



## Dear Parent /Guardian

You will be aware of the recent tragic events that have happened across the country where young people have lost their lives as a result of knife crime. As a parent, it is heart wrenching that our children, with their whole lives ahead of them, are dying needlessly and I wanted to share with you some simple ways to protect your child this summer.

If you carry a knife, you are more likely to become a victim of knife crime. This simple statistic breaks the myth that we often hear that 'I was carrying it for my own protection'. If your child carries a knife, there is real possibility that they will become a victim or an offender. When you carry a knife, your actions, made in the heat of the moment, may have serious consequences for a long time to come. Please speak to your children and have an open and honest conversation about the dangers of carrying a knife and what the implications might be for them and your family.

Another myth is that the weapons being used are these terrible knives we see on the TV.

This is not the case. The majority of the weapons seized by the police are kitchen knives, effective for cutting up vegetables but can be deadly on the streets. Please make sure that your children are not taking knives out with them; a simple check of a bag before school or before they go out will prevent the contents of your knife drawer getting out on the streets.

Take time to find out where your loved ones are going and who they are mixing with. Your child's social circle is a good indication of how vulnerable they are. If they are hanging around in a gang in a town centre location, then they may be putting themselves at risk. Many of the deaths in London have links to gangs and you need to know where they are, who they are with and what they are doing. This will also apply to social media and what they are messaging or viewing on-line or even the type of music that they are listening to.

I do not mean to alarm you but knife crime is an issue, particularly with the younger generation and only by us all working together will we prevent further loss of life. It is everyone's responsibility to keep our children safe and you can do your bit by having that conversation with your child about the dangers of carrying a knife.

Thank you and I hope that you and yours have a safe, enjoyable summer.

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