



Youth Voices: A National Survey on Violence and Prevention in Scotland (2025)

A Rights-Based Exploration of Youth Experiences and Evidence-Informed Prevention Strategies

Survey Information

What is this research about?

No Knives, Better Lives are looking to complete research on young peoples' attitudes towards violence and knife crime in Scotland. It's time for a proper check-in with young people about their experiences of violence and what they feel is needed by policy makers and practitioners. Inspired by the cross-party summit and the call for meaningful consequences, we want to know what young people think constitutes meaningful consequences (by that we understand it to be consequences that would prevent, stop and deter violent behaviour). Young people talked about regular exposure to violence and the pressure to respond. We need to better understand these impacts, what helps young people avoid and resist violence, and how we can assist in the scaling up of protective factors.

Why have I/my child been asked to take part?

To understand how to reduce violence in Scotland, we are asking young people across Scotland to share their views. We are asking about views on safety and knife crime, campaigns to reduce knife crime, social media and violent content online. It should take 10-15 minutes to complete, and answers will be used for research purposes only. We hope to hear from a broad range of young people (those who have experienced violence as well as those who haven't) to learn as much as possible.

What is involved?

We are asking young people aged 11 plus to complete a survey which will be sent out to them from a youth worker, a teacher, a support worker, a youth group leader or a violence prevention worker. The survey should take no longer than 10-15 minutes to complete. Most of the questions give a range of answer options, which means the young person will just be asked to tick boxes that apply to them. The young person does not need to answer all the questions, just the questions they feel comfortable answering.

Young people can either complete the survey with support from parents/guardians or with support from their worker. If you are to complete the survey during a youth group session your worker will let you know when this session will take place.

Who is carrying out this research?

The research is being carried out by YouthLink Scotland (National Agency for Youth Work in Scotland) on behalf of No Knives, Better Lives. ScotCen Social Research, an independent research organisation, has been commissioned by YouthLink Scotland to help design the survey and analyse the data.

No Knives, Better Lives is funded by the Scottish Government and is a knife carrying prevention programme committed to exploring and responding to the causes of knife carrying and violence in Scotland.

Do I/ my child have to take part?

No – participation in this research is voluntary and if the young person or their parent/guardian does not wish for them to take part they can opt out. The worker will let you know which session they will be supporting young people to complete the survey in, so you have the option to opt out. Choosing to opt out will not impact on the young person being able to take part in the youth group session, other activities will be offered.

How will the data be used?

All data will be treated in strict confidence in accordance with the Data Protection Act. The information collected will be used for research purposes only and will only be viewed by the research team.

We will use the data to write a report for No Knives, Better Lives. No one looking at the findings will be able to identify those who took part in the study.

Only the research team know who is taking part, and this information will not be shared with anyone else.

Will I/my child receive anything for taking part?

Yes, if the young person is a Young Scot Member they can earn 200 Rewards points for completing the survey. If they are not a Member yet they can go to young.scot to sign up.

Where do I/my child get support for any of the issues raised?

If you need any support for any of the issues raised in the survey please see:

- www.noknivesbetterlives.com - for information on deterring young people from carrying knives, with information for young people and parents/guardians
- www.fearless.org – a safe place to give information on crimes anonymously
- www.childline.org.uk/get-support - for young people to share any worries
- www.respectme.org.uk/information-young/ – providing advice and support to anyone affected by bullying
- www.lgbtyouth.org.uk – supporting LGBT young people

You can also talk to your worker if you have any concerns about any of the issues raised.

Any questions?

If you have any questions about the research, please contact Vicki Ridley vridley@youthlink.scot