



Dear parents, carers, and guardians,

As we approach the school summer holiday, we wanted to share some tips that may be useful for you.

We know people have concerns about violence and want to do all they can to protect their children while also allowing them to spend time with friends and enjoy their time off.

We also wanted to let you know about the start of a 10-week police operation to tackle serious violence in the county, which will see police officers and staff focus on preventing and investigating offences, including knife crime.

Ten Chief Inspectors will each take charge of a week and focus on education, prevention, and investigations, in a bid to divert people away from crime, but also to take robust action against those people who commit offences.

Tackling serious violence is a Matter of Priority for Northamptonshire Police and as such is something we have committed to challenging in the long-term.

We work closely with partners, including schools and our local councils to tackle the causes of violence, with the aim of preventing people from becoming embroiled in criminal activity.

This is where we need your help. In order to help prevent people from becoming involved in violence or help steer young people already exhibiting concerning behaviour away from a path you would not choose for them, we need information.

If you are concerned about a young person there are things you can look out for - subtle changes in behaviour:

- Are they being secretive about where they are, what they are doing, who they are seeing?
- Will they let you look in their bags or pockets?
- Will they let you look at their phone, are they secretive about who is calling or messaging? Do they have multiple mobile phones?
- Are they coming home with items they can't afford, or are unwilling to explain where they got them – such as phones, expensive trainers, or clothes?
- Are they going missing for periods of time or playing truant from school?
- Have they stopped engaging with teachers or going to school or perhaps they aren't doing as well?
- Have they stopped doing after school activities or going to clubs they used to like?
- Are they scared to go out or perhaps nervous to go to certain places?



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- Have they started to hang around with different or older people, have an older boy or girlfriend and perhaps aren't seeing their existing friends as much?
- Do they seem scared, quiet, or angry a lot more than they used to?
- Do they have marks or injuries that they seem very secretive about?

Many of these signs might just be down to typical teenage challenges and part of growing up - exam pressure, teenage relationships, or other stressful issues. But they could also be signs that a young person is being groomed or used by criminals or gangs.

If you are worried, talk to the young person and outline your concerns. Ask about them about their own worries and discuss what you can do to help.

You can also talk to their school, youth worker or you can call the police direct.

Sometimes having difficult conversations, while uncomfortable at the time, can prevent something more serious from happening.

If you aren't the young person's direct parent or carer, then speak to their family/carers about the issue and outline your concerns or call police on 101. If it's an emergency, call 999 now.

You can also call independent charity Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111. (You don't need to give your name and your call won't be traced)

Safeguarding children is everyone's business and we want all our young people to have a summer to remember for the right reasons.

You can keep up-to-date with the policing activity taking place where you live by signing up to Northamptonshire Talking, our free messaging service providing news and updates on policing and community matters that are relevant to you.

You can sign up via northamptonshiretalking.co.uk

Kind regards,

Detective Superintendent Andy Glenn