

MERSEYSIDE  
Violence  
Reduction  
Partnership



# NOTES FOR FACILITATORS

'TO THE EDGE' – A FILM FOR YOUNG  
PEOPLE ABOUT CHILD CRIMINAL  
EXPLOITATION, GANGS AND KNIFE CRIME

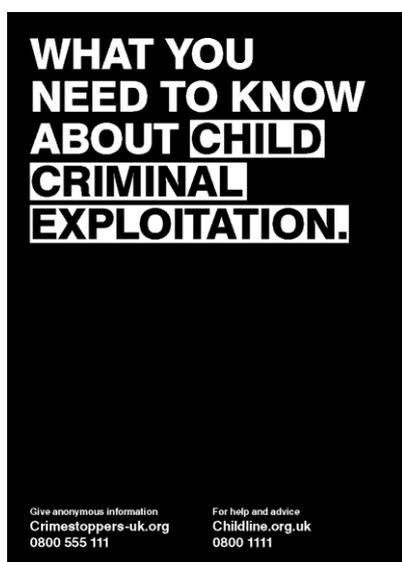


# 1. BACKGROUND AND DELIVERY

**1.1** 'To the Edge' is a resource created by D Street Media following a commission from the Merseyside Violence Reduction Partnership (MVRP). It has been created for Merseyside Police to use with schools and other organisations as a stimuli to discuss the issues of child criminal exploitation, knife crime and gangs with young people.

**1.2** The resource consists of:

- A 25-minute film.
- A workshop session plan (provided in sections 2 and 3).
- The MVRP Young Person's Guide to child criminal exploitation.



**1.3** While marketed as a resource for a universal Key Stage 4 audience, there is recognition it may also be appropriate for targeted Key Stage 3 groups.

**1.4** Any use of the film should be in conjunction with the following:

- The film should never be viewed in isolation.
- Pre-activity planning, signposting to appropriate support organisations and post-session feedbacks take place every time the resource is used.
- Those delivering the training are familiar with the school/setting and Local Authority's safeguarding procedures and referral pathways.
- All staff within the establishment, including those not in attendance for the session, are made aware of the subject matter and point of contact should any issues arise.
- In order to minimise any potential trauma, ensure already identified vulnerable young people are supported and facilitators are observant for any young people visibly affected.
- Additional consideration and support required for those with special educational needs.
- The school or setting ensures opportunity for further reflection in a separate session to unpick any additional issues arising from the screening.

## 2. SUGGESTED WORKSHOP ACTIVITIES

### 2.1 - RECAP AND SUMMARISE THE FILM AND ITS CHARACTERS.

#### What type of person do you think each character is?

Discuss character traits, behaviours and thoughts and feelings towards them.

- **Max** – The lead character.
- **Jeff** – Max's Dad.
- **Kath** – Max's Mum.
- **Jade** – Max's girlfriend.
- **Pete** – The ring leader of the gang.
- **Nico** – Another member of the gang.



Max with Dad, Jeff



Max's girlfriend, Jade



Pete, the gang's ring leader threatens Max

### 2.2 - WHAT ARE THE MAIN THEMES THAT THE FILM ADDRESSES?

Give at least one example for each theme including:

#### Alcoholism

Jeff is spending all his money on alcohol when the family needs money for necessities such as food.

#### Home stress

Although they are supportive of Max, Jeff and Kathy seem to argue often. They are also struggling to stay afloat financially which causes further stress.

#### Violent behaviour

Max grabs Jade and startles her, the teacher sees this.

#### Knife crime

There is a knife in Nico's car.

- Max takes a knife from his kitchen - does he carry it as a form of protection?
- Max eventually is killed by his own knife



Max is eventually killed by the knife he took from home, which he thought would protect him

### 2.3 - DO YOU THINK MAX WOULD HAVE REALLY USED THE KNIFE?

#### Ask why young people carry knives?

Explain many of those who carry knives say initially they carried them for their own protection. Evidence shows that those who carry knives for their own protection are more likely to become a victim as a result, and the knife can be turned on them.

<https://www.wirral safeguarding.co.uk/knife-crime/>



Why do young people carry knives?

## 2.4 - PETE AND NICO WERE OLDER THAN MAX, DID THEY EXPLOIT HIM?

Child criminal exploitation is when someone you feel you can trust encourages you, or forces you, to do things which causes you harm. This can include committing a crime for their benefit. Criminal exploitation can happen to boys and girls, teenagers and also to children under 10 years old.



