

NotTheOne – community engagement tool against knife crime

A campaign which provides materials to empower those with influence in the lives of children and young people to engage, educate, refer, and ultimately save lives.

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4 March 2025

Key details

Stage of practice	Untested
Purpose	Diversion
Topic	Knife and gun crime Violence (other) Community engagement
Organisation	South Wales Police
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Region	Wales

Key details

Partners	Police Community safety partnership Education Health services Local authority Private sector Voluntary/not for profit organisation
Stage of implementation	The practice is implemented.
Start date	March 2022
Scale of initiative	Regional
Target group	Children and young people

Aim

The aim of this project is to:

- provide the communities of South Wales with information to reduce the fear of knife crime
- enable and empower local communities to engage with their young people
- improve community resilience
- reduce signposting demand on police
- encourage young people to be aware of the relating to carrying a knife/bladed weapon
- encourage young people to know where to report any concerns about someone carrying a knife
- encourage young people to feel supported to make positive decisions relating to carrying a knife

Intended outcome

The intended outcomes of NotTheOne are to:

- increase engagement between communities and young people

- increase engagement between communities and third sector providers
- enhance education and reduced fear around knife crime
- increase referrals for young people involved in knife crime
- save lives
- increase 11 to16-year-olds knowledge and understanding of the consequences of knife crime to support positive decision making on carrying a knife
- increase the confidence of trusted adults in having discussions about knife crime with young people

Description

[NotTheOne](#) is a community-led campaign supported by the police. It involves the creation and distribution of materials to community members and professionals working with children. This may include families, friends and key community leaders such as teachers and sports coaches. The material encourages community members to engage with and deliver knife crime awareness sessions.

NotTheOne has two meanings and objectives:

- to promote the rarity of knife crime in South Wales to the wider public
- to engage directly with a child to emphasise that they are probably the odd one out in carrying a knife, despite perceptions to the contrary

The campaign seeks to challenge the narrative that knife crime in South Wales is akin to the much-publicised narrative regarding the scale and severity of knife crime in London.

Materials provided by NotTheOne include victims of knife crime outlining the dangers to others, lesson plans, a quiz, legislation clarification, myth-busting around knife crime and referral options to third sector providers including the Red Cross and Victim Support (this process allows self-referral without police involvement and the associated risk of perceived criminalisation). The materials were created by Blue Stag design agency with South Wales Police and Violence Prevention Unit (VPU). The material has been created so it is relevant and engaging for children and young people.

Phase one of NotTheOne cost the force and vulnerable persons unit £10,000. This equates to £14 per download of the resource pack or £3 per view of the material. Funding came from Force Tasking (£5,000) and the Violence Prevention Unit (£5,000)

NotTheOne is run by the South Wales Police communications department.

New resources were launched in April 2024. This includes:

- the campaign video, which is on the [website homepage](#) (this has been scripted by young writers from Cardiff Metropolitan University)
- an additional [‘In Conversation’ interview with a youth worker](#) to give practical advice to parents/carers, professionals and to young people worried about knife crime or who are considering carrying a knife.
- new sections of the website including a [‘get inspired’ section](#) so professionals can see examples of how others have used the campaign
- revised educational resources for [parents](#), [teachers](#) and [youth workers](#)
- adverts on buses and at railway stations, and on TikTok and Snapchat over the school summer holidays

Overall impact

NotTheOne has been described by South Wales Police communications department as the most successful campaign launched by the team. It has achieved more than 30,000 views, with 729 downloads of the education pack.

The most captive audience to date has been schools, with 229 downloads of the material. This demonstrates the need for such material to supplement existing school provision.

In the past 12 months, the campaign website has been visited by 6,500 users 47,000 times.

A survey of 650 children aged 11-13 attending a school or alternative education setting found:

- 10% said they would speak to a sports coach or youth worker if they thought their friend was carrying a knife, 41% said they would speak to their teacher, 46% said a police officer and 59% said a parent or caregiver
- 68% said the campaign’s message to not carry a knife was clear
- 55% said the ad would catch their attention on social media
- 33% said they would click to find out more if they saw it on social media

Learning

- It is important to engage and involve community leaders in this project, as the police do not hold the power in this space. The police do not have the same relevance in children's lives to truly make a difference.
- COVID-19 made partner engagement and reach difficult. It is hoped that phase two will see greater partner buy-in.
- Phase two will involve new content and more targeted marketing – for example to sports clubs and governing bodies. There will also be an updated list of third sector providers/support organisations.
- A campaign like this requires constant pushing to ensure that new police officers, police community support officers and teachers are aware and empowered to drive and deliver the message. Force-wide quarterly masterclasses have been a successful vehicle to deliver this focus.

Best available evidence

Currently, the [Crime Reduction Toolkit](#) does not include best-available evidence on an intervention similar to the habitual knife carrying index.

[Knife Crime: a problem solving guide](#) offers practical and evidence-informed advice on how to reduce local knife crime.

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Tags

Knife crime