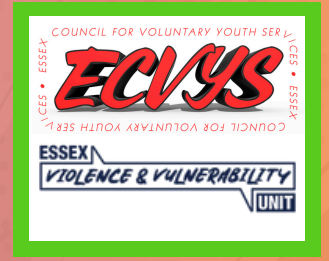




2024-2025 VVU Youth Voices LISTENING PROJECT 'Youth violence & feelings of safety in local communities'



This is the sixth year the Violence and Vulnerability Unit (VVU) have commissioned a listening project to enable young people from across Southend, Essex and Thurrock (SET) to share honestly and openly about how safe they feel in their communities, and what they think could be done to help them feel safer. The VVU are committed to hearing these views, because it helps to inform their work and make sure that anything delivered is always as relevant as possible.

The listening project takes place through face to face discussions and activities with young people, and the main insight is collected through youth leaders, who are already known to the young people through participation in local youth clubs/groups/activities.

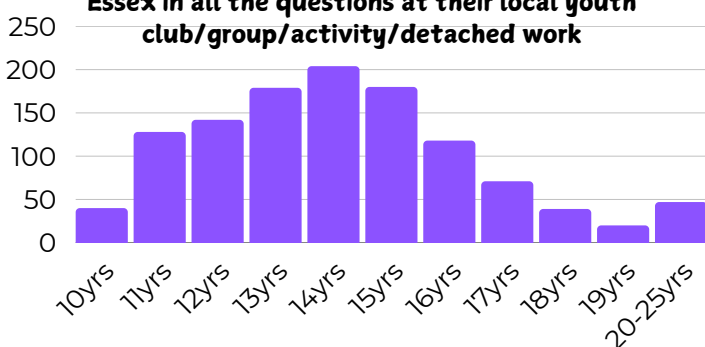
The variety of groups that take part in this project is part of its beauty, and the project is accessible for any group to take part.

Because each area of Essex is very different, we have formed an Essex-wide report to give an overview of young people's views, and local reports so that the VVU and others interested in keeping people safe, can gain local insight from a young person's perspective.

This report does not claim to be based on factual information. However, the insight gained is just as valuable as it is pure and honest. Views will be imperative to creating impactful changes that are relevant for everyone in the community to feel happier, healthier and safer.

This report is compiled by ECVYS, but is the work of local youth organisations, and the voices of Essex young people, to whom we are extremely grateful.

Distribution, by age, of young people who took part across Essex in all the questions at their local youth club/group/activity/detached work



2,466

Young people aged 10-25yrs took part in various ways-

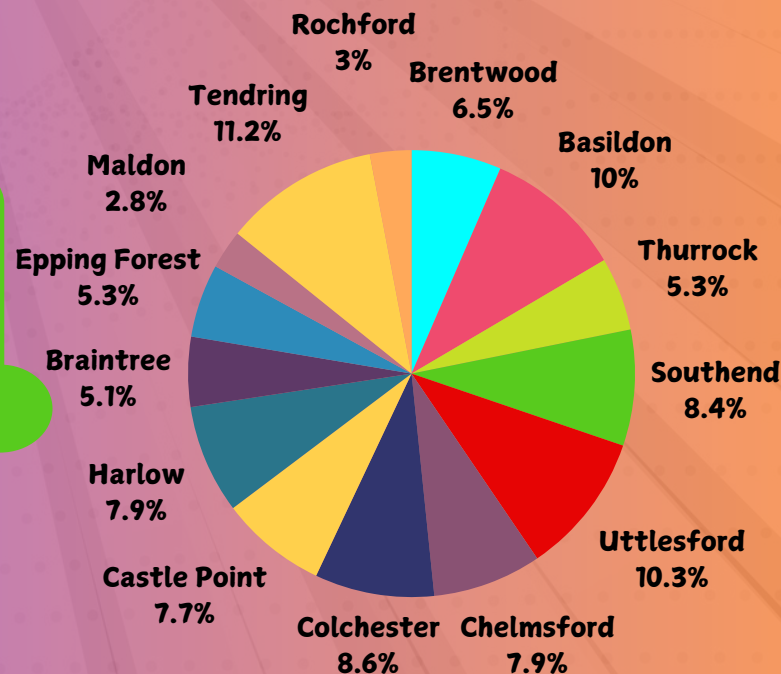
1168 Young people participated through 'in-depth' discussion and gave comprehensive insight on all the questions at 74 local youth clubs/groups/activity sessions, and through detached youth work. This in-depth work is the glue of our report, and is used to form the Essex-wide report, and the key insights shown in the local reports.

