



## **The Ben Kinsella Trust – Keeping Safe Lesson Plans and supporting resources for Key Stage 2, 3 and 4.**

### **Introduction**

The following learning activities are intended to support you in preparing for and following up young people's visit to the exhibition. They can also be taught within your PSHE education programme if you are unable to visit the exhibition.

The Ben Kinsella Trust has a specific focus on knife crime and the consequences however these lessons would equally apply to the carrying of other offensive weapons. They are also intended to raise young people's awareness about the types of situations that could escalate into violence.

Because all schools organise PSHE education in different ways this material can and should be used flexibly however it is important that these activities are located within a broader developmental PSHE education provision.

Before starting this work it is important to understand the significance of the carrying of or use of knives and other weapons in your pupils' community. It is essential to build on accurate data and to provide balanced and relevant learning.

It is also important to know your young people and consider if anyone maybe distressed by any of this work, perhaps a young person who has been recently bereaved for any reason or may have direct experience of knife crime.

It is essential that young people understand the true extent of the carrying of weapons in their community in order to ensure lessons help them to recognise real risks whilst not creating inappropriate anxieties that may increase rather than decrease the carrying of weapons. This is sometimes referred to as 'normative education'. We recommend that schools work closely with their local police in order to establish an accurate assessment of local behaviour.

In our teaching 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.

If your school is in a community where there is a substantial risk of knives being carried consider how your school policy can help. Consider working with the police on a knife amnesty. Consider how you can encourage young people who are concerned to safely and confidently ask for your help.

For example consider how your student council could work with local police to build trust, increase communication and reduce the fear and use of knives perhaps as part of 'healthy schools'.



Whilst it is not possible to ignore a crime consider ethical ways that your school can encourage and help support young people who are worried or have knowledge about knives and other weapons that they wish to share.

Consider how your school can contribute to a 'knife free' community.

### **Ben's Story**

Ben Kinsella was stabbed to death in 2008, aged just 16 years old. Ben was out celebrating his last GCSE exam with friends when an altercation took place in a bar. Ben and his friends were not involved in the argument so they left the bar and went their separate ways home. As Ben was walking home three young people followed him from the bar. They later explained that they felt that they had been "disrespected."

These young men stabbed Ben 11 times in 45 seconds in a senseless act of violence and Ben lost his life.

Not only did Ben lose his life the event devastated his family and friends. This event also significantly damaged the lives of the perpetrators and their own families. It is important that pupils understand the true extent of an event such as this and that the pain caused does not end.

Ben's family set up a charity in his name to continue Ben's legacy but also to prevent any other young person and family going through what Ben, his family and friends and the perpetrators of the crime and their family are all still going through to this day. The charity educates young people about the true consequences of carrying knives.



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## Section 1 - Establishing a safe classroom climate.

It is important to establish clear ground rules before doing any teaching about knife crime or the carrying of weapons. It is likely that you will already have these in place in which case it may be simply a matter of reinforcing those that may have particular relevance.

Ground rules should include;

- We will be open and honest but not sharing personal stories or those that may relate to others in the class.
- We have a 'right to pass' if an activity reminds them of something distressing.
- We understand the boundaries around teacher/pupil confidentiality; we understand our teacher's responsibilities if they believe a pupil to be vulnerable or at risk.
- We will be non-judgemental respecting other's point of view, whilst understanding that it is okay to disagree. We will challenge the opinion not the person'
- We agree that there are no 'stupid questions'. We are able to ask questions and to do so in a way that does not deliberately try to embarrass anyone else.
- We will use correct terminology.

**NB.**, 'Slang terms' can have the effect of 'softening' behaviour. In lessons it is important to always use correct terminology. Not only does this aid communication, it also ensures that pupils are drawn back to the real world.

For example '*I think it is a good idea for people to 'carry' when they go out round here*' should be immediately challenged with '*Are you saying that it is a good idea for people to carry a knife when they go out round here?*'

Emphasise that although the classroom is not an appropriate place to talk about personal stories or concerns there will be opportunities to talk privately after the lesson. Here is where it is essential to have a clear school policy and protocols in place to help you manage any such approach.

If any pupil is thought to be vulnerable or at risk it is essential to follow your school's safeguarding protocols.



## Section 2 - Starting from where children and young people are.

Before undertaking any work around safety and the carrying of knives it is important to establish young people's' current understanding and beliefs in order to identify relevant learning objectives and outcomes. It is essential to compare their existing understanding and beliefs with local data in order to assess if they are either under or over estimating local risks. Either can have consequences on their choices and behaviour and should be reflected in your planning.

