

Adventurer's MK

CRIME PREVENTION

Anti-social behaviour orders

Kids and teenagers are receiving lots of anti-social behaviour orders. Is this the right way to cut youth crime?

Discuss ways of beating youth crime and present solutions.

Learning aims

- Approaches available for youth crime prevention.
- Discuss their own solutions and present their ideas.

Icebreaker - Choose from the stories:

City terrorised by teenage girl

A 13-year-old girl has been banned from going into Leeds city centre for causing trouble and leading a gang. Ellen Moore was given an anti-social behaviour order (Asbo) that also stops her going on buses on her own, and covering her face with a scarf or hood. She is reported to be the leader of a gang of kids who caused lots of trouble there. If Ellen does any of the things the Asbo bans her from she could end up being locked away.

Banned from 80 streets

Imagine being banned from nearly 80 of the streets in your home town for four years. That's what's happened to 11 year old Lukon, from Wolverhampton. He's been given what's called an anti-social behaviour order, because he's been in trouble so many times. It means if the 11-year-old is found in any of the 80 streets, he could be spending up to two years in jail. Lukon spent six months abusing and terrorising people in Wolverhampton with threats of violence. And as a result he is now the youngest person in the Midlands to receive an anti-social behaviour order.

Do you know what an anti-social behaviour order is?

Anti-social behaviour orders

- These are special sets of rules given to someone whose behaviour is causing problems.
- The rules will say things like who you may meet and where you are allowed to go. They often ban you from the areas where you have caused trouble.
- Breaking the rules is an offence for which you can be arrested.
- Kids and teenagers who receive anti-social behaviour orders can have their names made public. Normally courts and the police may not name young offenders.
- People who keep stealing, getting drunk, acting violently or vandalising property can receive anti-social behaviour orders.
- The orders are mostly given to teenagers but are only used when other things have not worked.

It often works like this:

1. When a young person's behaviour is causing problems the first people involved are normally schools, social services and youth offending teams.

2. If the problem continues an acceptable behaviour contract may be used. This is signed by the young person, their parents and the police. Breaking the contract is not an offence.
3. Finally, an anti-social behaviour order may be used. This is a set of rules that the young person must follow.

Discuss

- What are the consequences of 'naming and shaming' young offenders?
- At what age should children be held criminally responsible?
- Will anti-social behaviour orders help young people to not break the law again?

Main activity

In groups, students make a list of their top five ways to prevent child criminals from breaking the law.

Suggestions include:

- Imprisonment
- Fines for their parents
- Curfews
- Electronic tagging
- Corporal punishment
- Community service
- Make them meet their victims

For the top two punishments on their list they should state three points in favour of its use and three against. Then students write and rehearse a 3-minute sketch to illustrate how their most effective way would work in practice.

Discuss:

- How do youth clubs and community schemes help reduce youth crime?
- In what ways can parents do more to help cut crime?
- Are there any schemes that have been or could be set up in the local area?

Recap on the main teaching points.

- 70% of all crimes that affect ordinary people are committed by a small number of young men - almost all of whom began offending in their teens.

The options for dealing with young offenders are chosen from a scale linked to the severity of the crimes committed, they include;

- Prevention schemes - the teams organise activities and supervision to keep the children away from drugs and criminality.
- Community sentences - includes a meeting between victim and criminal or an order to carry out work to repair damage done. More than 5,000 reparation orders have been made since June 2000.
- Intensive supervision - full surveillance of the offender through electronic tagging and personal visits.

Custody and training - in the year to March 2001 approximately 6,600 young offenders ended up on a Detention and Training Order (DTO) which aims to punish and rehabilitate in equal measure. A DTO can last between four and 24 months with half the time spent in custody and the remaining half in community rehabilitation.

Discuss:

- (1) At what age do young people know right from wrong? Prompt: 5? 7?
- (2) How old do you have to be before you are responsible for your actions?
- (3) Is a teenager less responsible for a crime than an adult?
- (4) Does the criminal's age make any difference to the victim?

Discuss:

Asked about their existing understanding of crime and how it affects them.

- What is crime?
- How does crime affect the individual and their surroundings?
- What causes people to commit crime?

Briefly discuss with the groups the questions listed on the Offence List and then engage them with some of the following questions/ideas.

- If an individual found out that a family member had been involved in crime, how would they respond/react?
- What do the group think of the courts and prison services in Britain, and do they feel that offenders are given the appropriate level of punishment?

Offence List

- Shoplifting
- Breaking into a car
- Picking a fight
- Drink driving
- Driving under the influence of drugs
- Solvent abuse
- Urinating against a wall
- Doing a paper round at the age of 11
- Shouting racist abuse
- Being sold alcohol in a pub at the age of 16

In your groups arrange the ten bulleted acts above in number order in terms of the seriousness of the offence with 1 being your highest and most serious offence and 10 being your lowest and most trivial offence.

Once everyone is finished, the group leader will ask you some further questions. Be considering the following:

- Which of these are crimes?
- Which of them, if any, are victimless?
- What kinds of punishment would you give to these offences?
- How should repeat offenders be dealt with?