183 Young people participated via the social media platforms; TikTok, Instagram, Facebook and Snapchat. Questions asked were limited to those that had a yes/no response. These views have contributed to our Essex-wide report only.

1035 Young people also got the chance to participate through assemblies and detached work with questions that could mainly had a yes/ no response. This insight has been used in both our Essex-wide report, and in the local reports.

80 The VVU youth voices conference was themed around safety in Essex and also gave young people a platform to share their views. This insight has been used in our Essex-wide report only.

Distribution, by area, of young people who took part in all the questions at their local youth club/group/activity/detached work



Who are the 74 Groups that ran the listening in each area?

(Through clubs/ activities/ detached work & youth resource hubs)

Uttlesford District (P11)

- **Stort Valley Schools Trust**
(Christian faith group running sessions in Saffron Walden County High School & St Thomas More School)
- **Noo Yu CIC**
(Tertiary provision, boxing group)
- **1st Thaxted Carver Scouts**
(Scouts)
- **The Garden Music Project**
(Open access music club)
- **Hyper Fusion**
(Performing arts group)

Braintree District (P41)

- **H.A.P.P.Y Youth Club**
(Open access youth club)
- **The Outhouse**
(LGBTQ+ youth club)
- **7th Witham Girl Guides**
(Girl Guides)
- **The Third Space**
(Open access youth club)

Chelmsford District (P47)

- **Kraken Explorer Unit**
(Scouts)
- **Essex YMCA**
Galleywood Youth Club & The Y club
(Open access youth clubs)
- **Zodiac Rangers**
(Girl Guides)
- **The Outhouse**
(LGBTQ+ youth club)

Maldon District (P53)

- **Action for Family Carers**
(Young carers)
- **Maldon & District CVS**
Community Gaming Initiative
(open access games club)
- **Maldon Sea Cadets**
(Uniformed group)

Brentwood District (P59)

- **Endeavour Youth Club**
(SEN group)
- **Doddington Road Community Church**
(School assembly with year 7)
- **Ingatestone Boys Own Club**
(Open access youth club)
- **Brennan & Burch, Big Smile Collective**
(Art youth club)
- **SNAP**
(SEN Theatre group)

Basildon District (P65)

- **Gateway Radio Club**
(Open access youth club)
- **Bar'n'Bus 'Being Me'**
(All girls group)
- **Chantry Rangers**
(Girl Guides)
- **Essex Youth Service**
'Gateway' (SEN group)
& Friday night club (open access)
- **Maru Kai karate**
(Martial arts group)
- **Flex Youth Club**
(Ethnic minority group)
- **Heritage Mix**
(Ethnic minority group)

Harlow District (P17)

- **Church Langley Girl Guides**
(Girl Guides)
- **Harlow Youth Council**
(Youth Council)
- **Rainbow Services**
(Alternative education group)
- **Essex Boys & Girls Clubs**
(Respect project)

Epping Forest District (P23)

- **Youth Unity**
(Limes Farm, open access youth club)
- **Epping Forest Youth Council**
(Youth Council)
- **Action for Family Carers**
(Young Carers group)
- **Bancroft Lions Youth Cricket club**
(Cricket club)

Colchester District (P29)

- **Tiptree Youth Project Outreach**
(Open access youth club)
- **Essex YMCA**
Myland Youth Club & The Hythe youth club (open access youth clubs)
- **The Outhouse**
(LGBTQ+ youth club)
- **The Underdog Crew**
(SEND)
- **St Annes Youth Club**
(Open access youth club)
- **YAK, Firstsite**
(Youth art group)

Tendring District (P35)

- **Teen Talk**
(Open access youth club)
- **Mistley Kids Club**
(SEN club)
- **The Outhouse**
(LGBTQ+ youth club)
- **Tendring CVS**
(SEND)
- **2nd Frinton Guides**
(Girl Guides)
- **The London Bus Theatre Company**
(Drama group)
- **Walton Youth Club**
(Open Access Youth Club)

Rochford District (P71)

- **KAOS Youth Club**
(Open access youth club)
- **Bar n Bus:**
(‘Being Me’ all girls group, & detached youth work)
- **The Megacentre**
(Wellbeing group)

Castle Point District (P77)