Below you will find two simple investigations that can be undertaken either with a class or a smaller representative group. Colleagues working in key stage 3 and 4 may find it interesting to use the research tool outlined below with pupils from a variety of different ages in order to determine the best location for this learning.

### A key stage 2 investigation

You will need 1 sheet of paper for each child. Give each child in class a number from 1 to the number of pupils in the class. Ask them to remember their number.

#### Explain to the class:

*We are going to be learning about keeping safe and I need your help so that I can plan these lessons. I am going to ask you to do some drawings and some writing. I need to know what you think so please work on your own.*

*There are no 'wrong answers'; all your ideas will be really helpful. If you can't spell a word just do your best. If you need help put your hand up, whisper the word to me and I will write it for you.*

*I do not want you to put your name on your work - this is so only you will know this work is yours. At the top of your page please write if you are a girl or a boy and write your number.*

*Imagine a young person, it could be a boy or a girl, who is a little older than you and who lives round here. Imagine they are getting ready to go out for the evening with their friends. They are going to meet their friends in their local town.*

*Draw a picture of them ready to go out. Think about what they look like. Write what it is that they are wearing?*

*They want to make sure that they are going to be really safe.*

*Draw a picture of all the things you can think of that they might take with them to help them to stay safe.*

*Write beside each what it is that you have drawn.*

*Write beside each why you think this will help them to stay safe.*



*Turn over the page.*

*Imagine this person asks you for your advice about how they can have a good time and stay safe.*

*Can you suggest other ways they could keep themselves safe when they go out for the evening?  
Write down as many as you can.*

Collect up your pupils' responses.

## **Analysis**

In analysing your pupils' drawings and writing it can be helpful to consider these questions

- What do your pupils already know, understand and appreciate that you feel is helpful?
- Is anything missing in their responses that would be helpful for them to know either now or in their future?
- Is anything being misunderstood or would make them vulnerable?
- Is anything in their responses that is worrying you?

What do they think about appearance? Is there anything that causes you concern? Is there anything that might make them vulnerable for example wearing an 'expensive jacket' or 'new trainers'?

What do they think their character will take with them to help them stay safe? How many are good ideas for example a mobile phone or spare money for traveling? Could these also be risky? For example is showing people you have an expensive phone or are carrying lot of money also risky?

Were they able to give a clear explanation of why different items would help their character to stay safe?

Did pupils mention carrying a weapon? If so how did they think it might help their character stay safe?

What advice did they offer? For example did they suggest telling someone where they are going and what time they will be back? Did they have any suggestions about ways to behave, for example keep away from 'trouble' or not to behave, for example not to drink alcohol?

Was there any significant difference between boys' and girls' responses? Did they identify different types of risks?

## **Sharing your results with your class.**

This data can help focus your lesson planning or the data can form the basis for a lesson. You can celebrate and reinforce their good ideas, identify what is missing that you may need to teach if not now then later, identify what needs to be 'fine tuned' and what needs to be challenged.

Select data from their responses that are relevant to your class either because it is something you want to reinforce or something you want to challenge.

Put four headings on the board.



- *'Good ideas we can all use!'*
- *'Ideas we need to think a bit more about...'*
- *'Things we should do to stay safe...'*
- *'Things we should be careful about or avoid if we want to stay safe...'*

Give the pupils their work back using their numbers to identify their work. Ask pupils to add or change anything they feel they want to during this lesson. (If you ask pupils to use a different colour pen this can help with overall assessment of the class's learning.)

Share the class's ideas with them and ask them to think about which column they should go in.

For example *'Lots of you thought 'telling someone where you are going will help you to stay safe' so which column should we put this in?'*

In this case draw out;

- *that it depends who you tell;*
- *how clear you are;*
- *if the person you tell also knows where the place you are going is;*
- *and if you are certain they heard you.*

If you are leaving someone a message will they get it and when? Will this enable them to help you?

So whilst this is a *'good idea'* we still need *'to think about it'*.

If your pupils have drawn or written about carrying a weapon do not explore this at this point. See the following lesson plan.

### **Extension activities**

Pupils could create a poster, presentation or contribution to the school's website to help younger pupils think about their safety when they go out.

Consider asking the pupils to present their work to a local police officer or community safety officer. Invite them to comment on and if necessary add to their work.

### **A Key Stages 3 and 4 investigation**

You may find it helpful to pre-prepare some response sheets. Use the questions below and provide some space after each for young people to respond. The questions below are only suggestions and you may wish to adjust the language and focus to better suit your students.

