



**Sure it's hard talking
to your child about knives.
Not half as hard as
never talking to him again.**

**A guide on how to talk to
your child about knives.**



IF THERE'S A KNIFE IN YOUR CHILD'S HANDS, IT'S IN YOUR HANDS TO STOP IT.

Young people face all sorts of pressures and it may be that your child is in contact with friends who carry knives. The chances are your child has talked about knives with friends or heard a story about the kid who carried a knife. Whilst many young people do not carry knives – it is still a conversation worth having with your child.

You have a role to play in helping your child make the right choice on this subject. If there is one person your child will listen to, it's you. They respect you more than you think.

This leaflet holds practical advice for parents/carers on what they can do to reduce the likelihood of a child carrying a knife. We aim to give some pointers on what to look for, how to raise the subject and who to contact if you need more help.

WHAT YOU CAN DO - **KNOW**

Find out about the law. Before talking to your child about knives, you might want to consider the following points:

- It is illegal to carry any knife if there is intent to use it, even defensively, as a weapon. Even if the knife belongs to someone else, such as a friend or a boyfriend.
- Police can and will search someone if they believe they are carrying a knife. Police and school staff can also search young people for weapons at school.
- Carrying a knife could mean being arrested, going to court and ending up with a criminal record or even a prison sentence. This can affect the rest of someone's life. Having a criminal record can prevent that person getting a job, going to university or college or even travelling abroad to some countries.
- One of the little known laws among young people is that of joint enterprise, which states you do not have to be the person committing the stabbing to be charged and convicted for it. If you have been part of the act or the group when the stabbing takes place, then you are involved.



If you would like to find out more information about knife possession, please visit our website at **www.direct.gov.uk/talkaboutknives**

You could also get in touch with your local Neighbourhood Policing team who will talk to you in more detail about the law and knives. If you are worried about your child, you might want a local officer to talk to your child or ask the school to arrange a talk. Your policing team could give anti-weapon talks at your child's school.

To find out who your local neighbourhood policing team is please visit **<https://www.west-midlands.police.uk/your-local-police>**

WHAT YOU CAN DO - **TALK**

- Have a chat with your children and see what they think about carrying a knife - you may have seen something in the news about knife crime that you could discuss.

- This can be a tricky conversation – your child may be scared or unwilling to talk about this. But it is never a bad thing to talk and it's important to be clear that your child does have a choice, even when they think they may not.
- Think about raising these points with your child;

By carrying a knife you:

- have a false sense of security;
- could be arming your attacker, increasing the risk of getting stabbed or injured;
- are breaking the law.

Not carrying, and walking away from confrontation:

- is what the vast majority do;
- is the tougher thing to do;
- means you'll be safer from serious harm and not breaking the law.

WHAT YOU CAN DO – **WORK TOGETHER**

- You're not alone! Have a chat to your children's friends' parents. If you're worried, they probably are too and it's always good to talk about these things.
- Other parents may see your child when you don't and you see their child – by working together you can keep a better eye on their behaviour.
- Are there other members of your family who could lend a hand in talking to your son about this? Perhaps dad, uncle or older brother?
- Work together with other mums and with your child's school to raise awareness of this issue and get advice.

WHAT YOU CAN DO – **LOOK OUT**

Most young people decide they need to start carrying a knife because they feel threatened. Signs to look out for that may suggest your child is feeling this way are:

- school's not going well / they don't want to go in to school at all;
- they've been a recent victim of theft/bullying/mugging;
- a different network of friends who may be older than your child.

Remind your child that they should always walk away if confronted with the threat of violence.

WHAT YOU CAN DO – **GET SUPPORT**

There are many organisations out there willing to help if you have concerns about your child.

You can contact your local authority for a list of local groups and organisations who can offer advice, as well as information on setting up your own group.



HELP AND ADVICE:

For further help and advice, including information about our #lifeorknife campaign, the law around knife possession and useful videos and other resources please visit the below links:
www.west-midlands.police.uk/your-options/knife-crime#prevention
www.west-midlands.police.uk/campaigns/life-or-knife

Get in touch:

Search our website for helpful advice and guidance whatever situation you may be facing.

You can also speak to an advisor using our Live Chat facility. You can find out more about by visiting

www.west-midlands.police.uk/contact-us/live-chat
or by searching 'Live Chat' via the search box on our website.

Alternately you can contact us by calling 101.

Other interests and activities for your child

It's important that you encourage your child to get involved in positive activities and explore any interests they have.

To find out what activities are happening in your area contact your local council and ask to be put through to the youth service department.

IF IT'S NOT 999

SEARCH: WMP ONLINE

www.west-midlands.police.uk

- Get tailored advice
- Report non-emergency crime online
- Track your case
- Live chat to an adviser