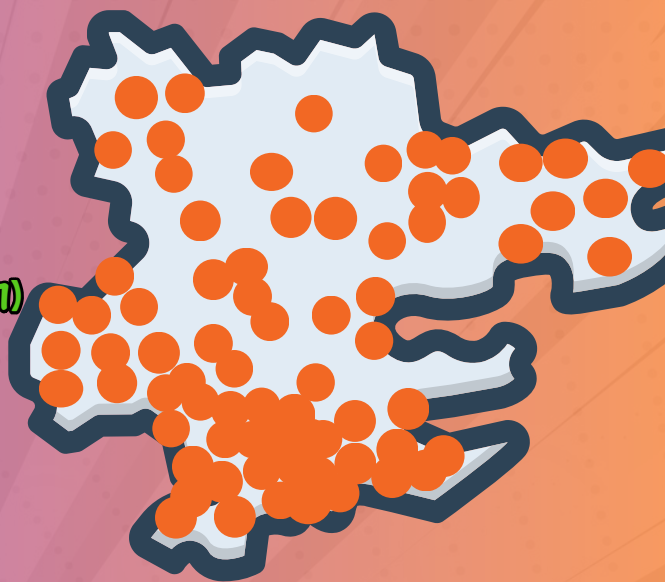
- **Yellow Door**
(Open access youth club)
- **2nd Hadleigh Guides**
(Girl Guides)
- **Canvey Island Boxing Club**
(Essex Boys and Girls Club)
- **ATF**
(Sports outreach)
- **TrustLinks & Yellow Door**
(Next level; performing arts group)

Thurrock (P83)

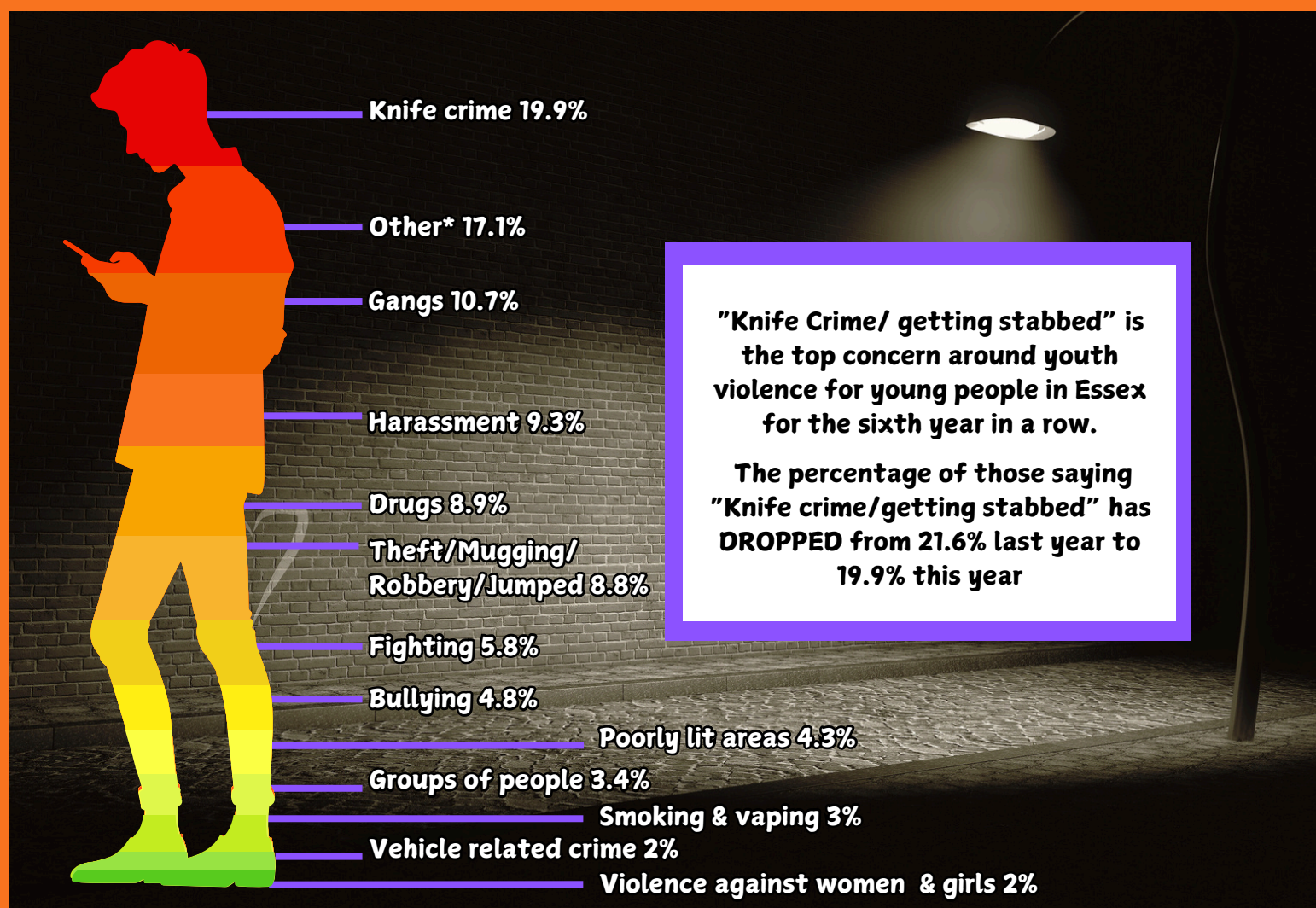
- **Seabrook Rise Youth Club**
(Open access)
- **Riverview Charitable Trust**
(Open Access)
- **Thurrock Youth Cabinet**
(Youth Council)
- **Orsett Fire Cadets**
(Fire Cadets)
- **Arts Outburst Express**
(Art group)
- **Super Social**
(SEN group)

