

ARE YOU READY?



FOR THE FIGHT AGAINST
KNIFE AND GUN CRIME !!!

Barnardos NE Young Peoples'
Regional Advisory Group

“Speaking Out”
about knife, gun and
gang crime.



Introduction

This report has been researched, compiled and written by Barnardo's NE Young People's Regional Advisory Group (YPRAG).

There are 10 members in the YPRAG who are Barnardo's Young Volunteers or current/ex-Barnardo's service users, aged 12yrs to 24yrs and come from right across the North East to form a regional group.

The groups primary aims are;

- Meeting with Barnardos Directors and Trustees to ensure that the voice of the children and young people is at the heart of the organisation
- Advising on how Barnardo's services could be improved

The groups achievements include:

- winning a National award for excellence in participation,
- contributing to the training of over 600 social work students and foster carers
- speaking in an All Parties House of Commons debate on poverty,
- advising the Children's Workforce Development Council on national standards
- undertaking research such as this study on knife, gun and gang crime.

Background

The NCVCCO "Speaking Out" fund helps young people to explore the connection between ***knife and gun crime and gang culture*** amongst their peers.

Thanks to this funding the YPRAG launched a creative arts competition, supporting entries on poster design, photography and poetry. However feedback from peers suggested that they preferred face to face interviews rather than contribute to an art exhibition. The group put together a questionnaire and embarked on interviewing young people from their social networks, schools and Barnardos projects across the region.

Aims

The aims of this research project are to;

- Gain an understanding of young people's views about knife, gun and gang crime, the impact this has on their lives, their fears, awareness and solutions.
- Create opportunity for the voices of NE young peoples to be valued, heard and listened to by local and national decision makers. Young people's worries about knife, gun and gang crime.
- Ascertain whether their worries were immediate or perceived.
- Young people's recommendations on how to best to tackle knife, gun and gang crime.

Methodology

Questionnaire

The main means of gathering information was by using a questionnaire. There were two versions of this:

Peer-to-Peer Questionnaire (See appendix 1). Members of the YPRAG used this questionnaire in peer-to-peer interviews with young people aged between 12yrs to 24yrs and from:

- their friendship groups
- Barnardos NE projects they attend
- their schools

Self completing Questionnaire (See appendix 2). Modifications needed to be made to the initial questionnaire in order to accommodate the need for self completion, i.e. distribution in schools.

180 questionnaires were distributed to 10 members of Barnardos YPRAG who live in Sunderland, Newcastle, North Tyneside, Northumberland, Durham, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough and Stockton.

112 questionnaires were completed following peer-to-peer interviews and self-completion in schools, Barnardos regional projects (who work with the most vulnerable) and YRPAG social networks.

83 of the questionnaires were self completed, and the remaining 29 completed by peer interview.



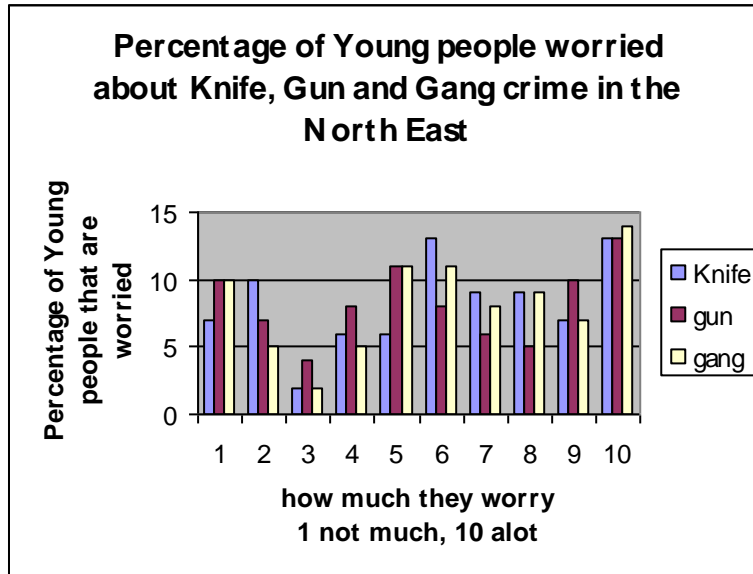
Findings

When you hear knife, gang and gun crime what do you think?

