

**Breaking The Chain**

Following the performance in schools you may wish to use the following questions as conversation starters

- Was there anything that surprised you? If so, what?
- Do you understand the consequences/laws around carrying weapons?
- Would you know who/where to get help/advice from if you or your friends needed it? Where?
- Do you know what is meant by 'joint enterprise' ?



**Contact Numbers:**

Thames Valley Police 101  
 Safe! 0800 1337938  
 NSPCC 0800 800 500

Runaway 116000 (call or text)  
 Childline 0800 1111

Crimestoppers 0800 555 111  
[www.safeproject.org.uk](http://www.safeproject.org.uk)  
[www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)  
[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

Call school and ask to speak to the designated safeguarding lead



**Worried about gangs?  
 Advice for parents.**



- Suddenly becoming distant and secretive
- Withdrawal from normal activities and interests
- Changes in behaviour reported by school
- Sudden interest in postcodes and boundaries
- Using coached responses 'no comment'
- Increasingly vague about their whereabouts, activities or friends
- Suspected misuse of drugs/alcohol, especially cannabis

### Presence of Unexplained Items

- Extra money or new possessions e.g. clothes, trainers, jewellery, computers / games, mobile phones
- Presence of unexplained items such as train tickets, balaclava, mobile data cards, debits cards 'found on the road'
- Notes with crime orientated rap lyrics and street slang

### Escalation Indicators

- Increase in going missing from home/school
- 'New' circle of friends with negative behaviours
- Excessive receipt of unexplained texts/phone calls at all hours
- From shyness and lack of eye contact to bravado, squaring up
- Total lack of empathy towards others
- Direct involvement with known gang members
- Unexplained injuries
- Carrying/holding weapons for protection (knives, screwdrivers, acid)

"a relatively durable, predominately street based group of young people who see themselves (and are seen by others) as a discernible group, engage in criminal activity and violence and may also lay claim over territory, have some form of identifying feature and/or be in conflict with other, similar gangs" (HM Government)

### **A person can be identified by the police as a gang member if he/she:**

- Admits membership to a group which meets the criteria of a gang
- Is identified by a reliable informant as a gang member
- Lives in or frequents a gang's area and adopts its style of dress or other signs—or associates with known gang members
- Has been arrested in the company of identified gang members for offences consistent with gang activity
- The law of joint enterprise applies to gang membership and activity.



- Understand the issues, recognise the signs and get further help and support if needed (see contacts on back page).
- Talk to your child without judgement. They are growing up in a different time from you, facing unique challenges.
- Discuss their hopes and aspirations as well as their fears and worries. Praise them for their achievements and make sure they know you are always there for them.
- Set a good example, you are their most important role model. If you deal with conflict without the use of anger or violence, it's more likely your child will too.
- Set clear boundaries around what is acceptable behaviour and what is not, emphasise the difference between earning something and taking it from others.
- Take an active interest and involvement in your child's life. Talk to them about their school work and their personal interests. Get to know their friends and their friends' families.
- Familiarise yourself with the social media networks your child uses. Most of the time social media is harmless. However, it needs to be monitored and be aware that gangs do sometimes use these sites to organise their activities.
- Find a way to talk about gangs directly. If it helps, use reports in the news, or storylines on television programmes as a starting point. Your son or daughter may know more than you think and will have opinions.