a discussion that considers how his story could provide a positive role model for others.

Extension activity
Using the role model suggested in the previous activity or choosing another, task young people with designing posters with an anti-gang crime message for younger peers.

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SESSION SIX
Knife crime

Aim:
- To explore why some young people carry knives
- To raise awareness about the consequences of carrying a knife
- To give information about reporting knife crime

You will need: sticky notes (in three different colours), pens, paper and sets of Session 5 Activity 3: Role-play cards

Film: BBC News ‘We have to walk round with knives’
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AUFNzLq3Cm4

Time: 90 minutes

Key phrases and words: crime, weapon, law and consequences

Icebreaker
Give each young person three sticky notes and a pen. Ask them to number the sticky notes 1-3. Then, ask them to write on the three weapons that they think are most popular with young people, with ‘1’ being most popular and ‘3’ less so.

Once done direct young people to stick them on the wall in designated zones 1, 2 and 3. This will provide a visual representation of the weapons considered most popular within the group, which tends to be knives.

Divide into small groups with flipchart paper and pens and ask the young people to discuss and make notes on answers to the following questions:

1. What evidence did you base your suggestions for the most popular weapons on?
2. Is it from a reliable source?
3. Where else have you seen information about weapon crime?

Activity 2
Use the tutor notes to facilitate the Session 5 PowerPoint presentation.

Work through Slides 1-4 to explore why a young person might choose to carry a knife and reasons not to. Then show the short film from BBC News ‘We have to walk around with knives’ (8.36 minutes). Those featured in the film say they ‘have to’ carry weapons to feel safe.

Ask:
‘Do you believe this is true?’

Return to Slide 5, which explains that if you carry a knife you are much more likely to use it and to get stabbed yourself. Statistics show that one in three knife-related injuries are caused by the victim’s own knife.
Facilitate activities until Slide 9 and then stop.

**Activity 3**  
This is a role-play activity to consider how to react if a friend or sibling is carrying a knife. The aim is to make them reconsider and understand the risks and potential consequences before hopefully making a different choice.

Divide young people into groups of three. Each will take at least one turn at being the person with the knife, the person persuading them to re-think and the observer, who will offer feedback afterwards.

Give each group a set of the Session 5 Activity 3: Role-play cards. Give each scenario 3 minutes to try and resolve then a minute or two to receive feedback and swap roles.

Once all of the scenarios have been explored bring the whole group back together and discuss:

a) the most effective strategies for challenging the choice to carry a knife  
b) the biggest barriers to encouraging someone to reconsider

Point out that:
- Most young people don’t carry a knife, even if the majority do in that group  
- The increased risk of getting stabbed if you carry a knife  
- If you carry a knife and use it, even in self-defence, you could be convicted with aggravated assault, attempted murder / murder or manslaughter, which could carry a life sentence.

Return to PowerPoint to show the final three slides.
### Session 6 Activity 3: Role-play cards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“I carry it for protection – it makes me feel safer”</td>
<td>“No one will start on me if they know I have a knife”</td>
<td>“Most of my friends carry a knife”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I’d only ever use it in self-defence”</td>
<td>“I wouldn’t ever use it, it’s just for show”</td>
<td>“It’s only a kitchen knife, not a real weapon”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I carry it for my friend as I’m less likely to be arrested”</td>
<td>“If I got caught I would just tell the police it’s for fishing’</td>
<td>“It’s not as bad a carrying a gun”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I hide it so well that no one is going to see it”</td>
<td>“It’s to show loyalty to the friends I hang around with”</td>
<td>“I have no choice, it’s something I have to do”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SESSION SEVEN
Gun crime

Aim:
- To explore feelings and attitudes to firearms
- To raise awareness about UK gun laws
- To discuss the potential consequences of carrying a gun
- To consider the effectiveness of gun amnesties.

