

EPKCE KS3 Session 1

Understanding Risks and Consequences of Knife Crime

Overview

This session educates young people about the risks and consequences of carrying knives. Through discussions, case studies, and interactive activities, students will explore the motivations behind carrying a knife and the legal and personal repercussions. The session encourages critical thinking and reflection to promote safer choices.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, students will:

- Identify reasons why young people may carry knives and the risks involved.
- Challenge the myth that knives provide protection.
- Explore the role of gangs and exploitation in youth knife crime.
- Develop strategies for conflict resolution without violence.
- Reflect on the impact of knife crime on individuals and communities.

PSHE Programme of Study Links

- R23. strategies to recognise, de-escalate and exit aggressive social situations
- R24. to evaluate the dangers and consequences of being involved in gangs, serious organised crime or carrying a weapon
- R37. the characteristics of abusive behaviours, such as grooming, sexual harassment, sexual and emotional abuse, violence and exploitation; to recognise warning signs, including online; how to report abusive behaviours or access support for themselves or others
- R28. to recognise when others are using manipulation, persuasion or coercion and how to respond

Assumed Prior Learning

Students may have prior awareness of knife crime from media, community discussions, or personal experiences. This session builds on previous PSHE lessons on safety and EKCP sessions.

Session Outline

The session should be delivered informally, ensuring a relaxed environment where students feel comfortable expressing their views.

Introduction & Reflection	15 minutes	Reviewing prior learning and icebreaker activity.
Discussion “Why Do People Carry?”	20 minutes	Exploring motivations to carry and risks of carrying.
Case Study: “Defence is No Defence”	10 minutes	Group reading of a case study and discussion.
Balloon Debate	10 minutes	Group decision-making activity.
Reflection & Closing Discussion	5 minutes	Key takeaways and personal reflection.

Suggested SEND Activities

- **Smaller Group Discussions:** Provide sentence starters to help structure responses.
- **Visual Aids:** Use images, short videos (e.g., Alfie’s Story on YouTube), and simple diagrams.
- **Role Play:** Act out safer choices in conflict situations.

Suggested Activities for Vulnerable Students

- **Scenario-Based Problem Solving:** Discuss real-life scenarios relevant to their experiences.
- **One-to-One Support:** Offer a quiet space for those needing extra time to process.

Tips for Delivery

- **Create a Safe Space:** Emphasize respect and confidentiality.
- **Use Real-Life Examples:** Relate to students' environments and experiences.
- **Encourage Participation:** Avoid putting pressure on students to speak but invite voluntary contributions.
- **Be Prepared for Disclosures:** Know safeguarding procedures in case a student shares personal concerns.

Lesson Plan

1. Introduction & Reflection (15 min)

Activity: Revisiting Prior Learning

- Brief discussion on previous EKCP sessions (e.g., bladed articles law, gangs, conflict resolution).

Icebreaker: "Common Ground"

- Students stand in a large circle.
- One student shares a personal interest (e.g., "I like football", "I like dance music").
- Others step forward if they share the interest, stay still if neutral, or step back if they dislike it.
- Repeat with different interests until there is a group in the middle of the room.

Debrief: Highlight to the group the idea that although everyone has different experiences, they all share common ground.

- You can relate this to the session theme: just as students share interests, they may also share experiences, pressures, and challenges surrounding knife crime and this is a safe space for them to discuss these, and it is okay to get things wrong during the session.

2. Discussion: "Why Do People Carry?" (20 min)

- Start the group discussion with the young people sharing what they know about knife crime, the consequences, effects and causes. Then ask the question "Do you think most young people who carry knives do so for protection?"
- This activity explores motivations, risks, and misconceptions.
- Set up the space with ground rules for the next activity, as young people may be discussing sensitive or potentially triggering topics.
- Encourage the young people in the group to each share something. Try to limit the amount of time spent on each point so that the group can get through each of them.

Discussion Points

(You can use fearless discussion cards here instead if you'd wish)

1. **Staying Safe or Taking a Risk?** Does carrying a knife make someone safer?
 - Some people think that carrying a knife will protect them, but it makes them more likely to get hurt or in trouble.
2. **Gangs & Being Tricked** How do gangs exploit young people? If a friend told you they were in a gang, what would you say? Do you think you could help them get out?

