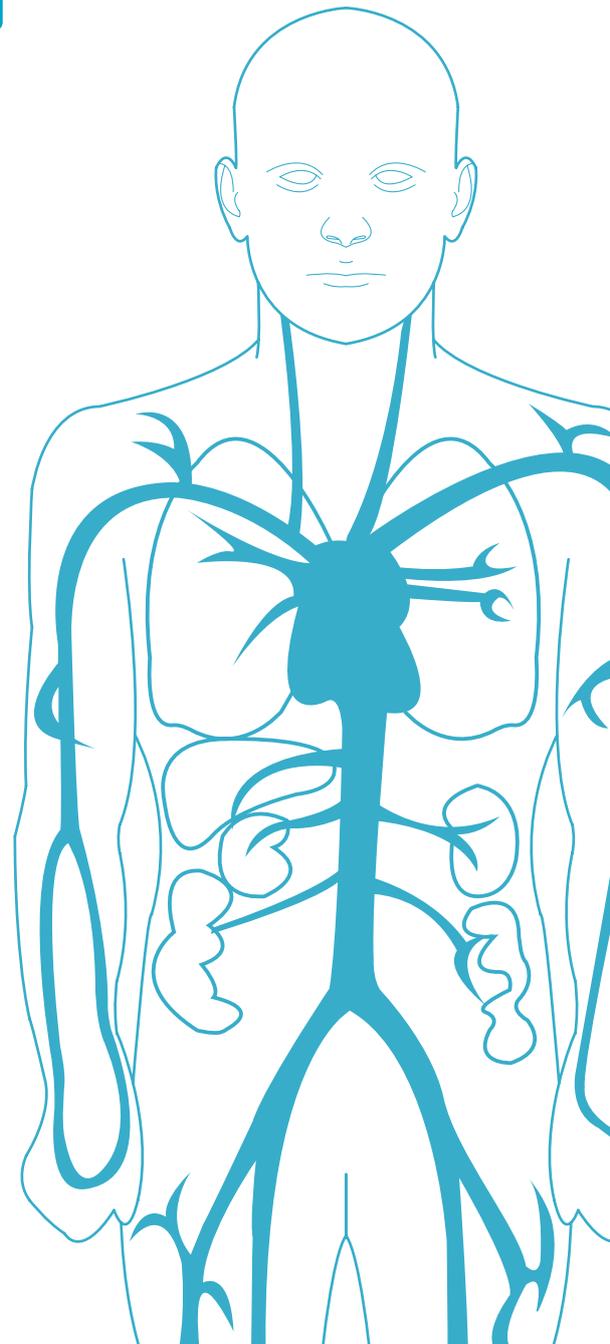


NO KNIVES, BETTER LIVES

Lesson Plan



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Lesson Plan

Published May 2017

Lesson Plan

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GUIDANCE NOTES

OVERVIEW (5 minutes)

This session plan is intended to support both an assembly and classroom type input to secondary pupils.

- **Method**

Interactive presentation (this session can be adapted for use in a smaller class setting and made more informal, dialogue based and young person centred by changing the “show of hands” interactions to group discussions).

- **Resources**

The session has been developed around the NKBL Film “Mark’s Story: One Knife, Many Victims”. You will require IT equipment (laptop, projector/ Smart Board). The link to the film is embedded in the accompanying PowerPoint slides. If you have an internet connection you can click on the links to show the film. If you don’t have an internet connection, or the embedded link doesn’t work you can request a copy of the film on disc from the NKBL Delivery Team.

E-mail - nkbl@youthlinkscotland.org

- **Preparation**

Familiarise yourself with the content of the film in advance of the session.

- **Age Group**

S1 and up (please note that the Mark’s Story film recommends a viewing age of 15 but this is a recommendation rather than a certificate). The film, and this input, can be used with younger people at your discretion but you may also need to check with the school before using the film. The film is intended to be hard hitting.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The learning objectives of the session correspond to the “**4 Rs**” that should inform knife crime prevention work with young people.

- **Reassurance**

Young people are aware that knife carrying is not common (this is important as protection is a common reason given for knife carrying).

- **Risks and consequences**

Young people are aware of the very serious legal and personal risks and consequences of carrying a knife or any offensive weapon (young people are often unaware of the legal consequences of carrying a knife and the impact that knife crime can have on individuals, families and communities. Young people often think that carrying a knife offers them protection when in fact it puts them more at risk).

- **Resilience**

Young people are more aware of the influences, fears and pressures that can lead to the decision to carry a knife and how these can be managed or avoided.