Southend (P89)

- **South Essex Community Hub**
(SEN group)
- **Bouldering Together**
Indirock & Trustlinks
(Open Access)
- **Southend United**
(Football club)
- **Southend YMCA**
(Detached youth work)
- **Southend TEENS Group**
(7th day Adventist faith group)
- **Garon Park Youth Club**
(Open access youth club)



What is the biggest concern for young people in Essex around youth violence in their local area?



*The 'Other' category incorporates examples such as: global affairs, people throwing fireworks, threats, lack of trust in others, 'Roadmen', discrimination, violence in school, drunk people, online abuse, being alone, and kidnap

The percentage of young people saying "Gangs" has increased from 8.8% last year, to 10.7% in 2024-2025

One of the top concerns this year is "**Harassment**". This is not something that has previously been too much of a worry for young people.

Within the group that mentioned "harassment", almost 60% specifically mentioned harassment involving men or boys.

Concerns around "**Drugs**" has remained exactly the same, with 8.9% of young people giving this answer.

The percentage of young people saying "**Mugging/being jumped/robbery**" has almost HALVED compared to last year.

The young people that stated "global affairs", were referring to the discriminatory and homophobic views and policy changes that are happening in the USA. They explained that they are worried about policies threatening inclusivity and equality.



Six year comparison of young people’s biggest concerns around youth violence in Essex

Year Area name	2019–2020 613 young people took part)	2020–2021 379 young people took part	2021–2022 761 young people took part	2022–2023 1553 young people took part	2023–2024 1434 young people took part	2024-2025 2466 young people took part (across all areas, & various platforms)
Uttlesford	Being ignorant of dangers	1.) Getting stabbed 2.) Robbed/ mugged 3.) Assaulted 4.) Gangs 5.) Sexual assault 6.) Kidnapped 7.) Attacked with weapons 8.) Drugs		Peer pressure & violence	Drug dealing/taking	Harassment
Harlow	Gangs		Drugs	Gangs	Knife crime/ stabbing	Knife crime
Epping Forest	Getting beaten up or assaulted			No consequences for violence	Getting robbed/ mugged	Poorly lit areas
Colchester	Getting stabbed		Knife crime/getting stabbed	Fighting	Knife crime	Knife crime
Tendring	Getting stabbed/ knife crime		Harassment & knife crime	Poorly lit areas	Youth violence	Fighting
Braintree	Drugs			Knife crime	Drugs	Groups of boys on bikes
Chelmsford	Getting stabbed		Getting stabbed	Knife crime	Being attacked	Knife crime
Maldon	No safe spaces			‘Hear say’ about violence	People carrying weapons AND vaping	Gangs
Brentwood	Gangs			Roadmen	Knife crime/ being stabbed	Violence/being attacked
Basildon	Gangs		Knife crime/ getting stabbed	Knife crime & getting stabbed	Knife crime	Knife crime
Rochford	Anti-social behaviour / criminal damage			Drugs	Drugs/ drug related crime	Gangs
Castle Point	Getting beaten up			Knife crime	Knife crime/ being stabbed	Knife crime
Thurrock	Youth violence at a younger age		Knife crime/ getting stabbed	Knife crime	Knife crime/ getting stabbed	Gangs
Southend	Getting stabbed		Knife crime/ getting stabbed	Getting stabbed	Gangs	Knife crime

Are young people in Essex worried about being exploited by a gang in their local area?



