

**POLICE:NOW**

INFLUENCE FOR GENERATIONS



# Preventing youth violence

PC Rossana Walker,  
Essex Police

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"Together with my community policing team and a host of partner agencies, I have been working with Colchester Institute to educate around 3,000 secondary school pupils on the dangers of knife crime and promote safety. Our approach included an engagement event involving numerous social media and lessons taught by local knife crime charities. This was then followed by two enforcement days, where I was able to implement a working knife arch.

To access children who, for various reasons, were not in school, I engaged with youth clubs in knife crime hotspot areas in order to deliver talks on the realities of knife crime and provide support and reassurance to a wider pool of people at risk. We have seen good results following my visit to youth clubs in Colchester, with 94% having learnt something new about knife crime and how to protect themselves, and with 88% of youths feeling more confident to report knife crime. Because of the availability and quality of data, which are typically limited to the national scale and do not give a nuanced picture of knife crime at the local level, I approached the University of Essex. There, I found out about the Catalyst Project. This is a multi-million-pound fund to improve community services for vulnerable people. After a few meetings, I put together a Data Processing Contract, and now, police data on knife crime are with the University research team for analysis. Academic experts are using state-of-the-art technology to conduct geo-demographic analysis, comparing data on unemployment, deprivation and knife crime. Recommendations from the study will enable a clearer understanding of our local knife problem and provide future partnership opportunities with external agencies to ultimately help young people protect themselves from the dangers they face."

Police Constable Rossana Walker, Essex Police