

Violence Reduction Partnership
Knife crime awareness week communications and engagement pack

#NeverChooseKnives

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What is knife crime awareness week?

Twice a year during May and November, Op Sceptre (knife crime awareness week) takes place. This is an intensification week where activity is implemented across Hampshire and IOW to target knife crime, take knives off the street and educate children, families and communities. Reducing knife crime is a focus Hampshire and Isle of Wight constabulary all year round, but we know that when we broaden that focus during Op Sceptre weeks, we reach more people and include them to get knives off our street.

The Violence Reduction Unit have produced this pack to help you get involved and share information with the children, young people and communities you work with.

The focus of this pack is reporting knife crime, getting support, and awareness raising. Much of the information in the pack can be used at any time of the year so although we would encourage you to use it during knife crime awareness week please feel free to use it at any time.

What is the Violence Reduction Unit?

Hampshire and Isle of Wight VRU is a small team who work in partnership to coordinate a collaborative response to tackle the root causes of violence. The VRU supports the Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP) made up of 25 different public sector bodies across the Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth & Southampton (HIPS) area who come together to make our communities safer.

What is the Violence Reduction Partnership?

The VRP is a partnership of authorities across Hampshire, IOW, Portsmouth and Southampton, who work together to tackle and prevent serious violence. They are police, health, justice fire, local authorities, education, prisons and the voluntary and charity sector.

[The Serious Violence Duty](#) was introduced under the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 and requires specified and relevant authorities to work together to prevent and reduce serious violence. The Serious Violence Duty requires partnerships to take a multi-agency, [public health approach](#) to understand the causes and impact of serious violence develop a strategic response, which focuses on prevention and early intervention, and monitor the impact of this response. [The Violence Reduction Partnership](#) has a vision for Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton to be a place where people can live their lives free from violence and the fear of violence.

Resources

We've gathered a wide range of resources to help deepen your understanding of knife crime and to support meaningful engagement with young people. Explore the list below to discover helpful tools and materials designed to inform, empower, and inspire action.

- **Serious Violence Toolkit**

The toolkit was produced to support a co-ordinated approach to tackling and preventing serious violence and understanding its root causes. The toolkit will support you as a professional working with people affected by serious violence by:

- Explaining the symptoms of serious violence
- Giving you access to free resources and referral pathways
- Thinking about serious violence and your role

You can access the toolkit on the [Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership website](#)

- **Serious Violence and Knife Crime Participation Pack**

The Serious Violence and Knife Crime Participation Pack has been developed to strengthen the VRP's conversations with young people about their experiences of serious violence and knife crime. The pack contains 5 x 15 minute session plans which are designed to educate and empower young people from 11-25 on the topic and allow the VRP to gather feedback about their experiences. You can access the participation pack on the [Violence Reduction Unit website](#).

- **Having Honest Conversations crib sheet**

We understand that talking about knife crime isn't always easy and you may not know where to start. If you are worried about talking to children and young people about knife crime we have produced an [honest conversation](#) tool to help you think about how to prepare for an honest conversation.

- **Talking about knife crime crib sheet**

Now you have planned how to have your honest conversation we joined forces with the Ben Kinsella Trust and have written [A Guide to Knife Harm](#) which will upskill you on facts, the law, where to get support and much more!

- **Webinars**

We have also worked with the Ben Kinsella Trust to produce a webinar on '[Having Honest Conversations](#)'. Much like the crib sheet above it gives advice and information on how to plan and begin an honest conversation with young people about this tricky subject.

- **Letters to parents and carers**

In November 2023 we wrote to all secondary schools with a letter for parents and carers around knife crime. This was very well received, and schools told us we should include primary schools so in May 2024 we did this. To reach more parents and carers we also worked with housing providers send a letter via their networks. We know if we talk about knife crime we raise awareness and encourage parents and carers to talk to their children.

- [Knife Crime Awareness Letter - Parents and Carers](#)
- [Knife Crime Awareness Letter – Primary School](#)
- [Knife Crime Awareness Letter – Housing Providers](#)

#NeverChooseKnives Campaign

The #NeverChooseKnives campaign promotes safety and positive choices by focusing on *reassurance, risk and consequence, resilience, and responsibility*.

Carrying a knife doesn't protect you—it puts you at greater risk. We want to reassure everyone that the vast majority of young people do not carry knives, and choosing to stay knife-free is the safest path. The campaign also highlights the serious consequences of carrying a knife, including the potential for injury and up to 5 years in prison, even if it's not used.

To support the message, we've created posters and engaging social media assets to help communities take part. Share the message online, join the conversation with #NeverChooseKnives, and use the campaign materials to raise awareness.

