

Lesson plan for key stage 3

#knifefree

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Context

This single lesson focuses on positive choices that young people could make and have made to live knife free. It aims to challenge misconceptions students may have about carrying a knife and so encourage more of them be knife free. It will therefore enhance work on personal safety and risk management, or lessons which have introduced topics related to gang crime. Neither this, nor the key stage 4 lesson, is designed to be taught in isolation, but should always form part of a planned, developmental PSHE education programme.

Learning objective

We are learning:

- About the potential consequences of carrying a knife
- How young people can take steps to achieve their goals and live knife free

Intended learning outcomes

- ✓ I can explain and challenge the reasons why some young people may carry a knife
- ✓ I can assess a range of consequences of carrying or using a knife
- ✓ I can explain how young people can make the choice to be knife free

Resources required

- Box or envelope for anonymous questions
- Resource 1a: Video handout
- Resource 1b: Teacher notes
- Resource 2: Consequences card sort (cut up and put in envelopes)
- Resource 2a: Teacher answers (card sort)
- Resource 3: Giving advice (optional support)

Lesson summary

Activity	Description	Timing
_1 Baseline assessment	Students respond to an 'overheard conversation' to demonstrate their initial understanding, views and attitudes	10min
_2 Mind map	Students work in pairs to create a mind-map of reasons why young people might carry a knife, and respond to these	10min
_3 Real life stories (video)	Students discover the experiences of characters through short videos	10min
_4 Risks and consequences	Students sort cards to distinguish four different types of consequences of knives; physical, emotional, social, legal	15min
_5 Giving advice	Students give advice to one of the characters at the start of their story	5min
_6 Reflection and signposting	Encourage students to write anonymous questions or comments and signpost further sources of support	5min
_7 Endpoint assessment	Students revisit the overheard conversation with their top tips for how to live knife free	5min

Climate for learning

- Make sure you are familiar with the school's safeguarding policy
- Consider any sensitivities and prior knowledge about specific pupils' circumstances. Prior notice that this issue will be covered may be advisable. Notice should be given to pastoral and other relevant staff
- Local and national support groups or helplines should be signposted
- Invite pupils to write down any questions they have anonymously at any time, and collect them in using an anonymous question box or envelope, which should be accessible both in and after every lesson
- Establish or reinforce existing ground rules. Add or emphasise any ground rules that are especially relevant to this lesson, such as not disclosing personal stories and not making assumptions about others

Key words

Knife, crime, gang, consequences

Beginning the Lesson

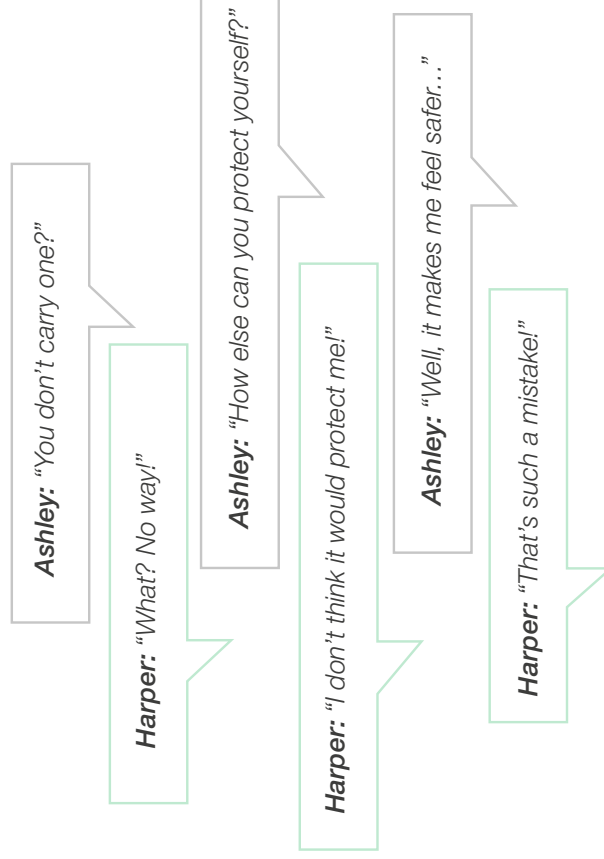
Introduction

Revisit or negotiate ground rules and remind students of the importance of respecting each other's ideas and opinions. Draw attention to the anonymous question box and remind them that they can submit questions at any time during or after the lesson. Ensure that these questions are revisited at the end of the lesson or in the subsequent lesson.

