



**a guide to keeping
safe and finding help**

KNIVES DON'T MAKE YOU SAFE

Knife Crime isn't as common as some people think but it does happen. Knife crime can affect everyone, not just people in gangs.

Some people carry weapons like knives to feel protected, because of peer pressure or to feel powerful.

If you have a weapon you might not always plan to use it - whether you use the weapon or not, it is still illegal.

- Police have the power to stop and search you if they think you or your friends have a weapon
- You could be arrested or go to prison for carrying, buying or selling a weapon
- Situations involving weapons can get out of control very easily and you might not have time to think about your actions
- Some young people carry knives to protect themselves and 'keep safe' but if you carry a knife you are much more likely to use it and to get stabbed yourself

- Across the UK, 99% of 10-29 year olds DO NOT carry a knife
- Nearly half of people who carry knives have been injured by their own weapon
- If you carry a knife or weapon, you're more likely to be targeted by people who want to hurt you

The consequences and dangers of knife carrying are real, but it's never too late to make the decision to live knife free. Real stories about real people affected by knife crime:

It all flipped when I went to secondary school. Some friends started messing around with knives, and I just followed the wrong crowd. It just got to a point where it was like, "why am I following these people?" I was looking over my shoulder, sweating all the time. I didn't want to live like that. That's why I put it down.

https://www.knifefree.co.uk/story/_aaron/



When I was 15, I saw someone I knew get stabbed repeatedly right in front of me by a group of guys. I heard later that he was killed in the attack. This affected me very deeply and I began to think about the risks of carrying a knife. I swore then that I would never pick up a knife, and decided to stay away from friends who carried. It wasn't an easy decision, but I felt I had no other option after seeing how quickly things had got out of control that night.

https://www.knifefree.co.uk/story/_aliya/

BEING EXPLOITED?

Exploitation is a form of abuse. It happens when anyone is persuaded or forced into doing something usually in exchange for something. Exploitation often happens without the person being aware that they are being exploited. Some people have relationships with others to take advantage of them or to abuse them – exploitation is never right.

KNOW THE SIGNS

- You may feel you have gained ‘friends’ or ‘family’ and that these people care for you
- You may be receiving money or gifts that you have not had before – this may feel exciting and make you feel good about this person
- Do they say that they are the only person you need and tell you that your friends or family won’t understand or you’ll be in trouble? Remember, the people who care about you will want to protect you
- Do they change from being ‘very nice’ to ‘very nasty’? and you feel like you need to do things to keep them happy - this can be a sign they are trying to control you
- Do they may make promises they can’t keep, ask you to keep secrets, threaten you or hurt you?

It can be really difficult to talk about this sort of thing. We have some advice about how to start talking about difficult issues with someone that you trust.

WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

Talk to someone

- If you are worried about a situation that you, or a friend, is in you should talk to an adult you trust as soon as you can. People who can help include parents, teachers, police officers social workers and youth workers.
- It's a lot easier to solve a problem when there are two heads working together on it. It's not always easy to know how to start the conversation. Often we don't talk to friends about things we'd really like to talk to them about because we feel embarrassed, shy or ashamed.
- The thing to remember is that whatever it is you're embarrassed about, a good friend isn't going to laugh at you, judge you or put you down, they'll listen, try to understand and try to help you feel better or find a solution. And that's why people find that talking to a good friend about a problem usually does help.