56%
of young people
said they were
NOT worried

This year 27% MORE young people than last year, said they are NOT worried about being exploited by a gang in their local area.

The majority of young people in 7 of all 14 of the Essex areas said that they are NOT worried about exploitation.

(Last year this was only 2 areas in Essex)

An additional 183 young people also answered this question via social media. Their responses changed this percentage slightly from 59% down to 56%.

Only 55 out of the 183 who answered online said they are NOT worried about being exploited by a gang.

Do young people in Essex feel safe when they are out with their friends in their local area?

65%

of young people
said they **DO**
feel safe



This year sees a lower percentage of young people saying that they do feel SAFE in their local areas when out with their friends, but the majority of young people still feel safe. Last year 76% of young people said they felt safe when they were out with their friends.

Consistently in our reports, young people's responses to this question are dependent on who they are with, where they are and if it is light or 'well-lit' in the areas outside.

An additional 183 young people also answered this question via social media. These responses lowered the percentage from 67% saying that they DO feel safe, down to 65%

In the last year, have young people from Essex experienced violent crime either as a victim, a witness or have they taken part in it?

As a Victim 82% said NO

As a Witness 65% said NO

Someone who took part 95% said NO

ALL of these figures have improved since last year-

In the 2023-24 project:

78% had NOT been a victim

48% had NOT been a witness

93% had NOT taken part

These results include the young people that took part via social media platforms

The responses to these questions vary across the different areas of Essex. Overall, these statistics show progress since the last report

When comparing the percentages from the different areas, Brentwood had the HIGHEST in regards to young people witnessing and being a victim of violent crime-

60% have been a witness

38% have been a victim

Colchester had the second HIGHEST percentages-

49% have been a witness

35% have been a victim



***What helps young people feel SAFE when they are out with their friends in the local area?**

BEING AT A YOUTH CLUB/ ORGANISED ACTIVITY

BEING WITH FRIENDS

HAVING A PHONE

STAYING AT HOME

TRUSTED ADULTS

SAFETY MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

POLICE PRESENCE

PUBLIC AREAS

WELL-LIT AREAS

CAMERAS/ CCTV

KNOWING THE AREA

1. Being with friends/ safety in numbers 27.4%
2. Having a phone 14.6%
3. Well-lit areas/ being out during the day 12.3%
4. Knowing the area/ staying close to home 11%
5. Being at youth clubs and organised activities 9.3%
6. Being with/having trusted adults close by 8.9%
7. Being in public spaces like shops 4.9%
8. Having a police presence 4.1%
9. Cameras & CCTV 3.6%
10. Safety management strategies 2.2%
11. Staying at home 1.7%

'Being in large groups of friends' is always a top priority for young people to help them feel safer.

Last year the top answer was "Being with friends"

This year young people mentioned Ring doorbells, location apps for phones and having plans for quick exits in case of emergencies, within the safety management category.

Over half of the young people that mentioned safe spaces specifically mentioned being at a youth club.

***What makes young people feel UNSAFE when they are out with their friends in the local area?**

KNIVES

GROUPS OF PEOPLE

CERTAIN AREAS

BULLIES

DRUNK PEOPLE

SKETCHY PEOPLE

BEING FOLLOWED

DRUGS

MEN/ BOYS

GANGS

BEING ALONE

POORLY-LIT AREAS

1. Poorly-lit areas 31.7%
2. Groups of people 12.1%
3. Men/ boys 10.1%
4. Being alone 7.9%
5. Sketchy looking people/people with hoodies/balaclavas 7.5%
6. Being followed or approached by strangers 6.9%
7. Certain areas (alleyways, underpasses, open spaces like parks at night) 5.9%
8. Gangs 4%
9. People on drugs, or smelling drugs nearby 3.9%
10. Drunk people 3.6%
11. No phone/ bad phone signal/ low phone battery 2.3%
12. Knives 2.2%
13. Bullies 2%

Young people consistently say how important street lighting is in helping them to feel safe.

Parks, and open spaces designed for children and young people, are the very spaces they do not feel safe in when it is dark. Early evening is often the time that young people want to 'hang out' in parks.

"Men/boys" making young people feel UNSAFE has MORE THAN DOUBLED since last year.

*The word clouds for the Essex-wide report only show the comments made the most. The reports for each area of Essex give more detail, and a complete breakdown of all answers given.