Baseline assessment activity

10 min

It is important that students are not introduced to the learning objectives of the lesson before completing the baseline assessment. Ask students to imagine they have overheard a conversation between two people of about their age. The conversation they hear is this:



Ask students to consider and write down answers to the following questions, providing as much information and detail as they can:

- What do you think the characters are talking about?
- Which character do you agree with? Why?
- What could Harper say to persuade Ashley?

Ask students to share their ideas to the third question, ensuring that during the discussion students put their answers aside and do not continue to amend them. Explain they will return to their initial ideas at the end of the lesson. Use the students' responses to help gauge their current level of understanding and to guide your questioning throughout the lesson.

At this point, share the learning objectives and outcomes with students. Explain that today they will be thinking about the risks and consequences of carrying a knife, and how some young people have chosen to live knife free after their experiences with knives.

Core activities

Why carry a knife?

10 min

Ashley says that carrying a knife makes him feel safer. What other reasons might young people give for carrying a knife?

Ask students to work in pairs to create a list or mind map of all the reasons young people might give for carrying a knife. They should also try to consider how they feel about these reasons; Do they think they are true? Might they be inaccurate in any way? Where have these reasons come from?

Students are likely to suggest:

- _1 For status, for a reputation, to feel powerful
- _2 To be accepted by a group/gang, peer pressure
- _3 They believe everyone else is carrying one, influence of the media
- _4 They live in a dangerous area
- _5 Their family carry one so it feels normal

It is essential that through discussion and feedback, students have an opportunity to hear these reasons being challenged, either by their peers or by you. This could be done by providing follow up questions as reasons are shared, or countering with facts that prove otherwise.

Key points to draw out include:

- 99% of 10-29 year olds do not carry a knife
- A person can get up to 4 years in prison for carrying a knife, even if it is never used
- People who carry a weapon are more likely to be hospitalised with a violence-related injury, and in many cases their own weapon has been used against them
- Friends who pressure a person to carry a knife are not good friends and will likely not be around to help if that person were to get caught

Real life stories

10 min

Hand out Resource 1a: Video handout and as a class watch the two #knifefree campaign videos:

Ben's story

Aliya's story

Between each video, ask the students to write their ideas in response to the five questions on their sheet. They should aim to write specific responses for each of the character's stories.

Take feedback from the class, ensuring that through discussion, key learning points are drawn out:

- _1 Aliya became involved in knives through her friendship group. In Ben's case, it was through his experience of his friend being attacked with a knife first.
- _2 Ben was stabbed during an argument and Aliya witnessed an attack which traumatised her for a long time.
- _3 Both have clear hobbies (BMX and dance) which have helped to refocus them and give them ambitions for the future. It is important to also emphasise that they probably had to change their friendship group to avoid being drawn in to the same behaviours.

_4 Both speak about seeing the world more clearly; they are now much safer than they were, can focus on their futures and ambitions and interests again, their family and friends are relieved that they are knife free and they feel a sense of personal pride.

_5 Students will have different ideas here, but they may relate to; having to change friendship groups, Aliya may have needed counselling, finding a new direction can be hard, they may have received criminal records for their behaviour. It is important to emphasise during this discussion that while these people faced challenges in choosing to live knife free, the benefits far outweigh these. For anyone who is changing their habits or lifestyle it can be difficult, which is why it is important to have a strong support network and to seek help when it is needed.

