

## Op Sceptre

Helping protect young people from the risks of knives and weapons



Proud to serve and protect our communities

November 2021

The Wiltshire Police Youth and Early Intervention team works with schools, colleagues and partners to share messages and educate young people, with the aim to keep young people in our community safe from harm and exploitation.

Dear Parent/Guardian/Carer,

This year's Op Sceptre campaign is running from 15<sup>th</sup> November – 21<sup>st</sup> November nationally, and to Friday 26<sup>th</sup> November in Wiltshire and Swindon.

During Op Sceptre weeks, Wiltshire Police are raising awareness about weapons and knife crime with young people, families and communities within Swindon and Wiltshire.

We need your help to ensure that every young person knows about the risks of carrying knives or other weapons; to support them to make informed choices to keep themselves and their peers safe, and to know where to go for help or to report concerns.

### **Signs that a young person may be vulnerable to exploitation or involvement with knife/weapons:**

- Is your young person/young people hanging around with a new group of friends? A group that you don't know or have never met?
- Is your young person suddenly wearing new and possibly expensive items of clothing or accessories, that you haven't bought for them?
- Does your young person have more than one phone?
- Have they started to become more irritable every time you try to engage with them?
- Are they becoming more secretive, always in their bedroom, not engaging in family activities/outings?
- Is your young person missing school? Or having missing episodes from home?

Whilst most of these signs can be described as 'typical' teenage behaviour, there could be more to it. If your gut feeling is telling you that something isn't right, then ask questions, and/or ask for advice.

### **When your young person goes out:**

- Do you know where they are going? Do you know who they are with?
- What time do they need to be back by?
- Ensure you have contact details for their friends and parents, guardians or carers

## Safeguarding and signposting information:

No knives, Better Lives is a dedicated website for practitioners, trusted adults and Young people. Consisting of education films, lesson plans and activity resources from primary age upwards. <https://noknivesbetterlives.com/practitioners/resources/toolkits/>

Knife Crimes is a dedicated organisation set up to support families affected by knife crime by providing a lot of information and advice. <http://www.knifecrimes.org/>

CrimeStoppers is an anonymous reporting service specifically for adults and is the sister company of Fearless. <https://crimestoppers-uk.org>, 0800 555 111.

Fearless is a site designed specifically for young people. You can access non-judgemental information and advice about crime and criminality including knife crime. It can also be used as an anonymous reporting tool for young people. <https://www.fearless.org>

The NSPCC is a children's charity, dedicated to supporting children and trusted adults for most situations providing useful information and resources. <https://www.nspcc.org.uk>

Childline is here to help anyone under 19 in the UK with any issue they're going through. You can talk about anything. Whether it's something big or small, their trained counsellors are there to support you. <https://www.childline.org.uk>. Or call on 0800 1111

UK Safer Internet Centre promotes the safe and responsible use of technology for young people. They have a lot of advice on all subjects digital as well as allowing you to understand how to report anything suspicious. <https://www.saferinternet.org.uk>

The videos linked below offer insight into the experiences of young people caught up in exploitation and weapons and we encourage you to look at them.

- [Are You Listening? | Leicestershire Police \(leics.police.uk\)](#) – Are You Listening
- [Kayleigh's Love Story - Full Version - YouTube](#) – Kayleigh's Love Story
- [Phoebe Maddison - Look At Where You're Now \(feat. The Magic Word Magician\) | County Lines - YouTube](#) – Swindon Based Exploitation Song
- [Help put 'county lines' out of business - YouTube](#) – National Criminal Child Exploitation
- [Knife crime: A new way forward - YouTube](#) – Avon and Somerset Police.

We hope that you have found this information useful. Should you have any questions please contact us on the below email addresses.

[youth@wiltshire.police.uk](mailto:youth@wiltshire.police.uk)  
[Youthswindon@wiltshire.police.uk](mailto:Youthswindon@wiltshire.police.uk)

Kind Regards

Wiltshire Police  
Youth and Early intervention Team