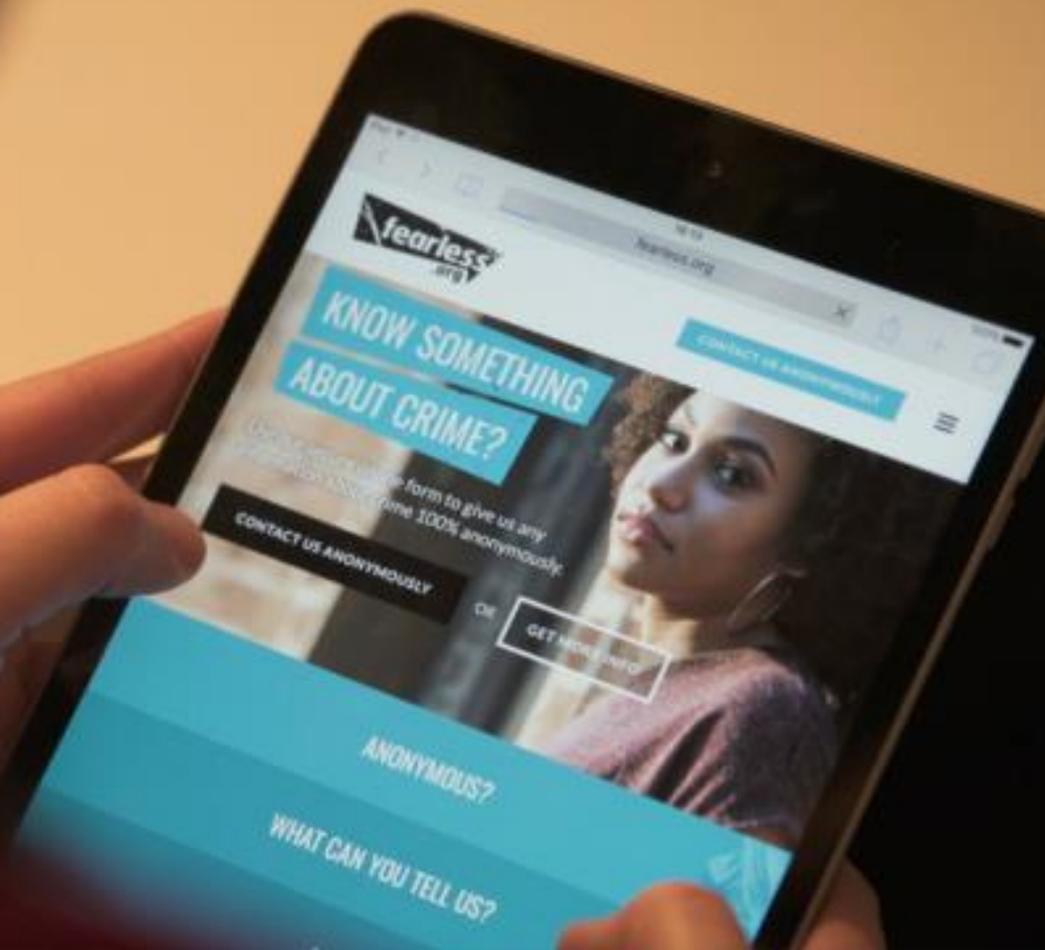
Speak to ChildLine

If you're nervous about speaking to a friend or an adult you trust or a conversation hasn't helped, you can always speak to someone at ChildLine. Childline can help anyone under 19 in the UK with any issue they're going through.

Childline is free, confidential and available any time, day or night. You can call them for free on 0800 1111 or visit their website www.childline.org.uk - to find support and advice about a range of issues

FEARLESS

Fearless is a site where you can get non-judgemental information and advice about crime and criminality. What makes this site different is they also provide you with a safe place to give information to them about crime - 100% anonymously



Visit www.fearless.org/en for advice and a way to anonymously report crime. It's important to remember that they are not a replacement for the emergency services so our advice, if something is happening that needs immediate action ring 999.

EVER THOUGHT ABOUT HAVING COUNSELLING BUT ARE WORRIED ABOUT SEEING SOMEONE FACE TO FACE?

e-motion is a free online counselling project for young people aged 12-18 years who live in East Sussex and offers a confidential service offering counselling via email or live messaging.

Online counselling allows you to talk about your problems and feelings in a safe supportive and private space online.

A counsellor is trained to listen with empathy (by putting themselves in your shoes). They can help you deal with any negative thoughts and feelings that you have.

For further information please visit: www.e-motion.org.uk



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www.safeineastsussex.org.uk