We are also excited to say we have worked with Unloc this year and are using their 'I Won't Give Up' music video as part of the #NeverChooseKnives messages.



Please feel free to use the assets from the campaign in the best way for you. We have created some suggested content you may wish to use. You can download all the resources from our [Google Drive](#)

Please adapt to suit your audience or platform and if there is anything else you think would help share the conversation wider please get in touch with Sallie the VRU Comms and Engagement Officer on sallie.white@hampshire.police.uk

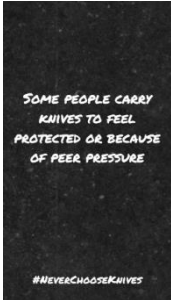



- **Posters and Leaflets**

Download our poster and leaflets to display at your venues, use at events, give out when meeting children and young people and help start a conversation about knife crime.

The posters and leaflets link directly to animations sharing messages about 'how to get support' and 'where to report'. We have shared these animations separately below so you can also use directly on your digital platforms.

Image	Link	Text
	Poster Animation - One	<p>Want to know more about knife crime?</p> <p><i>This poster links to Animation One</i></p>
	Poster Animation - Two	<p>How to report knife crime?</p> <p><i>This poster links to Animation Two</i></p>

Social Media assets

Image	Link	Suggested text
<p>Animation One - Want to know more about knife crime?</p> 	<p>Google Drive YouTube</p>	<p><i>Did you know 99% of young people don't carry knives? Carrying one makes you more likely to get hurt or face serious consequences, including up to 5 years in prison—even if it's never used.</i></p> <p><i>If you're worried about knife crime, talk to someone you trust or reach out to Childline at 0800 1111.</i></p> <p><i>In an emergency, always dial 999. Stay safe!</i></p>
<p>Animation Two - How to report knife crime?</p> 	<p>Google Drive YouTube</p>	<p><i>Worried about knife crime or know someone who is? It's never too late to get help. Talk to a teacher, parent, carer, or youth worker. You can also contact Childline at 0800 1111.</i></p> <p><i>Did you know you can report concerns 100% anonymously through Fearless? Speak up—it could make a real difference.</i></p> <p><i>In an emergency, always dial 999</i></p>
<p>Generic Social Media grid post</p> 	<p>Link</p>	<p>Carrying a knife is never a good idea—it puts you at greater risk of getting hurt or facing serious consequences, like up to 5 years in prison, even if it's never used. Most young people choose not to carry knives, and that choice keeps them safer.</p> <p>If you're worried about knife crime, talk to someone you trust or contact Childline at 0800 1111. In an emergency, always dial 999.</p>
<p>Social Media grid post – How to report it.</p> 	<p>Link</p>	<p>If you're worried about knife crime, you can report it <i>completely anonymously</i> through Fearless.org. No one will know it was you, and your tip could help keep someone safe. Speaking up makes a difference!</p> <p>Visit Fearless.org to report concerns—your identity stays protected.</p> <p>In an emergency, always dial 999.</p>

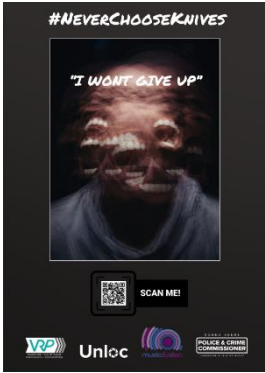
Unloc – ‘I Won’t Give Up’ Music Video


‘I Won’t Give Up’ is an urban rap track created by young people Benitez, Kizz, Bagins & Mystical Truth. This exciting project came together over the past few months as Unloc brought together young artists to aim for social justice as part of Unloc’s Inspiring Change programme. Unloc is a non-for-profit organisation working throughout the UK with schools and colleges, focusing on a strong mission to empower young people to be innovative change makers who seek to build stronger communities and sustainable businesses.

Their Inspiring Change programme empowered young people to come together and talk about the social issues they cared about the most, then create and design their own social action programmes to tackle them. One such group were the young people who have written and perform on a rap track of their own creation, working in partnership with charity Music Fusion to create a message to other young people reflecting on their own lived experience of gang culture, knife crime and youth violence.

The group have created a stunning single in ‘I Won’t Give Up’ that they are so incredibly proud of, pouring their hearts and souls into creating a single that speaks of their real experiences and cuts to the heart of the issue. With a music video to go with the track it’s available on YouTube to share on your platforms and social media channels to promote this message in a way that resonates with young people in their own language.