You will need: sets of Session 6 Activity 1 Report it cards,

Film: Metropolitan Police video #GiveUpYourGun "Carrying a gun is my choice" https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=54&v=a4WPunq6y0

Time: 90 minutes

Key phrases and words: guns, firearms, Serious Violence Strategy (2018), shooting and consequences

Icebreaker
Start by asking: ‘Is it ever acceptable to use a gun?’
Call out the following examples, asking young people to raise their right hand if they think the gun use described is acceptable and valid and to keep their hands down if they don’t. Explain that some raise ethical or political questions where opinion may vary and encourage discussion where there are differences of opinion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Farmers shooting rabbits and other vermin on their land</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Deer stalking weekends on a country estate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Armed police in a hostage situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Soldiers in the army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Shooting targets on a firing range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Clay pigeon shooting in a competition</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ask: What makes these examples of gun use different to guns used in criminal activity or on the streets?

This should include:
- Having a licence for the gun
- Being taught how to shoot
- Using the gun legally
- Being accountable for shots fired
Point out that the use of firearms in the UK is tightly controlled by legislation and that the country has one of the lowest gun homicide rates in the world.

**Activity 1**

Divide into groups of four and give each group a set of the Session 6 Activity 1 'Report it Cards'. On each card is the outline of a weapon related offence. The task is to read and discuss each scenario and then place it on a continuum of ‘Most likely to report’ and ‘Least likely to report’. Explain that for each you will be asking one group to share the thinking behind their decision before the rest of the group is invited to comment.

Allow up 20 minutes for discussion and then invite feedback from each group, taking it in turns to take the lead in explaining their decisions about each of the different scenarios.

- Which crimes are you most likely to report? What would make it more / less likely?
  *For example: more likely = if you felt someone you knew was at risk, if the threat was applicable to whatever groups you belong to, if it was more likely to result in a death etc. Less likely = if it wasn't something you consider dangerous, if you were not affected, if you were too scared or felt intimidated etc.*

- What might happen if it is not reported?
  *For example: it could escalate, it gives the message that it is acceptable, vulnerable young people could be targeted, more people could join in and someone could be harmed or even killed.*

**Where to report threats of crime:**

- Online threats, images of illegal activity etc should be reported to the service provider.
- If you think that someone you know, or someone in your area is carrying a gun report it to local police on 101.
- In an emergency dial 999

**Activity 2**

Show the Metropolitan Police video #GiveUpYourGun "Carrying a gun is my choice"

Ask:

In the film the young man repeats that it is ‘his choice’ to carry a gun. Is he right? Why / Why not?

Who else does his choices impact on?

*Discuss the role of his girlfriend in the film and his expectations of her, impact on family and friends, impact on other person involved in the shooting and their family and friends etc.*
Explain that one strategy that police forces across the UK have been trying is to hold a ‘gun amnesty’. This means that for a set amount of time anyone with a gun they don't have a licence for can hand in their weapon without any prosecuted for possessing a weapon at the point of its surrender. This is unlikely to encourage everyone to come forward, especially anyone using a gun for criminal or violent activity, but has been deemed successful.

In pairs, set young people the task of going online to research amnesties that have happened over the last two years to find out which have been most successful and why. They should make notes as they go along as well as writing down which authority they have been looking at to see how success varied in different parts of the country. From here they should select the one they feel has been most successful in terms of numbers of weapons received and positive feedback ready to present back to the rest of the group.

Invite each group to share their findings using the following questions to prompt discussion between presentations:

- Do gun amnesties work? How / why?
- What do you think prevents more weapons being handed in?
- Do you think that more gun amnesties would encourage more people to surrender theirs? How / why?
### SESSION SEVEN Activity 1: Report it cards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A gun threat on the Twitter feed of a female MP</th>
<th>A threat to shoot a footballer in the legs if he doesn't play better shouted during a match</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A photo on Instagram of guns and knives next to a piece of paper with a mobile number on it</td>
<td>A comment under an online news report supporting a terrorist gun attack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructions on how to convert an air rifle to live ammunition on the dark web</td>
<td>A music video featuring guns and sexual images</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing someone at school boasting that they have access to a gun</td>
<td>A YouTube clip of a gang shooting in America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A live petition on Facebook to make possession of a hand gun legal in the UK</td>
<td>A family member who has an old firearm from the war hidden away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A meme of someone holding a gun inciting gang violence</td>
<td>Unsubstantiated claims that a local gang uses guns to intimidate non-members</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SESSION EIGHT
Reducing weapon crime

Aim:
- To raise awareness about UK laws in place to protect people from weapon crime
- To discuss the potential consequences of carrying a weapon
- To consider what else could be done to encourage young people not to carry weapons.