Explain to your students that you are planning some lessons on personal safety and that you need their help.



Explain that you want to find out what they think and to please complete the questions on their own.

Explain that there are no wrong answers; that they will not be asked to put their names on their work so no one will know it is theirs.

They will need to write if they are male or female.

Read this to the class.

*Imagine you are travelling back to your home after school. You notice a young person of about your age moving into their new home. They are going to be living near to where you live. You get talking to them and they tell you they used to live in another part of the country. They don't know anything about where you live. They want to know what it's like to 'live around here'.*

*Try to give the fullest answers that you can.*

*They ask you;*

- *what is good about living around here? What would you say?*
- *what is not so good about living around here? What would you say?*
- *is it safe to walk around here by day? What would you say?*
- *is it safe to walk around here in the evening? What would you say?*
- *if there is a lot of 'trouble' around here? What would you say?*
- *if there is 'trouble' what sort is it? What would you say?*
- *if young people around here ever carry knives? What would you say?*
- *(if you think they do – why do you think they carry them?)*

*If they wanted to stay safe living around here what advice would you give them?*

## **Analysis**

Young people frequently overestimate the risk taking behaviours of their peers. It can be helpful to have gathered local data so that you can compare your students' perceptions of risks in their community with this data.

In analysing your pupils' drawings and writing it can be helpful to consider these questions

- Do your pupils feel that living round here is generally positive or negative?
- Do they feel it is generally safe to walk around by day or in the evening?





- Do they feel there is much 'trouble' round here? What do they understand by the term 'trouble'?
- How does their perception of their community compare to any local data you have? Is their perception accurate? If not how could their perceptions make them vulnerable? How might they influence their decisions or behaviour?
- Do they believe carrying a knife is common, rare or non-existent? How does this compare to local data? Are your students under or overestimating this behaviour?
- If they think knife carrying does happen why do they think this happens?
- Is the 'advice about how to keep safe' they would offer helpful or worrying? Is anything missing that would be helpful for them to know?
- Are there significant differences between the girls' and boys' responses? (If there are, in what way?)

If knife carrying in a community is rare it is important to reinforce this and to challenge any incorrect belief that it is more prevalent than it is. A mistaken perception that knife carrying is a common practice in a community can encourage some young people to carry themselves. It can be reassuring to young people to provide data that clarifies this misconception.

### **Sharing your results with your class.**

The data you have gathered can become a powerful resource for teaching. Taking their results back the class and discussing them can highly productive. It is important not to name any child instead use terms like '*60% of you thought...*' or '*One of you thought...*'

Consider inviting a local police representative to join the discussion to help clarify any misperceptions or respond to questions.

For example;

- If there are significant differences between different pupils' perceptions explore with the class why they think this might be the case.
- If there are significant differences between the girls' and boys' responses share this with the class and ask them why they think this might be the case?
- If their perceptions of their community are different from the local data explore with the class why they think this, is the data at fault, are their perceptions inaccurate; are there local 'hot spots' that are atypical to the rest of their community that might distort the data (if so where and knowing this what should we do)?
- If their perception of the degree of knife carrying is different from local data discuss why young people may have a distorted view. (Ensure you stress the credibility and validity of your data.)
- Explore what might be the consequences of young people having a distorted view of the extent of knife carrying in their community.
- Share the ideas pupils offered about 'how to stay safe round here'. Does the class agree with them? Are some good ideas they can all agree with? Are they practical? Are some not so good? Might some have unforeseen consequences?



It can sometimes be difficult for young people to share their anxieties with their peers. Explore ways that students can stay safe that our peers need not know about, for example our friends need not know we have told someone who cares about us where we are going and what time we will be home.

An extension activity might be creating a set of safety recommendations that could be shared with younger pupils.

It is important to recognise that a small group of young people (or even single young person) who carry knives can lead to tragedy. Even if knife carrying by young people in your community is low there is also a chance that your students will move to locations where knife carrying and crime is more prevalent. The following lessons may be important both for young people's' present lives and their futures.



### **Section 3 - Learning activities – Key stage 2**

Schools organise their PSHE education in different ways. Because of this each section below offers a series of learning activities from which you can select to enrich your own programme. It will be helpful if your pupils have already explored 'good and bad secrets' and concepts such as 'risk' and actions having immediate and long-term consequences. It is likely that these activities would be located in year 6 but could be earlier depending on local data.