You may want to refer to Resource 1b: Teacher notes to provide further relevant details about Ben and Aliya's stories during discussion with students.

Risks and consequences

15 min

Ask students to work in groups to discuss the key question: What are the consequences of carrying a knife? Hand out Resource 2: Consequences card sort and ask students to organise the cards into piles to represent the different types of consequences a person might encounter. There might be some cards that could fit into more than one heading, or there might be some that they feel do not fit into any category.

The four types of consequence that students should focus on are:

- _1 Physical consequences
- _2 Emotional / Personal consequences
- _3 Social consequences
- _4 Legal consequences

When students have completed the sorting activity, ask them to discuss as a group which type of consequences of carrying a knife are the most serious and why. Encourage students to feedback their ideas as a whole class discussion.

During discussion, it is important to emphasise:

While students may have different opinions about which consequences (e.g. physical, social etc.) are the most serious, all consequences of carrying a knife are serious in different ways and affect more than just the individual who chooses to carry the knife, but will also affect their friends, family and the wider community.

Support:

You could give pupils less cards to sort (for example 9 cards rather than 16) or to remove the cards which could sit into more than one category.

Challenge:

You could give students blank cards and ask them to decide on their own consequences under the four headings, or to add to those that are already provided on the card sort.

Giving advice

5 min

Explain to students that it can be hard to see the consequences of our choices until it is too late, and the more involved a person is in knife crime, the harder it is for them to change their mind. Ask students to think about which consequences might be the most persuasive for the people in the real life stories above, and to consider how their families might have felt about their situation.

If they could go back in time to when these people were making their first decisions about whether or not to carry a knife, what would they say to convince them not to?

Support:

Hand students one of the character profiles from Resource 3: Giving advice, which provide a direct question from each character. Students could choose one character to give advice to or write a short response to both.

Challenge:

Encourage students to also reflect on what help or support a person might need after they have been involved in a knife incident (either as a perpetrator, witness or target of the attack). How could they begin to rebuild their lives? Who might they need to turn to for help?

Ending the Lesson

Reflecting on today's learning and signposting support

5 min

Before students revisit the baseline activity, display places where young people can go to access further information and support, explaining how each can support them. This should include their local community (e.g. friends, family, youth groups) support available in school (their tutor, head of year or a school counsellor) and local / national organisations:

- Childline – 0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk - to find support and advice for young people about a range of issues
- #knifefree - www.knifefree.co.uk - to find out more about the campaign and for more information on how to live knife free
- Fearless (crime stoppers) – www.fearless.org - for advice and a way to anonymously report crime
- Victim support – www.victimsupport.org.uk - for support for anyone who has been a victim of crime

Assessing (demonstrating) progress

5 min

Ask students to revisit the baseline overheard conversation activity.

Using a different colour pen, ask them if there is anything about their original ideas that they would like to change or add to as a result of today's lesson. Then ask them to imagine that Harper is worried about Ashley and wants to get some advice. Students should explain whom they think would be most appropriate for Harper to talk to and why.

Extension / Home learning activities

Knife free diary

Ask students to write a diary entry from the perspective of one of the characters, on the first day they chose to live knife free. The diary entry should include:

- How the character is feeling about their decision
- What they are doing to refocus their attention
- What benefits they experience and what they are looking forward to in the future
- Any challenges they face (either from themselves or from peers) and how they overcome these

It is important to give students an opportunity to 'de-role' from the character after this activity, for example stating three things that are different about them from the character, so that they do not hold on to the experiences and emotions of the character.

Personal reflection – My ambitions

Ask students to reflect on what ambitions and goals they have for their future and to summarise these in a short paragraph. As this is a personal reflection activity, answers should not be shared in whole class discussion. Students should consider:

- What would you like to be or do in the future?
- What steps could you take to get there?
- Is there anything that might get in the way of achieving your goals?
- How could you overcome these barriers?
- What effects might choosing to carry a knife have on your future goals and ambitions?

Campaign Resources

Campaign posters are available to download [here](#).