That worries me	54%
That doesn't worry me	27%
Don't know	19%
That might happen to me	39%
That might happen to someone else	28%
Don't know	33%
That hardly ever happens	14%
That sometimes happens	19%
That often happens	16%
That's always happening	13%
Don't know	38%

How much do you worry about knife, gang and gun crime?
(1 = not much, 10 = a lot)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Knife	7%	10%	2%	6%	6%	13%	9%	9%	7%	13%
gun	10%	7%	4%	8%	11%	8%	6%	5%	10%	13%
gang	10%	5%	2%	5%	11%	11%	8%	9%	7%	14%



Have you or someone you know been a victim of knife, gang or gun crime?

YES friend	YES me	NO
6%	2%	92%

What happened when attacked?

- Someone stabbed in the ear
- Gun held to head
- Knife pulled on someone at a cash point
- Someone stabbed
- Someone was beat up in a area near to them
- When walking home from school, there was a knife put against a young persons neck

Feelings when being attacked

- Someone S*** themselves, thought they were going to die
- Upset
- Scared
- Worried

How can these types of crimes be stopped ?

- Stop all influences – games etc
- MORE police on streets
 - More searches (search everyone)
 - More police around schools
 - CCTV everywhere
 - Widen “beat” area’s – to include alleys, fields etc
- Automatic arrest for possession of a weapon
- Don’t know

- It will be very hard to stop
- Don't think its possible to stop it
- Don't know, but it must be stopped, as lots of people are dying because of it
- Take all weapons off teenagers
- Own up
- Stop selling knives and guns
 - No knives sold underage
- Catch them and put them in jail
 - Make sentence longer
- Stop putting it on the news, as this is an incentive to get attention
- Ban them
- Run away
- Less gangs on streets
- Make all weapons licensed
- Youth workers to work with young people
- Prevention in schools – work with them early
- Work with young people on positive images
- Harsher sentences
- Community work
- Adjust government policies around families
- Make parents aware of everything
- Bring back capital punishments
- Concentrate on the causes of crime

Conclusion

A lot of the young people we talked to are worried about crime, and that they may become victims.

Only 2% of those questioned have been victims themselves.

We also found that young people are more worried about gang crime than any other violent crime.

There were a lot of people feeling that they could use a higher police presence on the streets, this included CCTV and increased “beat” area’s.

8% of young people wanted tougher punishments for violent crime.

92% of young people felt that there should be more creative solutions to be looked at, such as prevention in schools, and more positive images of young people.

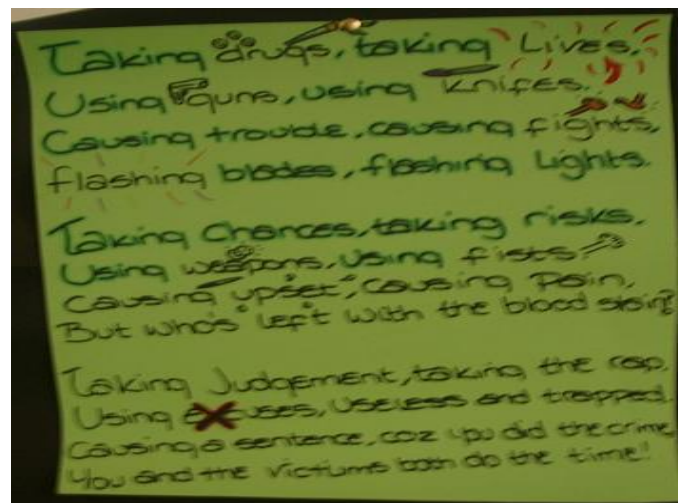
Creative Arts Competition

All entries received **appendix 3**

As well as gathering information through the questionnaire we publicised and held a *knife gun and gang crime* creative arts competition for all young people who use Barnardo's projects in the North East.

Entries around using photography, poetry and poster design were encouraged, with the majority of entries sent from young people in Barnardos projects SECOS in Middlesbrough and The BASE in North Tyneside. Both of these projects work with the most vulnerable & socially disadvantaged.

We have included their art in this report and have also drawn on this to inform our following overall conclusions.



Barnardos Young Peoples Regional Advisory Group conclusions based on personal research and data gathered.

The YPRAG drew upon their questionnaire findings, experiences of attending "Save our Streets" conferences, meeting with the families of murdered young victims and recent high profile media knife, gun and gang crime information and our competition entries and came to the following conclusions;

- The actual fear of crime may drive some young people to carry a weapon to defend them against a knife, gun or gang crime attack.
- Concerns are that the increasing media exposure is heightening this fear and making this level of violence a vicious cycle.
- The media always shows negative images of young people.
- Young people don't feel safe.
- Solutions are needed to this problem and it doesn't help by tarring every young person with the same negative brush.

- All gun, knife and gang crime should be recorded by the Police even if the young people are below a certain age.
- Curfews may not be the answer as research shows that the highest percentage of violent youth crime takes place within the one hour time frame following the end of the school day.
- Zero tolerance and more stop and search.
- Pay for more Police on the streets and stop all this Police paperwork.
- Licence or ban the sale of knives.
- Communities need to work together as it's everyone's problem and not just happening to someone else.
- Stiffer jail sentences for carrying knives and any violent crime.
- Set up a programme where Youth Workers identify and select young leaders/influencers in schools, even if they are anti-social. These young people influence other young people a lot so give them a lot of support and leadership training to make sure that this influence is positive and against violent crime.
- Violence is often linked to alcohol and drugs. Crack down on under age drinking and drugs.
- Get young people involved in more in-school debate around violent crime and the consequences.

Our future plans

Our most important task will be to thank, and share this report with, the young people who helped contribute, as their input has been greatly valued.

We will also share this report with our funders "Speaking Out ", Barnardos, local and national Politicians, Police Commissioners, Schools, Youth and Social Care agencies, Media and also present to "Big Trouble in Little Britain" UK Youth in Bournemouth, 25/27th July 08

We have also been approached from the Regional Youth Work Unit who propose to build on our study and work in partnership with us to "roll out" our questionnaire to a wider network of North East young people.

Appendix 1

Knife gun and gang crime Questionnaire (peer to peer)

1. When I say the words knife gun and gang crime what do you think?

(For example ask, "Does it worry you or do you think it just happens to someone else?")

2. On a scale of 1-10 how much do you worry about knife gun and gang crime?

(1 is that they don't worry, 10 is that they worry all the time)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3. Do you know anyone that has experienced knife gun or gang crime?

Yes/no

You might want to ask "if yes, do you want to tell me a little bit about what happened, and how it made you feel?"

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4. Do you have any ideas on how knife, gun and gang crime can be stopped and who might be able to help?

.....

Appendix 2

Knife gun and gang crime questionnaire (self-completion)

Please circle the answer, or answers which most closely match your own view in each case.

1. when you hear the phrase “Knife gun and gang crime” do you think

- a) that worries me
- b) that doesn't worry me

- c) that might happen to me
- d) that might happen to someone else

- e) that hardly ever happens
- f) that sometimes happens
- g) that often happens
- h) that always happens

2. On the following scale, how much do you worry about knife, gun and gang crime?

Circling 1 means you don't worry at all, and circling 10 means you worry all the time

Knife crime 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Gun crime 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Gang crime 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3. Have you been a victim of knife, gun or gang crime?

Circle YES NO

If yes, please tell me about the incident(s)

If yes, how did it make you feel?

4. What are your views on how knife gun and gang crime can be stopped?

Appendix 3

