

Keeping Safe

A lesson plan for teachers, youth workers and
other practitioners working with young people

Key Stage 2

make

This lesson was produced in partnership with the National Justice Museum, Nottingham.
With thanks to Kate Daniels | psheeducation.co.uk and the whole team at Make Agency.

Teacher notes

These lesson plans for primary school children in years 5 and 6 have been created jointly between [the Ben Kinsella Trust](#) and the [National Justice Museum in Nottingham](#). The Ben Kinsella Trust and the National Justice Museum work diligently to tackle knife crime and have produced these lesson plans for free, for the use of all educators working with primary age children. We encourage you to make full use of these resources and share them widely.

Curriculum links to Key Stage 2 can be found at the end of this document.

These resources have been created for Year 5 and Year 6 only. They have been written with flexibility in mind, allowing you to adapt them according to the needs of your pupils. It is important that you use your professional judgement on the suitability of this resource for each individual in your cohort.

A needs (baseline) assessment is provided for each lesson. This will enable you to understand existing knowledge and learning, along with gaps, and will ensure you meet the needs of your cohort.

Assessment for learning throughout the lesson is enabled through class discussion and activities and an assessment of learning at the end of each lesson provides time to reflect, clarify and evidence pupil learning.

Prior to teaching, it is strongly recommended that you read through the lesson plans and familiarise yourself with all of the resources and films, along with the websites/ organisations which you will be signposting to. Consider your cohort and whether there is anything further required to make this accessible and fully inclusive, taking into account each individual's needs and adapting or differentiating the lesson where required to meet these. Please note, when altering lessons, steer clear of adding any further content which may elicit your class to feel frightened, ashamed or distressed and be sure not to unknowingly glamorise or make risky behaviours seem appealing.

Young people frequently overestimate the risk-taking behaviours of their peers. It will be helpful to gather local data so that you can compare your students' perceptions of risks in their community with this data. If knife carrying

in a community is rare it is important to reinforce this and to challenge any incorrect belief that it is more prevalent than it is. A mistaken perception that knife carrying is a common practice in a community can encourage some young people to carry a knife themselves. It can be reassuring to young people to provide data that clarifies this misconception. You could consider inviting a local police representative to join the discussion to help clarify any misperceptions or respond to questions.

Check for any child protection, vulnerable children, children who may have experienced personal bereavement or had experience of violent or knife crime, SEN or other issues and read all Government guidelines and relevant school policies, asking SLT (Senior Leadership Teams) if you are unsure about anything. If you don't know already, find out who pupils can go to with any worries whilst they are at school – including any specific adults and where they can be located so you can share this with them.

When you are happy these are the right lessons for your pupils, spend some time researching the subject - it is important that you understand some of the complexities before you teach it.

The Home Office has produced Teacher Guidance with some further notes on teaching this subject – see [#knifefree](#). If you are a school in London you might also find the 'London needs you alive toolkit' from The Mayor's Office For Policing And Crime (MOPAC) useful.

Always start each lesson by creating a working agreement with each different class to maintain a safe and respectful environment for all. Write these with your pupils. Examples might include showing respect, not disclosing private information about themselves or others, not chatting about others afterwards and to always seek support if needed.

Finally, always remember to signpost to useful organisations in each lesson so that your pupils can go to trusted people or websites for more information and support should they need to. www.childline.org.uk, www.knifefree.co.uk, www.fearless.org along with 999 for emergencies are all good examples found on the Home Office guidance.

Keeping Safe

Learning objectives:

- To explain why carrying knives can increase rather than decrease danger and the possible consequences of carrying knives.
- To recognise when a situation is escalating into something dangerous and to know what to do.
- To explain how knife crime can damage far more people than the victim and perpetrator.
- To know where to go for more support about knife carrying and knife crime.

Learning outcomes:

- I know that carrying knives does not make me safer
- I will recognise when events are becoming dangerous and take the right actions
- I can see that victims are not always criminals

Keywords

Escalation Anxious Victim Perpetrator

Crime Consequences Offender

Important notes

This lesson is written for Year 5 and 6 primary year groups.

Make sure you read the teacher notes before teaching this lesson – some of this material is highly emotive and it is important you follow the guidance set out in the teacher notes to consider how best to teach and support your pupils.