*Nico starts to groom / persuade Max*



*Ring leader of drug gang, Pete, is older and knows how to groom / persuade Max*

**The list below includes some – but not all – of the things you could be encouraged, or forced to do.**

- Sell drugs.
- Carry drugs or money – or store them somewhere.
- Carry a knife or gun, or other weapons – or store them somewhere.
- Look after weed that is being grown in a house or other property.
- Have sex with someone or engage in sexual activity.
- Commit theft, robbery or burglary.
- Work in unsafe places, like a cannabis (weed) farm or a vulnerable person's home (selling drugs).
- Threaten to harm you or your family if you do not commit a crime for them.
- Encourage or force you to sell or carry drugs or money for them.
- Force you to work for them to pay off the debt if you are holding drugs and they are stolen from you (often they steal it themselves to force you into debt).
- Encourage or force you to carry a knife or gun for them.
- Encourage or force you to steal or assault someone for them.
- Make you feel you owe them for the gifts or the protection they have given to you.



## 2.5 - DOES ANYONE KNOW WHAT COUNTY LINES MEANS?

'County Lines' refers to the phone lines that drug dealers use to sell drugs right around the country, not just in Merseyside. Young people can be exploited into selling drugs near where they live, but they may also be forced to sell drugs in towns and places outside of the area, even hundreds of miles away.

This is also called trafficking. When this happens, they may go missing from school or home, and drug gangs will not allow them to return home for many days or weeks.

There are loads of different names for 'County Lines' including:

- Gone or going cuntch
- Going country
- Grafting
- Out there
- Out of town (O.T.)
- Trapping

Other names include:

- 'Trap houses' or 'Bandos' refers to the places that young people are sent to, away from their home in order to sell drugs.
- 'Gaff' can describe a house where there is a party and where drug use is taking place.
- 'Burner' or a 'Deal line' or a 'trap' or 'Graft phone' refers to the phone that's used to sell drugs.

## 2.6 - SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Each group to discuss one of the points below and then all to feedback:

- If you were Max, who could you speak to about your money problem?
- Jade had an idea that Max was getting involved with Nico and Pete, should she have done something about this, if so, what?
- What can you do to go against peer pressure?
- What are some other reasons why a person might carry a knife? What are the risks and consequences?
- If you feel under threat, what should you do instead of bringing a knife?



*If you were Max, who could you speak to about the money problem?*



*How could a girlfriend discuss her anxieties about her boyfriend?*



*What can you do to go against peer pressure?*

## 2.7 - RECREATE A SCENE

In groups, a selected scene from the film is recreated to perform to the rest of the group. They must reimagine it so that the story ends differently and more positively:

- In the band rehearsal when Max chooses not to explain his problem to his friends.
- Max approaching Pete and the gang as a solution to getting the money he needs.
- Max chooses to take the knife out of his kitchen.
- Choose a moment in the film that marks Max's destiny and change it.

## 2.8 - END OF SESSION

Explain that, although the film and the characters in 'To The Edge' were fictional, the events were actually based on real-life stories. State that, there are times when young people have nothing to do with the gang rivalry in a particular area and don't have previous involvement in crime, but can still suffer the consequences of knife crime.

Describe signposting opportunities (below).

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# 3. SIGNPOSTING

## 3.1 - CHILDLINE

Free confidential advice anytime, whatever your worry, whenever you need help  
0800 111; [childline.org.uk](http://childline.org.uk)

## 3.2 - SAMARITANS

Samaritans is an anonymous and completely confidential listening service. They can be contacted via phone, email, or going to the branch in Liverpool. You can contact Samaritans if you ever feel like you need to talk but don't know who to talk to or simply aren't ready to talk to anyone close to you just yet.

They operate 24 hours a day 365 days a year— a volunteer is always there to listen without judgement.

CALL for FREE: 116 123 EMAIL: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

VISIT: [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org) to find out more

## 3.3 - CRIMESTOPPERS

Useful for addressing the notion of being a 'grass', Crimestoppers is a charity that also operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. They provide a service whereby a person can report a crime or criminal activity completely anonymously and this information will be passed on to the police whilst ensuring the identity of the informant cannot be found.

They also share advice on how to keep the people you care about safe.

CALL: 0800 555 111.

VISIT: [crimestoppers-uk.org](http://crimestoppers-uk.org)

## 3.4 - FEARLESS

This is a brilliant and safe place made specifically for young people where they can get information and also report anything (anonymously) they are worried about, which might include worry about friends being involved in county lines or even themselves.