You will need: sets of Session 7 Icebreaker Activity cards, Session 7 Activity 1 PowerPoint presentation, Session 7 Activity 2 Anti-Weapon Crime Policies

Time: 2 hours

Key phrases and words: Serious Violence Strategy (2018), crime, weapon, law and consequences

Icebreaker
In groups of three, ask young people to discuss the gang related crimes outlined on the Session 7 Icebreaker Activity cards and then rank them 1-7 with the most serious being 1 and less serious 7.

Serious = most impact on victim(s) and / or society.

Call time and invite each group to share the order they have placed cards in and why. Point out that ‘Grave’ crimes, for example rape, murder and aggravated assault will not go to youth court, because the offence is too serious and it will be tried at Crown Court by a jury.

Activity 1
Begin by telling young people that homicides and gun and knife crime account for just 1% of all recorded UK crime, but their impact on society is huge. Because of this the government has made tackling serious violence a top priority, and in April 2018 set a new Serious Violence Strategy backed with £40m of Home Office funding.

Use the tutor notes to facilitate activities and discussions to raise awareness about the law and the strategies currently in place to reduce weapon crime using the Session 7 PowerPoint presentation.

Activity 2
Divide the young people into groups of five. Ask each to nominate a leader who for this exercise is now the Government Minister for Anti-weapon Crime. The rest of the group will be Government Advisors. Together, their task is to debate and agree a policy from those outlined on the ‘Session 7, Activity 2 Anti-Weapon Crime Policies’ that will tackle youth weapon crime and begin to reduce the numbers of young people carrying knives and guns. There is a blank space for them to come up with their own policy too. The Minister
should chair the debate and if the group cannot reach consensus this person holds the deciding vote.

Allow up to 45 minutes for debate and a decision to be made, encouraging each ‘ministry’ to consider how the strategy might be implemented and why they think it will work.

Then bring the whole group back together. Ask each ministry to share their policy and the reasons that they have chosen it using the prompt questions below to spark debate:

- How will this tackle youth weapon crime?
- What are the pros and cons of this policy?
- What needs to happen for this strategy to be successful?
- How should the policy be implemented to get maximum ‘buy in’ from young people?
- What else could be done?

**Activity 3**
Still in the same groups as for Activity 2, set young people the task of designing an anti-weapon poster for younger peers. This should raise awareness about the potential consequences of serious violence and encourage them not to carry weapons. It should also have details of how to report weapon crime and where to go for local advice and support.

The posters can be presented to each other and then displayed to raise awareness of the issues after this project ends.

**Extension activity**
Develop this into a wider project where the most effective designs are printed and shared with schools as part of a peer education project.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criminal damage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intimidation with a knife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug dealing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fighting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hate crime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrying a gun without a license</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackmail</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### SESSION 8, Activity 2 Anti-Weapon Crime Policies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policy A</strong></td>
<td>Invest in a secondary school education strategy to teach young people about the impact of carrying a dangerous weapon and strategies to resist peer pressure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policy B</strong></td>
<td>Make the consequences for being caught in possession of a weapon tougher so that young people face an automatic sentence of five years in a young offender institute if they are caught.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policy C</strong></td>
<td>Put the responsibility onto parents and carers of under 18’s by making them face a large fine and an automatic parenting order if those they have responsibility for are caught in possession of a weapon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policy D</strong></td>
<td>Sentence any young person arrested for carrying a weapon to work for a year voluntarily in a hospital with the victims of serious violence so they can see the consequences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policy E</strong></td>
<td>Hold weapon amnesties in all areas for weapons to be handed in without consequence. Any young person caught with one after that date to be sent to a young offender institute for two years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policy F</strong></td>
<td>Any young person caught in possession of a weapon to be put on a Weapon Offender List. They would need to check in monthly to the police and be subject to random weapon tests where their home and person could be searched.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policy G</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