Resources

- A4 paper and writing pens plus coloured pens, large flipchart paper and coloured pens for group work
- Local data on knife crime if available
- Film: The story of a family's loss to knife crime | The Ben Kinsella Trust. (2.15 mins) <https://youtu.be/Uv87QY0tMw>

The activities in this lesson are based around a gradually escalating story. It is important to consider how far along this journey to take your students. For many young people whose present and future experience of the carrying or use of knives and other weapons is unlikely (it is never impossible) it may be worth spending more time considering the early part of the story since it may be more relevant.

Starter | 10 mins

- Create a working agreement with the class (See teacher notes)
- Share the Learning Objectives.

Assessment: Explain that today they are learning about personal safety and that you want to find out what they think about this before you start.

Tell them you want them to imagine someone new is moving into the area so they need to explain what it is like. Ask them to write down their thoughts to each

question as you ask them and to do this independently. Be clear that there are no right or wrong answers and to give it their best guess if they do not know.

Ask:

1. What is good about living around here?
2. What is not so good?
3. Is it safe to walk around here by day? Why?
4. In the evening? Why?
5. Is there is a lot of 'trouble' around here? (If there is 'trouble' what sort is it?)
6. Do young people around here ever carry knives? (if you think they do – why do you think they carry them?)
7. If you wanted to stay safe living around here what advice would you give someone new to the area?

Main | 40 mins


- Put the children in mixed ability groups of no more than six. Tell them, as a team they are going to create a character on a large piece of paper. Handout the paper and coloured pens.
 - Tell them the character they are going to create is their age and the character has just moved into their area. They can choose all their unique characteristics (Examples might include; sexual identity, name, fashion style, ethnicity, hairstyle, family/carers etc.) Tell them not to worry about the quality of the artwork. They can write all the details about their character around the outside of the picture.
 - Go around the class and let each group introduce their character.
 - Tell them the story below and stop at intervals to ask them questions and allow them time to decide as a group what their character will do.
- **Begin to tell a story:** *Their character has made some friends at their new school and one hot weekend in the summer they get invited to join their new mates in the local park for the afternoon and their parents and carers agree that they can go.*
 - 1. What will your character wear?
 - 2. What will your character take to the park in their pockets or bag?
 - Allow no more than 5 minutes for the teams to decide, add to their picture and feedback to the class.
 - **Continue with the story:** *The day arrives. It is a beautiful sunny day and your character is looking forward to seeing their three new friends. When they arrive at the park though, they notice that one of the friends is carrying a knife. When they are asked why they are carrying it, the friend says, 'I always carry one when I go out, it's no big deal, most young people carry knives, it's just to keep me safe.'*
 - 3. What does their character think/feel about this and why?
 - Allow no more than 5 minutes for the teams to decide, add to their picture and feedback to the class.
 - **Ask:** Why do you think one of the characters is choosing to carry a knife? (Good and not good) They said it is 'no big deal' – what do you feel about this? (Draw out that something that seems 'no big deal' can become a very big deal if circumstances change) They said that 'most young people carry knives' – what do you feel about this? (Good to reinforce any positive local data here - it is critical that young people understand that most young people do not carry knives and never will. It is a very small minority who do.)
 - 4. What does your character feel about their friend choosing to carry a knife?

