



## Knife Information and Advice for Parents and Carers



Whilst many young people do not carry knives, many also do! This is certainly a topic worthy of a conversation between you and your child as difficult as it may seem; adults have a key role to play in helping young people make the right choices.

This leaflet contains practical advice for parents/carers to support them to reduce the risk of their child carrying a knife; advising what to look for, how to speak about the topic and who to contact if you need more help.

### The Law

#### It is illegal to:

- Sell a knife of any kind to anyone under 18 years old
- Carry a knife in a public place without good reason
- Carry, buy or sell any type of banned knife (see list below)
- Use of any knife in a threatening way (even a legal knife, such as a pocket/Swiss army knife)

To prepare you to talk to your child about knives, refer to the points below:

- It is illegal to carry any knife with intent to use it against another person, even for self-defence
- Police can and will search someone if they believe they are carrying a knife. Police and school staff can also search young people for weapons at school.
- Carrying a knife can lead to arrest, a court hearing and possibly a criminal record or prison sentence. This can have a huge impact on a young person's future; having a criminal record can affect employment, going to university or college or even travelling to some countries.

### What can you do?

As a result of exposure and access to media, young people are more aware of knives than ever before; film, gaming, music often glorifies knives and the idea of carrying one, as such young people may face increased pressure to carry one or to readily accept that their peers do.

It is highly likely your child has talked about knives with friends, heard a story about a youth who carried a knife or read a tragic real knife news story... So what can you do to help your child?



**TALK:** Speak with your child to discover what they know about carrying a knife; discuss their views and opinions and give advice to help them to make safe choices.

Your child may be unsure or unwilling to talk to you about this, be persistent; explain your duty as their parent to keep them safe by addressing issues risks and danger.

Make your child aware of the following points:

#### If you choose to carry a knife.....:

- Gives you a false sense of security
- You could arm your attacker, increasing the risk of being stabbed or injured
- You are breaking the law

#### Advice...

- You always have a choice!
- Do not ever carry a knife
- Walking away from a knife confrontation
- Don't give in to peer pressure

**Explain:** Working together increases the chances of you staying away from serious harm and not breaking the law; reassure you child that they can always speak to you if they have an issue.

## Information for Parents and Carers



**LOOK OUT:** Young people commonly decide to start carrying a knife because they feel threatened; look out for signs that may suggest your child is feeling this way.

Be aware of the following signs and triggers:

- Not happy at school/not wanting to go
- They've recently been a victim of theft/bullying/mugging
- Having a different network of friends who may be older than your child

Remind your child that they should always walk away if confronted with any threat of violence

## Support to help you give support



There are numerous organisations to provide help to parents concerned about their child. You can contact your local authority for a list of local groups and organisations in your area who can offer advice and information.

Below is a list of national organisations who can offer help and advice

**KnifeCrimes.org:** an online knife crime resource offering advice and support; includes a forum to share and read views from parents and experts on knife crime in the UK. Visit [www.knifecrimes.org](http://www.knifecrimes.org)

**Parentline Plus:** a national charity that works for and with parents to give advice on all aspects of parenting. Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Call free on 0808 800 22 22 or access the website [www.parentlineplus.org.uk](http://www.parentlineplus.org.uk)

**Victim Support:** a national charity can help you and your child if they have been a victim of knife crime. [www.victimsupport.org](http://www.victimsupport.org) or call 0845 30 30 900

**Hampshire Police:** to find details of your local team and find out more about any youth work they are doing in your area visit [www.hampshire.police.uk](http://www.hampshire.police.uk) or call 101

If you would like to find out more information about knife possession, visit the government website at [www.direct.gov.uk/talkaboutknives](http://www.direct.gov.uk/talkaboutknives)

## Reporting Crime



If you or your child knows of someone who carries a knife, you can report them anonymously using crime stoppers or fearless



Contact Hampshire Constabulary on 999 if you or your child is at immediate risk of harm

## Top Tips to Keep Your Child Safe

1. Talk to your child
2. Reassure them they can come to at anytime
3. Watch out for signs and triggers
4. Know where they are and who they are with
5. Pay attention to their belongings – they may be hiding something
6. Inform them of how to anonymously report a person they know to carry a knife
7. Make sure they know how to get support when and is needed
8. Encourage your child to get involved in positive activities and interests - keep them focussed and off the streets to reduce risk of harm and crime