For more information about Unloc and their work in schools and colleges visit unloc.org.uk

Image	Link	Text
	Poster	<p>Knives are never the answer</p> <p>You only get one life, don't lose it. <i>99% of young people don't carry knives. Don't be the 1%, you could face up to 5 years in prison—even if it's never used.</i></p> <p>‘I Won’t Give Up’ is a new hip hop/rap single by young rappers in Hampshire with a lived experience of gangs, knife crime & youth violence. Scan the QR or go here https://tinyurl.com/ms5exsu9 for the highkey music video.</p> <p>Worried about knife crime? Talk to someone you trust or buzz Childline at 0800 1111. In an emergency, always dial 999.</p> <p>#YoungPeople #SayNoToKnives #Gangs #KnifeCrime #GangCulture #Rap #R&B #HipHop #Rapper #SocialAction #Schools #Colleges #Teenagers #Crime #Teens #Teachers #Tutors #HeadTeachers #EducationProfessionals</p>

	<p>Graphic of single cover</p>	<p>Knives 'aint no vibe</p> <p>'I Won't Give Up' is a new hip hop/rap single by young rappers in Hampshire with a lived experience of gangs, knife crime & youth violence.</p> <p>No cap, these bussin new performers Kizz, Bagins, Mystical Truth, Benitez & Leon spit their truth through their lyrics & deliver a highkey debut that cuts to the heart of the issue.</p> <p>Check out the official music video here: https://tinyurl.com/ms5exsu9</p> <p>Worried about knife crime? Talk to someone you trust or buzz Childline at 0800 1111. In an emergency, always dial 999.</p> <p>#YoungPeople #SayNoToKnives #Gangs #KnifeCrime #GangCulture #Rap #R&B #HipHop #Rapper #SocialAction #Schools #Colleges #Teenagers #Crime #Teens #Teachers #Tutors #HeadTeachers #EducationProfessionals</p>
<p>Music Video</p>	<p>Google Drive YouTube</p>	<p>'I Won't Give Up' - the new hip hop/rap single by young rappers in Hampshire with a lived experience of gangs, knife crime & youth violence.</p> <p>No cap, these bussin new performers Kizz, Bagins, Mystical Truth, Benitez & Leon spit their truth through their lyrics, and working with Unloc & Music Fusion deliver a highkey debut that cuts to the heart of the issue.</p> <p>Check out the official music video here: https://tinyurl.com/ms5exsu9</p> <p>Worried about knife crime? Talk to someone you trust or buzz Childline at 0800 1111. In an emergency, always dial 999.</p> <p>#YoungPeople #SayNoToKnives #Gangs #KnifeCrime #GangCulture #Rap #R&B #HipHop #Rapper #SocialAction #Schools #Colleges #Teenagers #Crime #Teens #Teachers #Tutors #HeadTeachers #EducationProfessionals</p>

	<p>Animation – Coming soon!!</p>	<p>Don't be the 1%</p> <p>99% of young people DON'T carry a knife. 'I Won't Give Up' is a new hip hop/rap single by young rappers in Hampshire with lived experience of gangs, knife crime & youth violence. No cap, these bussin new performers Kizz, Bagins, Mystical Truth, Benitez & Leon spit their truth through their lyrics & deliver a highkey debut that cuts to the heart of the issue.</p> <p>Check out the official music video here: https://tinyurl.com/ms5exsu9</p> <p>Worried about knife crime? Talk to someone you trust or buzz Childline at 0800 1111. In an emergency, always dial 999.</p> <p>#YoungPeople #SayNoToKnives #Gangs #KnifeCrime #GangCulture #Rap #R&B #HipHop #Rapper #SocialAction #Schools #Colleges #Teenagers #Crime #Teens #Teachers #Tutors #HeadTeachers</p>
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Where to get support

For professionals:

- Violence Reduction Partnership – [Serious Violence Toolkit](#)

The toolkit was developed to support professionals working with children, young people and families who are involved in serious violence. There is also information about how to have [honest conversation](#) with children and young people about knife crime.

- Fearless

[Fearless](#) is part of the Crimestoppers brand. It enables young people to pass on information about crime 100% anonymously. They offer [professionals resources](#)

- Ben Kinsella

[Ben Kinsella](#) are a charity that educate young people on the dangers of knife crime and help them to make positive choices to stay safe. They offer [professional resources](#) such as lesson plans.

For children and young people:

- [Fearless](#)

Fearless is part of the Crimestoppers brand. It enables young people to pass on information about crime 100% anonymously

- [Childline](#)

Children and young people can [contact](#) Childline for free to talk about anything they are worried about. They offer a range of [creative games](#) to support children and young people with their feelings.