You might consider team-teaching this work with a local police officer. Their task would be to add legal information clarifying what would happen if someone of your pupil's age or older was found in possession of a knife. If they are not available the following may be helpful.

- Anyone under 10 is below the 'Age of Criminal Responsibility' - In law - they cannot be guilty of a crime
- Someone under 10 may still be arrested (i.e. until their age could be confirmed) - but they could not be charged
- A 10 year old or above would be arrested and taken to a police station
- They would be supported by an 'Appropriate Adult' - usually a parent or family member, but could be someone from Social Services.
- They would be treated as a juvenile (and need the adult support) up to the age of 18
- A 10 year old can be searched in the street - if there are reasonable grounds to do so.

#### **Learning outcomes –**

- To explain why their responsibility to be a good friend may sometimes have to come second to their responsibility to protect others from harm.
- To be able to explain what they advise someone to say and do if they know (or believe) their friend has a knife.

#### **Activity 1 – Being a good friends and keeping secrets.**

It is likely that one of the first people to notice a young person is carrying a knife (or other weapon) will be one of their friends. This can create a dilemma for young people. Even if they know that they should say something or tell someone it is likely that they will be getting their friend into trouble, possibly serious trouble.



They not be sure what support or approval they may receive from other peers if they tell someone in authority. By bringing this dilemma out into the open we can create a 'whole class agreement' on what responsibilities we all have and we should all do if this occurs. In this way we help to take the responsibility for the decision to tell someone away from the young person.

Ask the class

- What does it mean to be a good friend? How should you behave with our friends?
- How should you behave if a friend asks you for help?
- What should you say or do if your friend asks you to keep a secret?
- If your pupils say *'it depends what kind'* ask them what they mean?

Draw out

- 'Should you keep a secret that could mean one day your friend gets hurt or into serious trouble?'
- Should you keep a secret if it could mean someone else might one day get hurt?
- 'Should anyone ask you to keep a secret that makes you feel uncomfortable; worried or scared – is that fair?'

### Activity 2 – Being asked to keep a 'risky' secret.

Read the class this short extract (change the names if necessary).

*Imagine a young person of about your age called Jo is hanging out with their best friend Alex.*

*Alex says, 'Do you want to see what I have got?'*

*'What is it?' Jo replies.*

*Alex takes something from their pocket. 'Look – I got a knife from my brother. It's only small. I am going to carry it with me all the time.'*

*'Why would you want to do that?' Jo asks.*

*'You mustn't tell anyone it's a secret. Promise me you won't tell anyone. I could get into trouble.'*  
*Alex says.*

In groups of four discuss why you think Jo might want to carry a knife. Think of as many ideas as you can.

Look for

- to protect themselves
- to feel important
- they think lots other people do it
- to show off
- to look or feel grown up

Now ask groups to talk about how they feel about these reasons. In their opinion are these

- 'Good' reasons - ones they would agree with?
- 'Not so good' reasons – ones people may say but you would disagree with?



- Why would you disagree?

Take a feedback from groups.

If some pupils feel there *are* good reasons for carrying a knife ask the rest of the class if anyone has a different opinion.

*(If some young people continue to suggest that knives can help protect them ask the class what it is like to 'lose our temper' – what might we say or do when we have 'lost our tempers' that we usually wouldn't? When we 'lose our temper' are we completely in control of ourselves? Do we say or do things we normally wouldn't? How do we feel afterwards? Do we sometimes regret what we did or have to say sorry to someone?)*

*Now imagine a group of people are out together when a row starts. There is lots of shouting; name-calling and people start pushing and shoving one another. They have 'lost their tempers'. Now imagine some people have knives. How might knives make things even worse?)*

Explain that there are no 'good reasons' for carrying a knife. Ensure pupils know that;

- Carrying a knife is a serious crime and could get someone into a lot of very serious trouble.
- If someone is threatened with a knife then it is more serious and if someone is cut or stabbed even more serious.
- Even a very small knife can badly hurt someone.
- The vast majority of young people never carry knives
- Knives seldom (if ever) help to protect us – they usually make things much worse.

Ask them how do you imagine Jo is feeling right now?

Look for

- Curious
- Excited
- Worried
- Scared

Ask the class is it possible for Jo have more than one feeling or even lots of feelings – perhaps some feelings 'pushing Jo forward' and some feelings 'holding Jo back'?

### **Activity 3 – Thinking about consequences or 'What could happen next'**

Now ask the pupils to imagine they were there listening to this conversation but only Alex can see them and talk with them.

