



NEWSLETTER

The school holidays are a great time to make memories together — but they can also bring new risks for young people. Here's what you need to know to help keep your child safe this Easter and all year round.

EYES OPEN: SPOTTING THE SIGNS OF EXPLOITATION

Criminal exploitation is when someone takes advantage of a person's trust to encourage or force them into doing things that put them at risk of harm.

This could include:

- Selling drugs
- Carrying drugs or money – or storing them somewhere
- Carrying a knife or other weapon – or storing them somewhere
- Looking after cannabis (weed) that is being grown in a house or other property
- Having sex with someone or engaging in sexual activity.

FREE JACKET*



***But at what cost?**

WHAT ARE 'COUNTY LINES'?

'County lines' refers to the networks used by gangs to distribute drugs from cities to smaller towns and rural areas. These operations rely heavily on the exploitation of children and young people, who are used to transport and sell drugs across different locations.

HOW TO SPOT THE SIGNS

Gangs will groom children through the promises of gifts, attention and a 'better' life, only to find themselves trapped in dangerous situations. Initially, these gifts may seem harmless - new clothes, gadgets, or money. However, if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. More about spotting the signs can be [found on our website](#).

WHAT SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE?

- **Crimestoppers Fearless** – a safe place to give information 100% anonymously
- **Childline** – Free, confidential advice anytime, whatever your worry
- **NSPCC** – If you're worried about a child, you can contact the NSPCC Helpline online or by phone
- If you think a child is in immediate danger, please call the police on 999 straight away.

**TOGETHER, WE CAN
CREATE A SAFER
KENT AND MEDWAY**



kentandmedwayvru.co.uk

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WHAT'S *the* POINT?

KEEPING YOUR FAMILY SAFER AT HOME

'What's the Point?' is a new campaign run by the Kent and Medway Violence Reduction Unit, which encourages us to think about one simple question: why does a kitchen knife need a sharp point? Just like seatbelts and smoke alarms, it's about making one simple change that protects the people you love - swapping your pointed kitchen knives for round-ended ones.

WHY ARE ROUND-ENDED KNIVES SAFER?

Researchers at De Montfort University tested round-ended knives against traditional pointed knives using real fabric. Pointed knives penetrated every fabric type tested. **Round-ended knives penetrated none.**

Round-ended knives still do everything you need - chopping, slicing, and preparing meals but with less risk.

WHERE CAN I BUY ONE?

Round-ended knives are easy to find and affordable. Look for the **Viners Assure Range** available at well-known online retailers.



If you're a partnership agency, school or college, get in touch with the VRU to discover how you too can move to safer knife options.

COULD IT HAPPEN IN YOUR HOME?

Picture a busy weekday evening. You're cooking dinner, helping with homework, and keeping on top of the chores. The children are exploring, and the knife you left on the side is just within reach. **One simple swap can help to reduce the risk and give you peace of mind. Visit our website for full guidance.**

WHAT DO I DO WITH MY OLD KNIVES?

Never put pointed knives in your household bin. Securely package and take them to your local recycling centre for safe disposal. **Visit our website for full guidance.**



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