- **Responsibility**

Young people are aware of the importance of telling someone if they know that someone else is carrying a knife (this is an important aspect of prevention work and is relevant to all young people).

SESSION PLAN

1. INTRODUCTION (5 minutes)

WHY DO WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT KNIVES?

1. Some young people still carry knives.
2. Some young people think carrying a knife will protect them.
3. We can't ignore it if we know that someone is carrying a knife.

Explain the purpose of the session (use the guidance notes below to help with this).

NOTES

The purpose of the session is to highlight the personal and legal risks and consequences of carrying a knife. There are three reasons that this is important.

1. While we know that not as many young people carry knives as they used to (reassurance is an important part of prevention as one of the main reasons young people choose to carry a knife is for protection) but some young people still do and we know that very often these young people are not aware that if they are caught carrying a knife (even if they don't actually use the knife) there are very serious legal and personal consequences some of which might affect them for the rest of their lives. We don't want that to happen.

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1. INTRODUCTION - CONTINUED

2. It is also the case that young people that choose to carry a knife often don't realise that far from offering them protection, they are much more at risk of being stabbed themselves either because situations involving weapons can get out of hand very quickly or because their own knife is used against them. We want to make sure that no one makes that mistake and ends up seriously injured or worse.
3. While most of them (the young people you are talking to) will never carry a knife it is also important that everyone understands the seriousness of carrying a knife and how important it is to tell someone if you know that someone is carrying one. Every knife attack is potentially (and often is) fatal. Telling someone isn't grassing, its life saving. One wrong decision can be fatal for the victim of a knife attack and can destroy the lives of many other people (including the perpetrator). So the third objective of the session is to raise awareness of the need to report knife carrying.

SESSION PLAN

2. MARK'S STORY (ONE KNIFE, MANY VICTIMS) (5 minutes)



Explain that you are going to show a short film that tells the story of a young man who made a split second decision that had devastating consequences.

Show the film.

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3. THINK IT COULDN'T HAPPEN? (10 minutes)

The purpose of this part of the session is to encourage the young people to reflect on the reasons why someone might choose to take a knife out with them, who and what might influence that decision and how Mark's story might have turned out differently.

USE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS TO PROMPT DISCUSSION:

- Q1.** What do you think Mark was thinking when he took the knife? Do you think he was scared and took it for protection or to look "hard" in front of his friends?
- Q2.** Do you think he was really thinking about using it?
- Q3.** Why was he worked up and worried? What contributed to that?
- Q4.** Do you think his friends would have acted differently if they'd known he might take a knife?
- Q5.** What would have happened if Mark didn't have the knife?

Use the guidance notes following to help with the discussion.

SESSION PLAN

3. THINK IT COULDN'T HAPPEN? - CONTINUED

NOTES

- Q1.** We don't really know from the film whether Mark took the knife for protection or to look "hard" but it seems that he was anxious about a possible confrontation. He didn't tell anyone he had it and wasn't bragging so it doesn't seem like he took it just to look hard.
- Q2.** There is nothing to suggest that Mark went out with the intention of stabbing Ian it seems like a split second decision that was more about self protection.
- Q3.** He thought something was going to happen. Maybe, he thought that Ian or his friends might have a weapon. There was a lot of "hype" happening via Facebook and his friends were winding him up on the way to the park. Social media can make something small seem really big and young people often feel under a lot of pressure to act in a particular way.
- Q4.** Definitely, if they'd known the outcome of Mark's decision to take a knife out with him. It was Mark's decision but his friends contributed to the fact that he felt threatened and under pressure (even if they didn't mean to).
- Q5.** There would probably have been a fight between Mark and Ian that would have been broken up by their friends with no real harm done and everyone would have gone home that night. Having the knife changed everything. Ian didn't go home and neither did Mark.

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3. THINK IT COULDN'T HAPPEN? - CONTINUED

The core messages in this section are:

- Carrying a knife is not a good form of protection.
- Situations involving weapons can quickly get out of control.
- It is also common that people who carry knives end up having it used against them.
- We should try to be aware of the way we can pressure and influence our friends (even without meaning to).
- We should try to be aware of negative influences and how to avoid responding in a way that will have a bad outcome for us. If we need help with that we should talk to someone we trust.

SESSION PLAN

4. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? (10 minutes)

The purpose of this part of the session is to encourage young people to reflect on the short and long term consequences for everyone involved. This is important as the impact on their family is what young people tell us is most likely to deter them from carrying a knife. It is also an opportunity to communicate key medical, personal and legal consequences of carrying and/or using a knife.

