



Tackling Knives Action Programme (TKAP) Fact Sheet

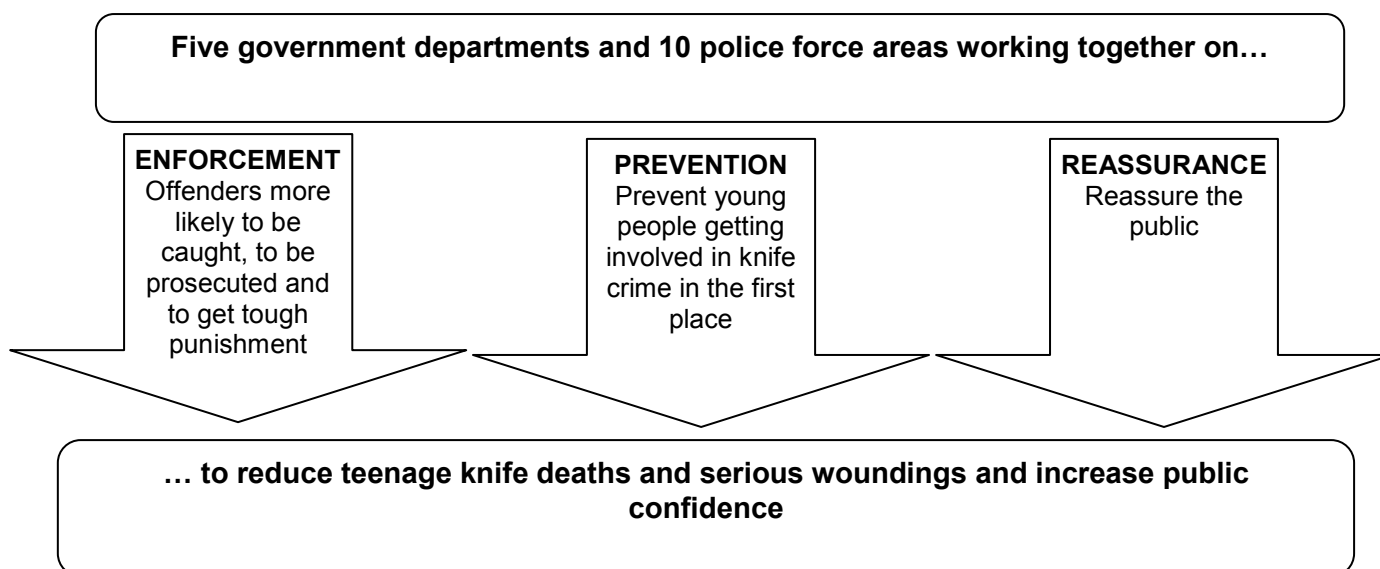
December 2008

Home Office

Background

Since June the Government has been working with ten police force areas* in England and Wales to reduce the number of teenagers killed or seriously wounded by knives and to increase public confidence that our streets are safe. Thanks to additional funding, tough new guidance and hard work by the forces themselves, working side by side with local people, the results are already clear:

- Fewer teenagers seriously wounded by knives
- Fewer young people carrying knives
- Fewer offenders getting off with a caution
- More people going to prison and longer jail sentences



Fewer teenagers are being wounded by knives

- **17% fewer serious knife crimes against young people** (homicide, attempted murder, GBH with intent) in October 2008 than in June 2008 in the ten TKAP areas – down from 98 offences to 81.
- **18% fewer young victims (under 20) of knife crime in London** between April and September 2008 than in the same period in 2007 and youth violence in Halloween week 30% lower than last year.

* The ten police force areas are: Essex, Greater Manchester, Lancashire, Merseyside, Metropolitan Police, Nottinghamshire, South Wales, Thames Valley, West Midlands, West Yorkshire

Fewer young people carrying knives

- **10,000 more stop and searches every month** and the proportion of searches uncovering a weapon has halved. [In the ten TKAP areas when comparing figures in October to those in June].
- **Over 105,000 stop and searches for offensive weapons** carried out from June to October 2008 in the TKAP areas and **over 2,200 weapons seized**.
- **700 extra search arches and wands** provided across the ten TKAP areas, to help police take knives off the streets and reassure the public
- **Over 1,300 shops tested for underage sales** of knives since June and the failure rate down by more than 50%.

Keeping young people safe and off the streets

- An extra **7000 places for young people** to be involved in positive activities on Friday and Saturday nights in TKAP areas by March 2009.
- **£3.4m is being invested over the next 3 months** in after-school patrols to help young people feel safer on their journeys home from school and in school through supporting Safer Schools Partnerships. We're also investing in operations to ensure that young people are not out late at night and putting themselves at risk.

Fewer offenders getting off with a caution

- **Cautioning across the country is down** and use of custody and tough community sentences is up. In London alone, over 90% of people caught with a knife are being charged.

More offenders going to prison and sentences getting tougher

- There are now **179 more offenders in prison** for weapons possession than in June – an increase of 27% across England and Wales; and **average prison sentences** for weapons possession are **now 53 days longer** – an increase of 38% according to provisional data.
- Provisional data also suggests that the **average number of hours of tough community work** for offenders sentenced for weapon possession is **up by 9%** from June to September (across England and Wales).

Getting the message through

- “It Doesn't Have To Happen” anti-knife crime campaign launched in May and the viral video adverts have now been viewed 9.6 million times; there has been 70,000 visits to the Bebo site and 2.8 million young people have heard the radio adverts.
- 73% of young people say that the adverts make them less likely to carry a knife.