What do young people in Essex think should be done to help them feel safer in their local areas?

1. More/better street lighting
2. More police
3. Free phone charging stations
4. More CCTV/security cameras
5. Safe places for young people to hang out ~ that are inside
6. More trusted adults
7. Help points or free emergency phones
8. More accessible youth clubs ~ including clubs that cater for SEND, that are open more frequently
9. Location phone apps. personal safety alarms
10. Maintaining areas to look nice and improve pavements



From the Youth Voice Day, 80 young people highlighted that they want more; streetlights, police presence, CCTV and free activities for young people" to help them feel safer.

More street lights was said by EVERY area and given in the top 3 most frequent responses.

More police was asked for by each area, with 10 areas mentioning it in their top 3 answers.

Other suggestions from young people:

- Better phone signal
- Tougher punishments for people carrying weapons
- Better location maps/signage

What activities would young people in Essex, like to see more available for them to take part in?



These answers vary slightly from area to area but, across the whole of Essex, young people are consistent that any new provision needs to be free or low cost.



Over the past six years we have noticed that young people's answers to this question are very consistent. This year, using this insight, we made the question multiple choice rather than free form.

Young people did have the option to comment and add in anything else. This is important to mention because over half of the young people that chose to give individual comments, specifically mentioned wanting learning opportunities around life skill topics.

If we had included life skills as one of the multiple choice options, we suspect this would have seen an even higher response rate.

Have young people seen content on social media of *serious violence?

(Young people answered the question about social media in their youth groups and online)



78%

of young people said they had seen content on social media

These questions were answered by 1302 young people, 183 young people via social media

Which platform have young people seen the serious violence on?



1) TikTok 36%



2) Snapchat 22%



3) Instagram 13%



4) X/Twitter 10%



5) WhatsApp 7%



6) YouTube 6%



7) Facebook 4%



8) Reddit 2%

Of those young people who have seen violence on social media:

41%

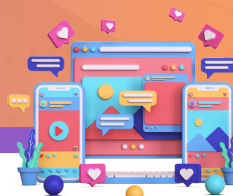
have seen content of people they know – friends, friends of friends or people they know from their local area?

87%

have seen content of people they don't know

Exposure to violence online can have a negative impact on children and young people in numerous ways

- It can encourage imitation of violent behaviour
- It can reduce sympathy for victims and normalise violence
- It can make people suspicious of other's intentions



The definition of serious violence* given to the young people was:

- Threats to beat up another child or group of children
- Fights involving children or young people
- Sexually violent content or threats (example: images or threats of sexual assault)
- Children or young people carrying, promoting or using weapons
- Children or young people being part of, or promoting, gangs
- Children or young people promoting, or using, illegal drugs
- Glorifying previous attacks on other young people



KEY OBSERVATIONS, COMPARISONS AND COMMENTS FOR ESSEX-WIDE

2466 young people from across Southend Essex and Thurrock (SET) have voiced their concerns, shared their experiences and offered their suggestions about how safe they feel in their communities, what makes them feel unsafe and how we can help them feel safer.

These young people have participated in face to face discussions at their youth clubs, in school assemblies, via social media and at the Youth Voice conference.

Concerns for young people are different in each area and therefore worth a read to ensure needs are met specifically to the young people in that area.

Looking at the Essex-wide feedback it shows that there is a REDUCED percentage of young people saying that “*Knife crime/getting stabbed*” is their biggest concern around youth violence, from 21.6% to 19.9%. However, this was the MOST frequent response this year and has been the top answer consistently for the previous five years.

Concerns around “*Gangs*” has INCREASED from 8.8% to 10.7% in this report and, new to this year, 9.3% of the young people stated that “*Harassment*” was their biggest worry. ALMOST 60% of these young people specifically mentioned harassment from men or boys.

The percentage of young people that mentioned “*Theft/mugging/getting jumped/robbery*” has almost HALVED, from 16.1% to 8.8% this year.

Young people saying “*Drugs*” is the same percentage as last year, at 8.9%.

This year 4.8% of young people said that “*Bullying*” is their biggest concern, an INCREASE of 1.3%. “*Vaping*” was given as a response by less young people compared to last year, from 3.9% to 3%.

**Contrary to the increase in the percentage of young people saying that their biggest concern is “*Gangs*”, this year sees a significant DECREASE in the percentage of young people that said they are worried about being exploited by a gang in their area.
Last year 71% said they ARE worried compared to 44% in this report.**



The percentage of young people feeling safe when out with their friends locally has DROPPED by over 10% since the previous report.