USE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS TO PROMPT DISCUSSION:

- Q1.** What happens next for Ian (the victim)? Do you think he survives or dies? Does it depend where he was stabbed?
- Q2.** What happens next for Mark? Do you think he'll go to prison? How long for?
- Q3.** What happens next for Mark's friends? Will they be in trouble? How will they feel?
- Q4.** How will Ian's family and friends feel?
- Q5.** What will the impact be on Mark's family?

Use the guidance notes following to help with the discussion.

4. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? - CONTINUED

NOTES

Q1. We don't know from the film whether Ian survives or if the stabbing is fatal but this is an opportunity to communicate the following messages:

There is no "safe" place to stab someone; if an artery is severed anywhere in the body it is possible to bleed out within several minutes and it takes longer than that for an ambulance to arrive.

Q2. It is illegal to carry a knife and you can go to prison for up to five years even if you don't use it. If you do stab someone you could face up to life in prison if they die.

Q3. Even if it's not you who uses the knife, if someone is injured or killed by a knife in your presence you could be sent to prison for murder or attempted murder. At the very least Mark's friends will be questioned and appear in court as witnesses.

They will be in shock; they have just witnessed a serious assault or possibly the murder of someone they knew.

Their friend will go to prison for a very long time.

Longer term, Mark's friends may struggle emotionally to come to terms with having been involved in the incident. Someone died.

SESSION PLAN

4. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? - CONTINUED

NOTES

Q4. Ian's family will be devastated. They have lost their son to a mindless act of violence that Mark may not even have intended. It will affect them for the rest of their lives.

Ian's friends will be devastated by the loss of their friend and will quite possibly feel a sense of responsibility for what happened (think of the way the girls were involved in "pushing" the two boys together).

The emotions that family and friends of knife crime victims experience are very difficult emotions to deal with and may affect them very seriously and for a long time. It may require professional help to come to terms with what happened. They may never come to terms with it.

Q5. Mark's family will be devastated. They will lose their son while he is in prison. His baby sister will grow up not knowing him. They will feel the pain of Ian's family and in some way feel responsible for his death. They will feel that everyone in their community associates them with what happened. Their lives will be ruined.

5. WHAT WOULD YOU DO? (5 minutes)

The purpose of this part of the session is to encourage young people to think about what they would do if they knew that someone was carrying a knife and to encourage them to report it.



USE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS TO PROMPT DISCUSSION:

- Q1.** Most of you would never make the decision to carry a knife but a small number of people will. In Mark's story, no one knew that he had the knife but often people do know when someone is carrying a knife, especially their friends. What would you do if you knew?

Use the guidance notes following to help with the discussion.

SESSION PLAN

5. WHAT WOULD YOU DO? - CONTINUED

NOTES

Q1. If the young people you are talking to are reluctant to respond you can prompt them by asking how many of them would do nothing (show of hands) and how many of them would tell someone (show of hands) or many of them would try to talk to the person if it was a friend (show of hands).

For each option you can:

- Emphasise the risk of doing nothing (if you think it's appropriate you can refer to the incident in an Aberdeen school where other pupils were aware that young person involved was carrying a knife).
- Emphasise that talking to the person might not be a safe option and it might be better to report what you know anonymously.
- Give information about reporting anonymously (e.g. through a trusted adult or Fearless) and emphasise the guarantee of anonymity.
- Emphasise that if talking to someone doesn't work it is important to move to the next step of reporting anonymously.

CONCLUSION (5 minutes)

KEY THINGS TO REMEMBER

1. It's illegal even to carry a knife.
2. Mark used the knife because he had it.
3. All knife attacks are potentially fatal. If you know someone is carrying a knife - tell someone.

The purpose of this part of the session is to reinforce key messages.

Thank the young people and remind them of the following points:

1. Mark's Story illustrates how easy it can be to make the decision to carry a knife and the devastating consequences of using it, **but even if you don't use it**, if you are caught carrying a knife you will be arrested and prosecuted. It doesn't matter if it was for your own protection or you were carrying it for someone else. Self-protection is not a reasonable excuse for carrying an offensive weapon.
2. If Mark hadn't had the knife the worst thing that could have happened would have been a fight, but no one would be dead or in prison.
3. Telling someone if you know that someone is carrying a knife isn't grassing it's potentially life-saving (don't forget that if it's your friend and they end up using it, their life will be devastated too).

CONTACT

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May, 2017

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