

# Y8: Crime & Influence

## County Lines

County lines gangs use children and vulnerable people to courier drugs and money. A young person who is involved in county line activity might exhibit some of these signs:

 Persistently going missing from school or home, or being found out-of-area	 Unexplained acquisition of money, clothes or mobile phones	 Excessive receipt of texts or phone calls	 Relationships with controlling, older individuals or gang association	 Leaving home or care without explanation
 Suspicion of self-harm, physical assault or unexplained injuries	 Parental concerns	 Significant decline in school performance	 Significant changes in emotional well-being	

If you are concerned for the welfare of a child or young person please contact the police on 101 (or 999 if urgent). If you have information that will help the police investigate this crime but wish to remain anonymous you can contact [www.crimestoppers-uk.org](http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org) on line or call 0800 555111. **Speak up, Stop crime and Stay safe whilst remaining 100% Anonymous. Always**

**CrimeStoppers.**  
0800 555111  
100% anonymous. Always.

**County Lines:** The illegal practice of drug gangs from big cities expanding their operations into smaller towns or rural areas.

**Exploitation:** Taking advantage of someone, often by forcing them to do something they don't want to do.

**Gang:** A group of people, often young, who engage in criminal activities together.

**Drug Dealing:** Selling illegal drugs.

**Vulnerability:** Being at risk of harm or exploitation due to personal or social factors.

**County Line Operator:** Someone who runs or manages drug operations that cross county lines.

**Cuckooing:** When drug dealers take over the home of a vulnerable person to use it as a base for their criminal activities.

**Exploited Person:** Someone who is taken advantage of by others, often through coercion or manipulation.

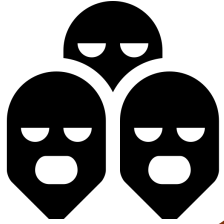
**Drug Mule:** A person who transports illegal drugs, often across borders, for criminal organizations.

**Vulnerable Community:** A group of people who are at risk of exploitation or harm due to factors such as poverty or social isolation.

## Gangs

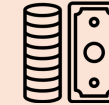
### What is a gang?

*'a group that consists of at least three people, and has one or more characteristics that enable its members to be identified by others as a group'*



### Why might someone join a gang?

- to be accepted
- for a sense of identity
- for financial gain and other rewards
- because gangs are common in the area
- due to a lack of family or emotional support
- due to fear, intimidation or threats from others
- for protection from other gangs, groups or peers
- because siblings or other family members are involved



## The impact of Gangs

**Criminal Activity:** Illegal behavior or actions that break the law, which gangs often engage in, such as drug dealing, theft, or violence.

**Risk Factors:** Factors or circumstances that increase the likelihood of someone joining a gang, such as poverty, family problems, or lack of positive opportunities.

**Consequences:** The results or outcomes of actions. Joining a gang can have serious consequences, including legal trouble, injury, or even death.

**Community:** The people who live in the same area or neighborhood. Building strong communities and providing support to young people can help prevent gang involvement and promote positive alternatives.

# Y8: Crime & Influence

## Knife Crime



**It is against the law to carry a knife in public place.**

Unless the blade is less than 3 inches long and is a manual folding blade. Doing so can carry a prison sentence of up to 4 years even if it is not used in England & Wales, and 5 years in Scotland. It is also against the law to carry a knife on behalf of someone else



**A person must be 18 or over to purchase a knife.**

This includes cutlery and kitchen knives. In Scotland, people between the ages of 16 and 18 can legally purchase cutlery and kitchen knives.



**If the blade is less than 3 inches in length and is a manual folding blade,**

A person over the age of 16 can purchase this knife.



**It is illegal to bring into the country, sell, possess, hire or give someone a banned knife.**

Banned knives include: butterfly knives, disguised knives, flick knives, and zombie knives. A full list of banned knives in the UK can be found on the GOV website.

**99** young people aged under 25 were murdered with a knife or sharp object in the 12 months to March 2022

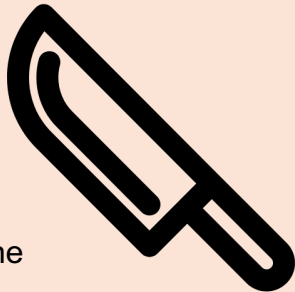
In Cheshire, knife offences have decreased by **2.4%** in the 12 months to March 2023 compared to the previous year.



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### Why might someone carry a knife?

- to gain 'respect'
- to intimidate others
- to protect themselves
- to make them feel safer
- they feel pressured to carry one
- because they want to hurt other people
- because they are cheap and accessible weapons



## Grooming

### What is grooming?

*'when someone builds a relationship, trust and emotional connection with a child or young person so they can manipulate, exploit and abuse them'*

### How might a groomer build a relationship with a victim?

- Pretending to be someone they're not
- Offering advice or understanding
- Buying gifts
- Giving the child attention



The NSPCC Website contains more information

### What are the signs that someone is being groomed?

- underage drinking or drug taking
- being upset, withdrawn or distressed
- having an older boyfriend or girlfriend
- being secretive about what they are doing
- going missing for extended periods of time
- sexualised behaviour or using sexualised language
- having money or new possessions, without explanation
- spending significantly more or less time online than before