- Allow no more than 5 minutes for the teams to decide, add to their picture and feedback to the class.
- **Ask:** Imagine the person who is not carrying a knife asks you what they should say or do – what would you advise them? Do you think it would be easy to follow your advice? What might happen if they choose to ignore your advice? Which could be worse? Is the 'right choice' the same as the 'easy choice'?
- Continue with the story: *After an hour or so of messing about, the friend who is carrying the knife says they want to go to the shop to buy some snacks. They ask your character if they can look after their knife while they are gone.*
 - 5. What will your character do?
 - 6. Does your team think this is a good choice or not and why?
- Allow no more than 5 minutes for the teams to decide, add to their picture and feedback to the class.
- **Ask:** Is it acceptable to ask someone to carry a knife? Is it fair? What is likely to happen if both are searched? If your character was searched by the police and said 'The knife isn't mine, I was just asked to look after it by my friend' will this make any difference? (It won't.) What is likely to happen in this situation? (Both are likely to be arrested. Joint Enterprise is something in the law that says if someone is with a friend or a group where someone has a knife and they are aware of this and encourage its use, then if that person went to use the knife, the person/people with them could be held as responsible as the knife holder even if they didn't have or didn't hold the knife.)
- **Continue with the story:** *The evening air is getting cooler and the four friends are relaxing and chatting together. There are lots of other young people in the park doing their own thing. The friends notice an argument seems to be breaking out nearby voices are being raised and they seem to be getting angrier. There seems to be some shouting and name-calling. The four friends now notice that the people who are having a row are made up of two groups of people a little older than them. One member of each group has moved closer together and they are now pushing each other. Others from each group are standing behind them encouraging them and shouting at the other group.*
 - 7. How is your character feeling about what is happening? What will they want to do and what will they actually do?
- Allow no more than 5 minutes for the teams to decide, add to their picture and feedback to the class.
- **Ask:** Might their character's feelings and actions be different from what they are saying? Why? (Draw out that sometimes everyone can feel anxious but pretend to others everything is okay. This can make us feel we are the odd one out when in fact everyone feels the same.) Why might leaving be hard if one of their group wants to stay and watch what happens? Is one person's curiosity an acceptable reason to endanger their friends? Do we have a responsibility to protect our friends?
- **Ask:** What would they advise if some of the friends want to leave but others want to stay? Should they stick together or should those that want to leave do so?
- **Continue with the story:** *Things are now moving quickly. One of the people who is pushing the other has now drawn a knife and is waving it around. The other is still shouting at him. Both groups are now screaming at one another and encouraging the two who are on the verge of fighting. It looks like the other person may be about to pull a knife of his or her own. Your character sees his friend start to reach for their own knife...*
 - 8. How is your character feeling now? What will your character do?

- Allow no more than 5 minutes for the teams to decide, add to their picture and feedback to the class.
- **Ask:** What do they think the friends should do? Has it changed? Explain to the pupils that this process is known as 'escalation' and what is happening inside these people's bodies is called a 'fight response'. A huge number of different chemicals are now pouring through the two people who may be about to fight (and that of groups who are encouraging them). Some parts of their brains will have 'shut down' and other parts will have taken over. Their hearts will be beating quicker and their breathing will be more rapid. Chemicals that reduce pain are being released into their bloodstream (This is why people with serious injuries can still walk about unaware of how badly they have been hurt.) They will almost certainly be unable to think about the consequences of what they are doing, nor is it likely they will 'listen to reason'. Their 'fight response' will be amplified if others are encouraging them. This is why after violent events people sometimes say 'I can't believe I did that, it wasn't like me' Emphasise that events can now escalate very quickly. This situation has become really dangerous if someone doesn't calm down something very serious could be about to happen.
- **Ask about the friend:** What might happen if they pull out their own knife? Why might they feel the need to do this? Is this likely to make things better or worse?
- Ask them to imagine they could turn the clock back – Is there any point where someone could have done something different that would have helped everyone to stay safe? (For example, leaving the park as soon as trouble started.) What might happen next? Who might be in trouble? Is something about to become a 'big deal'?
- **Key point:** Tell the class knives do not make us safer – they make dangerous situations far more dangerous. Feeling anxious or scared is our brain's way of telling us something is wrong, and we need to act quickly. (We should pay attention to these feelings.)
- Tell them to ignore any temptation to wait and see what happens or to 'hang around' where a fight may be starting. When 'trouble' starts events can escalate very quickly. Whilst it may be easy to escape from a situation when trouble first begins it can become increasingly difficult as 'trouble' escalates. Always leave as soon as trouble starts and if necessary, phone the police for help after you have left. Because a fight can continue or restart outside of a building or in the street once you have left the immediate situation get as far away as you can by leaving the area. Ideally leave together but if necessary, protect yourself by leaving and getting far away. Do not be tempted to go back and see what has happened. Do not try to get involved it is unlikely people you do not know will listen to you and if they are already angry even less so. You are more likely to become another target for their anger. (It might be useful to write these up on a flipchart whilst you are going through them.)
- **Continue with the story:** *There is the sound of police sirens and your character sees blue flashing lights heading towards the park. Everyone rushes towards the gates, but police officers are now blocking the exits. They tell everyone to stand still. No one will be allowed to leave until they have been searched. Police officers are watching everyone very carefully...*