Alex says to your class, '*Help! What should I say and do?*'

Tell the pupils that before they answer Alex we need to *really* think about this.



In groups discuss the following taking feedback at appropriate moments.

- What are all the *good* things that might happen if Alex promises and says nothing? (To Jo? To Alex?)
- What are all the *not so good* things that might happen if Alex promises and says nothing? (To Jo? To Alex? To someone else? Today, tomorrow in the future? )
- Who could be *'involved'*? (The police? The school? Their families?)
- Who could be *hurt* if the *not so good things* happen?
  
- Remind pupils that people can be hurt 'on the inside' as well and 'on the outside'. Even if people's bodies are not hurt – could their feelings be hurt? (For example how might Jo's parents feel if Jo or his brother is arrested? If Jo or his brother hurt someone else think about all their friends and family who would be hurt.)
- How might Alex feel if the *not so good things* happen?

Talk with the pupils about how sometimes being a really good friend may mean doing something that their friend won't like or may even get them into trouble. Explain that sometimes even if they get into trouble now it could prevent something far more serious and them getting into far more serious trouble later.

Draw out that doing the *'right thing'* the thing that protects people may not always be the *'easy thing'* the thing that keeps people happy. At this point discuss how you as a teacher could help them.

#### **Activity 4 – Ben's story**

At this point tell the class the story of Ben Kinsella.

As you read Ben's story the groups to notice what they have already thought about in their groups and add anything extra that they feel is important as they hear the story. *(As you tell the story consider building a 'spidergram' on the board recoding all the people who were hurt by what happened to Ben – help pupils to see how large is the number of people who were hurt by this crime. Ask the pupils if they think these people will ever really stop hurting? Ask the pupils if they think some hurts might never completely go away. )*

So what would you advise Alex to say or do?

#### **Activity 5 - Plenary and Assessment.**

Imagine Jo says to Alex, *'I'll get you one to!'*

If Alex has been sitting in this lesson what do you think Alex will say?

Why do you think he might say that?

#### **Private reflection**



If someone suggested that you carry a knife – what would you say?



#### Section 4 - Learning activities – Key stage 3 and 4

These activities are based around a gradually escalating story. It is important to consider how far along this journey to take your students. For many young people who's present and future experience of the carrying or use of knives and other weapons is unlikely (it is never impossible) it may be worth spending more time considering the early part of the story since it may be more relevant.

These activities are deliberately 'gender neutral' however in the real world the majority of knives are carried by males. It is important to remember that a percentage of your pupils will be LGBT and must feel they are included in these activities. We suggest keeping the story gender neutral but adding *'for a moment let us imagine one of the characters is...'* to provide different perspectives.

For the purposes of these activities we have also kept the location 'neutral' however the class might like to suggest a likely location in their community where the events described below could happen.

If you are working with a mixed sex class try to create mixed sex groups. Young women may have strong opinions and feelings about the carrying of knives especially by their current or future boyfriends that can be useful to share. (For example young women may challenge young men who believe they feel safer if their boyfriend carries a knife.)

Once you have decided which activities to use integrate Ben's story (see above).

Ben's story offers the opportunity to explore both what happened to Ben and the impact it had and continues to have on his friends and family. The critical issues are both the loss of Ben and his potential as a young person and the network of all the people who have been damaged by this event. It is important that young people can recognise that the impact of an event such as Ben's death ripples outwards damaging literally scores of people.

A simple activity to illustrate this would be for groups to create a 'spider-gramme' illustrating all the people affected. (It is important to include the family of the perpetrators and to help pupils recognise that both the victim's and perpetrator's families and friends can be damaged by these events.)

**NB** – Before teaching these activities familiarise yourself with Section 6 which outlines the current law. Especially note 'joint enterprise' which can mean a group may be prosecuted for the actions of one of their members.

#### Learning outcomes –

- To explain why carrying knives can increase rather than decrease danger and the possible consequences of carrying knives.
- To be able to explain what they advise someone to say and do if they know (or believe) their friend has a knife.





- To be able to describe how to recognise when a situation is escalating into something dangerous and strategies for escaping.
- To explain how a knife crime can damage far more people than the victim and perpetrator.

### Activity 1

Ask the class to get into groups of approximately four people.