It's important to emphasise that this can be done anonymously – check that the young people understand what that means if it feels right to do so?

Fearless has five ways of getting in contact and offering information:

**Website:** [www.fearless.org/en](http://www.fearless.org/en)

**Insta account:** <https://www.instagram.com/fearlessuk/?hl=en>

**Twitter:** <https://twitter.com/FearlessORG>

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/Fearlessagainstcrime>

**YouTube:** <https://www.youtube.com/user/FearlessORG>

### 3.5 - MERSEYSIDE POLICE

For non-emergency, call 101. For an emergency, call 999.

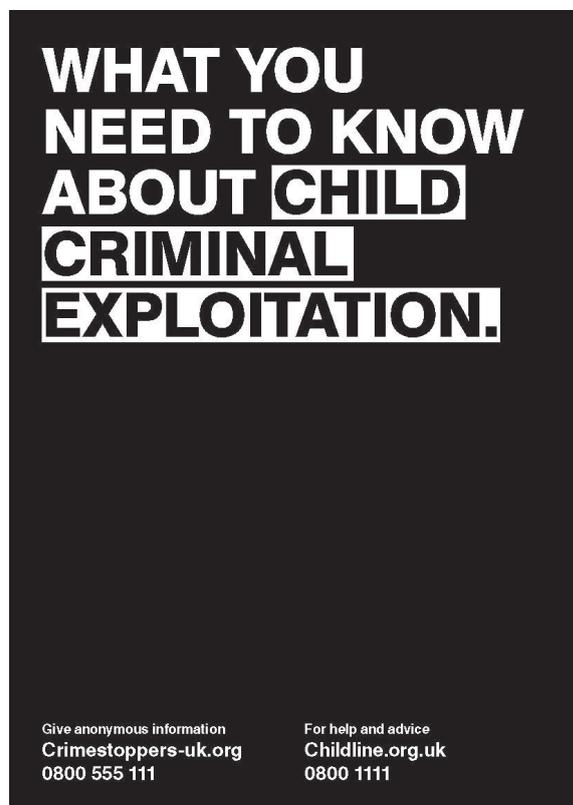
[www.merseyside.police.uk](http://www.merseyside.police.uk)

Or, you can DM the police on Twitter or

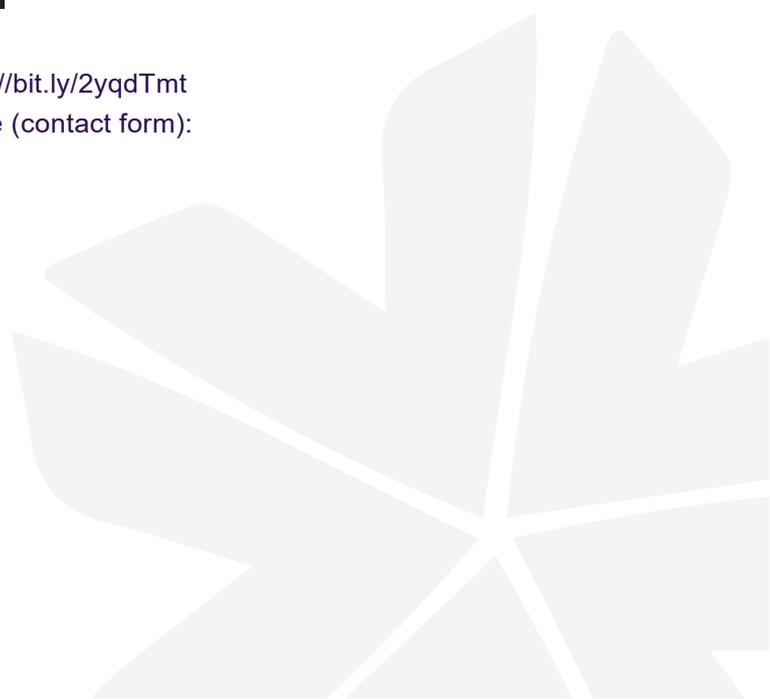
Facebook: @MerPolCC Instagram: @merseysidepolice

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## 4. WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CCE - Young Person's Guide



Digital copies can be downloaded from: <https://bit.ly/2yqdTmt>  
Or order hard copies through MVRP's website (contact form):  
<https://www.merseysidevrp.com/>



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