Plenary | 10 mins

- Remind children that the choice to carry a knife can start a series of awful events.
 - Knife crime can damage far more people than the victim and perpetrator. It can negatively affect the victim, the perpetrator (the person who carries out an illegal/harmful act), both of their families, their friends, the witnesses to the crime, police, doctors, nurses. The local community...
 - Show them the film: The story of a family's loss to knife crime | The Ben Kinsella Trust.
<https://youtu.be/Uv87QYOTtMw> [2.15 mins]
 - Allow them time to discuss this if required. (See footnotes on The Ben Kinsella Trust for more information.)
- The story
of a
family's loss
to knife crime**


- Assessment: Discuss - 'What do I know now about carrying knives that I didn't know before?' What have I learnt the best thing to do for personal safety is in this situation? (If I noticed a friend of mine was carrying a knife or told me they were thinking about carrying a knife would I feel confident that I would know what to say and do? (You could also ask: Do I know how many young people actually carry knives in my community?))
 - Finally, signpost where they can go for more information about knife crime issues or if they are concerned about themselves, a friend or family member;
 - a. Teachers and any other school staff that you trust
 - b. Family, youth workers, sports/out of school activity coaches or tutors
 - c. The police
 - d. Childline - 0800 1111/ www.childline.org.uk
 - There are also different support services depending on your area Google 'advice and helplines for children in my area' to come up with a more targeted result. UK wide organisations: www.knifefree.co.uk , <https://crimestoppers-uk.org/> , www.fearless.org
 - If they are nervous about approaching any of these people alone then they can ask a friend that they trust to go along with them or when they make a call/report.
 - Remind them that if anything they have seen has upset them it is really important that they talk to an adult that they trust about how they feel.
 - **Assessment:** Get them to write down their thoughts and feelings on what they have learned. Following this, ask them: If someone suggested that they or you carry a knife to keep you safe – what would you say?
 - **Extension:** They could spend time learning about The Ben Kinsella Trust and the work they do. See Footnotes and their website for more information: <https://benkinsella.org.uk/>

Notes on The Ben Kinsella Trust

You can use this background information to give more information regarding Ben's story if the children wish to know more about him and the Trust. Please use your professional judgement about what level of details you share about his story. These are teacher notes and are not designed to be read out.

- He wasn't involved in a gang or anyone/anything associated with knife crime;
- He was a straight 'A' student, a Peer Mentor in school and well-liked by his fellow students
- On a Saturday night, after completing his exams, his friends rang him to invite him to a popular venue close to his home to celebrate having finished their exams
- While in the venue there was an altercation between an older group of boys which started because three boys felt they had been disrespected by some other boys at the venue. This did not involve Ben or his friends.
- Security staff ejected both sets of boys from the venue. Ben, his friends and all the other people at the venue continued with their evening.
- When the venue closed, Ben was waiting with his friends to be picked up by a parent and driven home
- While they were waiting, 3 of the boys who had been involved in the altercation returned to the venue looking for revenge. They saw Ben and his friends outside the venue and ran towards them, even though they knew Ben and his friends hadn't been involved in the earlier altercation at the venue.
- Ben and his friends ran when they saw the 3 boys coming towards them. After a short while, Ben stopped running, possibly because he had done nothing wrong. The 3 older boys approached him and stabbed him 11 times in 5 seconds.
- Prior to the attack, Ben had never met or spoken to the boys who stabbed him
- Ben died in hospital shortly after the attack
- The 3 boys who were aged 19 at the time, (3 years older than Ben), were caught by the police and found guilty in court. They were sentenced to a minimum of 19 years in prison in 2009.
- Ben's sister, Brooke Kinsella was an actor in EastEnders shortly before Ben's murder and is now a leading anti-knife crime campaigner.
- She was awarded an MBE for her work in 2012.

Achievements of the Trust - Optional

- The Trust successfully campaigned for the introduction of Ben's Law in 2012 raising the minimum sentence for knife crime murder to 25 years
- The Trust has provided educational workshops to over 16,000 young people since it was founded
- The Trust now has Exhibition sites in London and the National Justice Museum in Nottingham

Primary curriculum links:

These lessons link to the new statutory Relationships education, relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education.

Relationships education (Primary)

By the end of primary school pupils should know:

1. Caring friendships

- the characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties
- how to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed

2. Respectful relationships

- the importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs
- the importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness
- that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority

3. Being safe

- what sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context)
- where to get advice, for example family, school or other sources

Physical health and mental wellbeing (Primary)

By the end of primary school pupils should know:

Mental Wellbeing

- how to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate