

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is to update the Committee about the React Project. The React Project has been designed by young people for young people and aims to reduce/prevent knife crime.

1.0. Background

1.1 This project developed by a group of 13 young people aged 13-19 who were awarded funding from Youth Opportunity Fund to develop a peer led project that reduces/prevents knife crime in their area.

2.0. React Project

2.1. The group of young people have worked together since May 2009, meeting once a week. The young people's aim was to develop a project which used informal discussions and art to show others the dangers of carrying knives.

2.2. Prior to the project commencing the group went through a process of exploring their own values, feelings and beliefs around knife crime. They did this through attending conferences, watching documentaries, debating, sharing experiences and finding out about the law around carrying knives. The group also gained a first aid award that focused on dealing with injuries caused by knives.

2.3. The group then planned the detail of the project with the help of the local Police Officer and Police Community Support Officer. The group delivered their project to young people from Woodchurch High School. The group from the school consisted of 12 men aged 12-14 years. The young people were released from school for three afternoons to attend the course.

2.4. The first afternoon session of the project was lead by the group and focused on:

- Dangers of carrying a knife
- Why people carry knives
- Who carry knives
- Who is affected by knife crime
- The Law around carrying knives (delivered by the local Police Community Support Officer)

2.5. The next two sessions used graffiti art (facilitated by Dead Cat Dreaming) to display what the young people had learnt. Eight large boards were produced which will be photographed and made into posters and postcards. These posters and postcards are aimed at preventing young people carrying knives and will be played in schools and youth clubs in the local area.

3.0. Outcomes and Impacts

3.1. The project provided all the young people, both facilitators and participants, with information around knife crime and the dangers of carrying knives.

3.2. Eight young people received first aid certificates.

- 3.3. Young people had the opportunity to plan and deliver their own project, providing them with the feeling of ownership, responsibility and a chance to help to improve their communities.
- 3.4. The project provided young people from the school the opportunity to be creative in an informal learning environment and to produce art work which will be used across Wirral to educate other young people about the dangers of knife crime.

4. **Future Developments**

- 4.1. The group will now discuss what information they would like to be included on the posters and postcards.
- 4.2. A celebration of the young people's achievements will be held to launch the posters and postcards and to reward all the young people involved. Parents, community members, school and police will all be invited to this event.
- 4.3. The group has been asked to support Wirral Youth Theatre's new outreach drama performance which will focus on knife crime. The group will deliver their workshop to the production cast and will help with research for the script. The group may also deliver their workshop before or after the Youth Theatre's performance once they start their tour.
- 4.4. The group are also interested in working with the Youth Theatre to develop a DVD that focuses on people's experiences of knife crime.

5.0. **Financial Implications**

- 5.1. The project was funded through a grant from the Youth Opportunities Fund.

6.0. **Staffing Implications**

- 6.1. This project is supported by Fender Youth Club's staffing establishment.

7.0. **Equal Opportunities Implications/Health Impact Assessment**

- 7.1. The project delivers positive messages about keeping safe.

8.0. **Community Safety Implications**

- 8.1. The project directly addresses issues of knife crime.

9.0. **Local Agenda 21 Implications**

- 9.1. There are none.

10.0. **Planning Implications**

- 10.1. There are none.

11.0. **Anti-poverty Implications**

- 11.1. There are none.

12.0. **Social Inclusion Implications**

- 12.1. There are none.

13.0. **Local Members Support Implications**

13.1. This report affects Irby/Frankby/Greasby/Upton Ward.

14.0. **Background papers**

- Tackling Youth Knife Crime – Practical Advice for the Police – *Home Office, 2009*

RECOMMENDATIONS

That

(1) The Committee notes this report.

Howard Cooper
Director of Children's Services