- Sometimes, criminals who are a part of a gang may trick young people into carrying knives for them, making them take the risk of getting caught or hurt instead of them. This is called criminal exploitation.
3. **Getting Even?** What does the word 'Opps' mean? What are better ways to solve problems without using knives or violence?
- Some young people might carry a knife because of past arguments, to get revenge or out of fear of 'opps' (opposition gang members / enemies).
4. **Fashion Statement?** Do celebrities, influencers, music or the media glamorize knife crime? What are the real-life consequences?
- Sometimes, films, songs, social media, celebrities, influencers or fashion trends can make knife crime or joining a gang look cool.

True or False Activity

- Read statements aloud; students decide if true or false.
 - To make it interactive, you could ask people to stand up or raise their hand if they think a statement is true.
- **Statement One:** Carrying a Knife makes you safer.
 - **Answer: False. It increases your risk of injury.**
- **Statement Two:** Most young people do not carry a knife.
 - **Answer: True. Most young people do not carry knives. Does this surprise you?**
- **Statement Three:** If you stab someone in self-defence, you won't get into any trouble.
 - **Answer: False. The law will not accept stabbing someone in self-defence as a valid excuse. There are no excuses for carrying a knife, wielding a knife or using it to hurt someone.**
- **Statement Four:** People who carry knives are just looking for trouble all of the time.
 - **Answer: False. Some people carry them due to fear or because they are being exploited, but it puts them at a greater risk of being caught or hurt compared to somebody who doesn't.**

3. Case Study: "Defence is No Defence" (10 min)

- Take it in turns reading the case study below (14-year-old carrying a knife for protection, resulting in unintended harm).
- After reading the case study, move on to the guided discussion below.

Liam, a 14-year-old boy, started carrying a knife after his older cousin told him it would keep him safe. He wasn't in a gang, but he had seen others in his area carrying weapons, and he didn't want to feel vulnerable.

One afternoon, Liam got into an argument with another boy, Jay, outside a shop. The argument escalated, and Jay pushed Liam. Feeling threatened, Liam pulled out his knife to scare him away. But instead of backing off, Jay panicked and tried to grab the knife... In the struggle, Jay was seriously injured.

When the police arrived, Liam claimed he didn't mean to use the knife—he only carried it for protection. However, the law does not accept this as a valid excuse. Liam was arrested, and he now faces serious consequences, including a criminal record that could affect his future.

Case Study Guided Discussion

- Why did Liam start carrying a knife?
- Was it for safety, peer pressure, or something else?
- What could Liam have done differently when he felt threatened?
- Do you think the law is fair in saying that carrying a knife for protection is not a valid excuse?
- How might Liam's decision affect his future?
- What would you say to someone who believes carrying a knife makes them safer?

4. Balloon Debate (15 min)

- This activity can engage young people effectively as it allows them to have fun with a serious topic whilst learning at the same time.
- This activity is based on ethical decision making and taking personal responsibility.

Setting up the activity:

- Explain to the young people that a group of people effected by knife crime have gathered in the basket of a hot air balloon. It launched safely, but as it rose higher, it hit problems. **The balloon is losing height rapidly, and the only way to save the group is to throw three characters out of it.**
- Each student will choose a character card. During this activity, they will represent a character affected by knife crime.
- Each student will have 30 seconds to say why their character should stay in the balloon.
- They must argue why they should stay in the balloon.
- The group votes to remove three characters.

Resource: Please find the list of characters at the end of this document.

5. Reflection & Closing Discussion (5 min)

- **Quick-fire discussion prompts:**
 - Sit in a circle, each young person takes it in turn to give an answer:
 - “What’s the first thing that comes to your mind when you hear Knife Crime?”
 - “What would you do if your friend told you they were carrying?”
 - “How can we stop young people carrying knives?”
- **Final words:** Summary of session and signposting to local support services.

Alternative Activities

Fearless ‘What would you do?’ Cards and Resources.

You can find these on the Fearless Website. [Resources | Crimestoppers](#)

Baseline and Plenary

- Introductory discussion with the young people around pre-existing knowledge on knife crime and raising of topics from the previous EKCP sessions.
- Session concludes with young people each taking it in turns to answer questions in a quick-fire discussion

Characters for the Balloon Debate

A Shopkeeper selling stab-proof vests

An ex-offender who no longer carries a knife

An ex-offender who was arrested for stabbing someone and still carries a knife

A police officer with the powers to stop, search and arrest

A teenager who was pressured into carrying a knife for a gang

A teenager who carries a knife for protection

A teenager who has been hurt by a knife before so now they carry

A doctor who has treated knife crime victims

A lawyer who has defended knife crime offenders in the past

A lawyer who has defended knife crime victims in the past

A gang leader who “traps” children into carrying weapons

A politician working on laws to tackle knife crime