*6.30 pm Saturday night – somewhere ‘round here’*

*Imagine four young people are ‘going out’ together on a Saturday evening to their local town. They are all going to meet up later in the evening but before that two meet up at one of their houses. One of them notices the other is carrying something heavy in their pocket. The other asks what it is and they say it is their knife. They say they always carry one when they go out in the evening. They say ‘It’s no big deal, most young people carry knives’.*

Ask groups to discuss;

- Why do you think one of the characters is choosing to carry a knife?  
Come up with as many reasons as you can. Collect up students’ thoughts to the board.
- Ask your students to think about if any are ‘good reasons’ – ones they might agree with (or sympathise with) – why would they agree with them?
- Ask your students to think about any that are ‘not so good’ (try to avoid using the word ‘bad’) reasons – ones they might not agree with – why would they disagree with them?

Challenge any ‘good reasons’ that young people feel they might support. For example ask if they can imagine how these ‘good reasons’ could lead to not so good consequences.

- They said it is ‘*no big deal*’ – what do you feel about this?  
Draw out that something that seems ‘no big deal’ can become a very big deal if circumstances change – for example if a police officer notices it.
- They said that ‘*most young people carry knives*’ – what do you feel about this? Do you think they are right or do you think they are mistaken?

At this point it is essential to reinforce any positive local data. It is critical that young people understand that most young people do not carry knives and never will. It is a very small minority who do. This can be a useful point to explore how our ‘feelings’ or beliefs can sometimes affect our choices. Why if it is an important choice is it important to check out if our feelings or beliefs might be in error?

- How does the other character feel about their friend choosing to carry a knife?

Ask groups if they think the other character -



- will feel safer or more anxious with their friend carrying a knife? Explore why.
- will feel that it is '*nothing to do with them*'? Ask how it might become '*something to do with them*' if things go wrong later, how could they find themselves '*involved*'? (See 'Joint Enterprise' – Section 6 below)

Now ask groups to;

- Imagine the person who is *not* carrying a knife asks you what they should say or do – what would you advise them? Do you think it would be easy to follow your advice? What might happen if they choose to ignore your advice? Which could be worse? Is the '*right choice*' the same as the '*easy choice*'?
- If you had the chance what would you say the person who is choosing to carry a knife?

Take a feedback from each group and discuss their thoughts as a whole class.

## Activity 2

8.15 pm - Saturday night – somewhere 'round here'

*As the two friends walk towards their destination they notice that two men outside are using metal detectors to search some people before they go inside. Imagine just for this activity that the friend with the knife is male and the other person is his girlfriend. He says to her, 'Can you look after my knife for me? They know me, but they won't search you. It will be alright, they never search the girls!'*

- Ask the class what they think about this.
- Is it acceptable to ask someone to do this? Is it fair?
- What is likely to happen if both are searched?
- If the girlfriend says '*The knife isn't mine, I was just asked to look after it by my boyfriend*' will this make any difference? (It won't.)
- What is likely to happen next? (The police are likely to be called and both are likely to be arrested.)

How might a conviction for possession of a weapon affect their futures? (For example, their personal freedom; distressed parents and family members; their future careers?)

## Activity 3

8.30 pm - Saturday night – somewhere 'round here'

*All four friends have now met up and have gone to the place where they usually spend Saturday evening. It is now getting dark and it has started to rain quite heavily outside. They all sit down together and spend some time talking. Lots of other people are already there.*

9.30 pm



*The friends notice a row seems to be breaking out nearby - voices are being raised and they seem to be getting angrier. There seems to be some shouting and name-calling.*

The four friends talk about what is happening saying,

- *'I think we should leave'*
- *'Let's watch what happens'*
- *'Just ignore it'*
- *'We should we try to stop it'*
- *'We should get someone to stop it'*

Ask groups to

- Imagine you were there but invisible - which voice or voices do you agree with?
- What else do you imagine the friends could be saying?
- How might the friends be feeling right now? (Might this be different from what they are saying? Why? Draw out that sometimes everyone can feel anxious but pretend to others everything is okay. This can make us feel we are the odd one out when in fact everyone feels the same.)
- Why might leaving be hard if one of their group wants to stay and watch what happens?
- Is one person's curiosity an acceptable reason to endanger their friends? Do we have a responsibility to protect our friends?
- What would they advise if some of the friends want to leave but others want to stay? Should they stick together or should those that want to leave do so?

#### **Activity 4**

*9.35 pm*

*The four friends now notice that the people who are having a row are made up of two groups people a little older than them. One member of each group has moved closer together and they are now pushing each other. Others from each group are standing behind them encouraging them and shouting at the other group.*

The four friends talk about what is happening saying,

- *'I think we should leave'*
  - *'Let's watch what happens'*
  - *'Just ignore it'*
  - *'We should we try to stop it'*
  - *'We should get someone to stop it'*
  - *'I am feeling scared'*
- Imagine you are still there and invisible - which voice or voices do you agree with. What else could they be saying?
  - What do you imagine could happen next?



## Activity 5

9.36 pm

*Things are now moving quickly. One of the people who is pushing the other has now drawn a knife and is waving it around. The other is still shouting at him. Both groups are now screaming at one another and encouraging the two who are on the verge of fighting. It looks like the other person may be about to pull a knife of his or her own.*

Again the four friends talk about what is happening saying,

- *'I think we should leave'*
  - *'Let's watch what happens'*
  - *'Just ignore it'*
  - *'We should we try to stop it'*
  - *'We should get someone to stop it'*
  - *"This is frightening!"*
- Imagine you are still there and invisible - which voice or voices do you agree with. What else could they be saying?
  - What do you imagine could happen next?

## Mini Lecture

Explain to the pupils that this process is known as *'escalation'* and what is happening inside these people's bodies is called a *'fight response'*.

A huge number of different chemicals are now pouring through the two people who may be about to fight (and that of groups who are encouraging them). Some parts of their brains will have 'shut down' and others parts will have taken over.

Their hearts will be beating quicker and their breathing will be more rapid. Chemicals that reduce pain are being released into their bloodstream (This is why people with serious injuries can still walk about unaware of how badly they have been hurt.)

They will almost certainly be experiencing 'tunnel vision' seeing only what is directly in front of them.

They will almost certainly be unable to think about the consequences of what they are doing, nor is it likely they will *'listen to reason'*. The 'frontal cortex', the area of their brains that helps them make good decisions is almost certainly being overtaken by other parts of their brain that focuses on fighting and survival. Their 'fight response' will be amplified if others are encouraging them. This is why after violent events people sometimes say *'I can't believe I did that, it wasn't like me'*

Emphasise that events can now escalate *very* quickly. This situation has become really dangerous - if someone doesn't calm down something very serious could be about to happen.



## Activity 6

9.36 and 30 seconds.

*One of our four friends sees their own friend start to reach for their own knife.*

- What might happen if they pull out their own knife?
- Why might they feel the need to do this?
- Is this likely to make things better or worse?

Now ask groups to

- Imagine you 'press an imaginary pause button and could talk to everyone involved right now - what would you say?
- Imagine you could turn the clock back – Is there any point where someone could have done something different that would have helped everyone to stay safe? (For example leaving the area as soon as trouble started.)

## Optional activity.

9.37 pm

*There are the sound of police sirens and the reflection of blue flashing lights outside. Everyone rushes towards the doors but police officers are now blocking the exits. They tell everyone to stand still. No one will be allowed to leave until they have been searched. Police officers are watching everyone very carefully.*

Ask groups to explore

- What might happen next?
- Who might be in trouble?
- Is something about to become a 'big deal'? (Knife carrying is punishable by up to 4 years in prison.)

## Mini lecture

Emphasise the following.

- Knives do not make us safer – they make dangerous situations far more dangerous.
- Feeling *anxious* or *scared* is our brain's way of telling us something is wrong; (being *frightened* is our brain's way of telling us something is *really* wrong) and we need to act quickly. These are great feelings and we should pay attention to it!



- Ignore any temptation to wait and see what happens or to ‘hang around’ where a fight may be starting.
- When ‘trouble’ starts events can escalate very quickly. Whilst it may be easy to escape from a situation when trouble first begins it can become increasingly difficult as ‘trouble’ escalates.
- Always leave as soon as trouble starts and if necessary phone the police for help *after* you have left.
- Because a fight can continue or restart outside of a building or in the street once you have left the immediate situation get as far away as you can by leaving the area. Ideally leave together but if necessary protect yourself by leaving and getting far away. Do not be tempted to go back and see what has happened.
- Do not try to get involved - it is unlikely people you do not know will listen to you and if they are already angry even less so. You are more likely to become another target for their anger.
- Add any additional legal information not already covered from Section 6.

### **Plenary and assessment.**

Invite pairs to discuss

- What do I know now about carrying knives that I didn’t know before?
- If I noticed a friend of mine was carrying a knife or told me they were thinking about carrying a knife I am confident I would know what to say and do.
- I am confident I have an accurate understanding of how many young people actually carry knives in my community.
- I understand the personal and legal consequences of carrying knives.