Young people continue to tell us that feeling safe is dependent on it being daylight or them being in well-lit areas, who they are with and where they are in their community.

4.6% of young people did state that “*Poorly lit areas*” was their biggest concern.

In regards to young people’s ACTUAL experience of violent crime, this year’s feedback shows there have been LESS young people that HAVE been a victim, witnessed it or been involved in violent crime in comparison to last year’s data.

4% LESS have been a victim

17% LESS have been a witness

2% LESS have taken part.

Young people were asked where they feel the crime hot spots are in their local area and although the feedback varies across the different districts, there are similarities to the previous report, with **parks** being given as a response most frequently at the top of their lists, followed by **town centres** and **public transport stations**.

This year there was a noticeable increase in the number of areas which mentioned “*school*”, with Tendring young people putting this at the top of their list for crime hot spots.





KEY OBSERVATIONS, COMPARISONS AND COMMENTS FOR ESSEX-WIDE

Nearly a quarter of the young people across Essex said that they feel safe in large groups of friends, with many of them using the phrase “*Safety in numbers*”.

The second most frequent response for “What helps young people feel safe when out in their local area” was “***Having a phone***”. Although we categorised it separately, many young people talked about having location apps on their phones, or maintaining communication with parents/guardians as to their whereabouts, helps them feel safe.

Being in well-lit areas was third on the list and is reinforced by being at the top of the list, with over 31% saying “*Poorly-lit areas*” makes young people feel unsafe. The importance of lighting is repeatedly raised by young people of all ages, and in all areas, in multiple questions, and has been the top concern for the previous five years when asking young people what makes them feel unsafe.



To help young people feel safer in their communities they asked for more streetlights, more police presence, with some young people suggesting building more positive relations between them and the police, free phone charging stations, CCTV and more safe places for young people to socialise with friends in accessible, supportive and welcoming environments.

Young people echoed this opinion when asked what activities they would like to see more available in their areas, with “***Social chill out spaces***” being said by 15.1%.

This was closely followed by any activities or services provided being “***Affordable or free***”.

Comment from Youth Leader “All young people agreed that they had felt, or witnessed, the cost of living crisis with their families and commented on more people not being able to afford to do things or clubs”

Sport activities was a close third on the list with many young people expressing the sense of safety and belonging from being involved in team sports and at organised clubs.

This was the second year that we asked young people if they have seen violent content on social media and it has INCREASED from 71% to 78%

This year we went more in-depth, and asked if the content involved people they know or people they don’t know. The results on the Essex-wide review showed;

41% said the content involved people they DO know

87% said the content involved people they DO NOT know

TikTok and Snapchat were the top two platforms where young people are viewing the violence, the same as last year.

This year’s feedback signals that efforts to make communities safer are making some tangible impact in certain areas, with fewer young people fearing gang exploitation and encountering violent situations on a personal level.

However, there is always room for improvement and being able to provide safe, welcoming spaces for young people to socialise, learn and develop, affordable activities such as sport to offer a sense of belonging and security, opportunities to learn life skills and forge better relations with authorities, as well as better streetlights could be key to encouraging young people to feeling safer, and becoming proactive contributors in their communities.



120 Young People took part in the Uttlesford district

The brilliant youth organisations that took part:



1st Thaxted Carver (Scouts)
Thaxted



Hyper Fusion (Performing Arts)
Saffron Walden



Noo Yu CIC (Tertiary Provision)
Dunmow

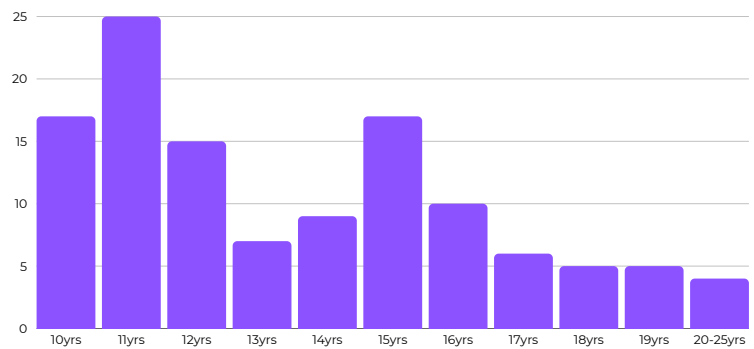


The Garden Music Project (Youth Music Group)
Saffron Walden



Stort Valley Schools Trust (Christian Faith Group)
Saffron Walden

Distribution, by age, of young people who took part in Uttlesford, in all the questions at their local youth club/group/activity



Gender: Female 57%, Male 42 % Non-binary 1%

What is the biggest concern for young people around youth violence in Uttlesford?

