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VIOLENT ASSAULTS: PREVALENCE, PREDICTION AND PREVENTION

Statistics in England and Wales showed that there were a total of 47,000 offences reported involving a knife or sharp instrument. This was the highest number recorded for the previous eight years. In 2017/18 there were 285 homicides recorded using a sharp instrument accounting for 39% of all homicides. The current knife crime prevention strategies are: identification of those at risk, risk management, zero tolerance to carrying knives, and to make it more difficult for offenders to get away with carrying knives.

The risk factors that show the strongest association with committing an offence among 10 to 25 year olds are: family breakdown, truancy from school and school exclusion, antisocial behaviour, being a victim of personal crime, being drunk once a month or more, having friends/siblings in trouble with the police and taking drugs.

Research has found for over 40 years that young people who are convicted of violent assault are more likely to have experienced poor parenting, neglectful parental attitudes, parental conflicts and lax supervision in their childhood.

There are a variety of different reasons why young people carry knives. more emphasis on psychoeducation to children around knife crime and how The function could be for protection, fear of being a victim of crime or growing up within gang/youth offending culture. Increasing ‘stop and search’ and ‘amnesty knife disposal boxes’ have had limited impact on knife crime. A re-investment in the Safer School Partnership (SSP) programmes is essential for building closer working relationships between police and schools and offering joint run ‘after school youth clubs’ free to access for all children.

Education and social services need resources to support parents in the supervision and monitoring of their children. Parents in difficulty or experiencing family breakdown require signposting on how to access support in order to prevent their child becoming involved with anti-social behaviour and knife crime.

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