### **Section 5 - Who can help pupils if they have concerns about knives or other weapons**

- Teachers and any other school staff that you trust
- Family, youth workers, sports/out of school activity coaches or tutors
- The police
- Childline 0800 1111
- Get Connected
- Coramvoice.org.uk
- Talksafe.org.uk (London based)

There are different support services depending on your area - Google advice and helplines for children in your area to come up with a more targeted result.

If you are nervous about approaching any of these people alone then ask a friend that you trust to go along to be with you or when you make a call.



## **Section 6 - Knives and the law – a briefing for teachers.**

As of April 2016 these are the laws surrounding knife crime that could affect your students. Please note this list is not exhaustive and there are often many other factors and laws taken into account if a crime using an offensive weapon takes place including GBH, ABH, Robbery, Theft etc.

Ensure pupils have been told;

- You can be stopped and searched by the police if you are 10 or over if they have reasonable grounds to suspect you are carrying a knife, offensive weapon or drugs or are a danger to yourself or others.
- Teachers can search you if they also have intelligence (information) that you are carrying a knife and if you resist the search they can use reasonable force if they believe you could cause harm to yourself or others.
- If you are caught carrying a knife (even if you have never used it) you can go to prison for up to 4 years.
- If you kill someone using a knife you will get a minimum sentence of 25 years.
- If you are with someone that uses a knife you can be convicted under the doctrine of "Joint enterprise."

This law does not just apply to knife crime but any offence where more than one person is involved:

- Joint enterprise is a powerful prosecuting tool applied so that more than one person - often a group - can be charged with the same crime if it can be proved that they were in some way "in it together". It applies even though the suspects may have played different parts in the alleged offence.
- Criminal law generally only holds offenders liable for their own actions but, under the doctrine of joint enterprise, a person may be found guilty for another person's crime. Simple association or accidental presence during a crime is insufficient for a charge under joint enterprise.





## Appendix – Exploring ‘disrespect’.

‘Disrespect’ in adolescence is a very complex issue and the following questions are only intended as one possible route into this. It is unlikely that a single lesson can do more than offer an opportunity to bring this issue into the open for exploration.

It is essential to ‘know your class’ and understand your community before exploring ‘disrespect’. With limited time it can be easy to inadvertently provide a platform for a minority of young people to ‘champion’ or reinforce the importance of protecting their right to respect regardless of the cost to themselves or others.

Brain imaging shows teens and adults tend to process facial expressions differently leaving adolescent brains vulnerable to misinterpreting others facial expressions. This is compounded as adolescents mostly use the amygdala to process their subsequent feelings, two small almond shaped regions that guides instinctual or "gut" reactions, while the adults rely on the frontal cortex, which governs reason and planning.

As the teens get older, the center of this activity gradually moves to the frontal cortex and away from the amygdala. We might interpret this being able to have a more ‘mature response’ to issues such as ‘disrespect’ even if it was actually intended. A key role of PSHE education is providing the learning and opportunities necessary to help young people through their neural development.

### Activity

After Ben died one the perpetrators said they had felt ‘disrespected’.

Ask groups to discuss

- What they might have meant by this?
- Does it matter if we feel ‘disrespected’?
- What sort of things might make someone feel they have been ‘disrespected’?
- How might the presence of friends or other peers influence the behaviour of people who believe they have been ‘disrespected’? Is it easier to walk away if we are on our own?
- How might people ‘misread’ others language or behaviour for ‘disrespect’ – could people ‘read it wrong’? (For example ‘They gave me a look’ could easily be misinterpreted.)

This can be an opportunity for a ‘mini lecture’ explaining how young people's’ brains undergo huge changes and the vulnerabilities this can bring. There is nothing ‘wrong’ with their brains they are undergoing a period of development.



Explain that we are not entirely 'slaves' to our brains, we can stop, take a breath and ask ourselves '*am I reading this right; am I over-reacting or reacting appropriately?*'

Ask the class to think about creating an imaginary set traffic lights in their heads,

- Red means '*stop*',
- Amber means '*think*',
- Add a second amber light, this means '*think a bit more*'
- Green which means '*now act*'.

If in doubt, encourage them to use their brains 'traffic lights'

Ask groups to discuss

- Is hurting someone (perhaps badly) an acceptable way of dealing with feelings of disrespect – especially if we might have misread the situation?
- Is even if we are right is 'being disrespect' an acceptable reason to hurt someone? What if it means we ourselves face serious consequences? What if our actions hurt our own families?
- How might we react in a positive way if we feel we (or our friend) have been 'disrespected'?