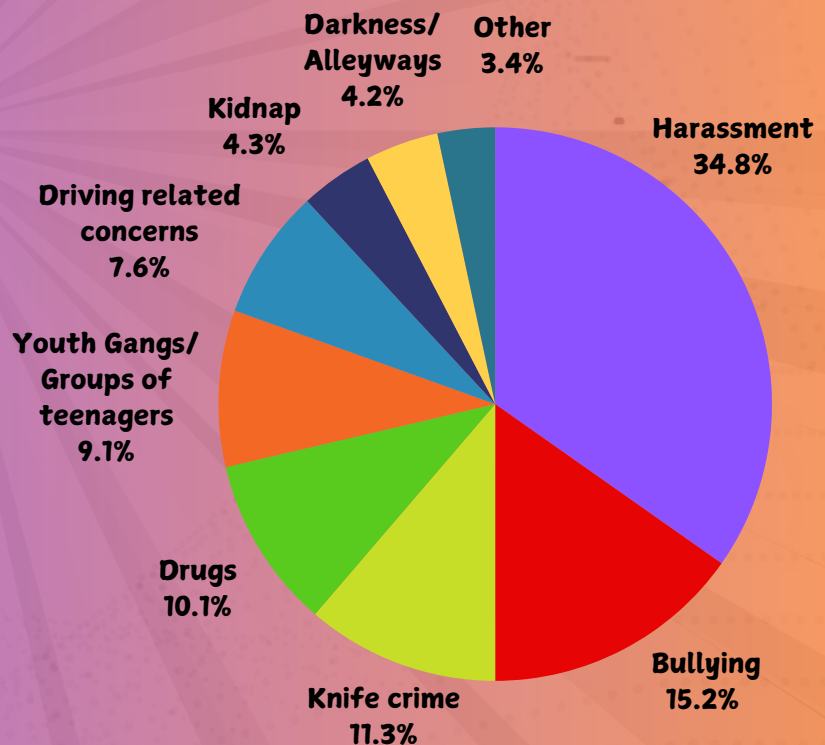
Over a third of young people in Uttlesford said that some kind of harassment was their biggest concern, and out of these young people nearly 60% of them mentioned harassment involving boys or men.

“Most girls I know have been sexually assaulted, harassed or even raped. It’s like an awful secret loads of us keep”

“Guys need educating please, about how to behave and how to be good men”

Compared to last year, the concern around **Bullying** has more than doubled.

“I’ve been harassed by groups from school in town, but also by kids coming in from Stortford”



Other: Older children hanging around school, stalking, homophobic threats, radicalisation, drunk people

Last year **“Drugs and drug dealing”** was mentioned by 50% of the young people that took part in Uttlesford as their biggest concern. This has **DROPPED** significantly this year to 10.1%. This year has also seen a reduction in young people saying that knife crime is their biggest concern by almost half, from 21.6% in 2024 to 11.3% this year.

Are young people in Uttlesford worried about being exploited by a gang in their local area?

No!

59%

of young people
said they are
NOT worried

"Not really my personal experience but we see it happening to others" ~ said by many

LESS young people are worried about being exploited by a gang.

Last year ONLY 38% said they are NOT worried.

"A need to fit in, gain protection from the others" ~ said by many

"County lines, drugs, they think it gives opportunity to make money and increase reputation" ~ said by many

Do young people in Uttlesford feel safe when they are out with their friends in their local area?

65%

of young people
said they **DO**
feel safe

YES!

Compared to the last report, there has been a **DECREASE** in the percentage of young people that feel safe when out with their friends in their local area.

Last year 86% of the young people that took part in the listening project in Uttlesford said they **DO** feel safe.

However, this did depend on where they were, who they were with and if it was dark.

In the last year, have young people from Uttlesford had experience of violent crime either as a victim, a witness or have they taken part in it?

As a Victim

80% said NO

As a Witness

67% said NO

**Someone who
took part**

95% said NO

This feedback shows there has been **13% MORE** young people who **HAVE** been a victim compared to last year

Comment from a young person talking about violence against females:

"This is just the way it is! Nothing you can do about it"

"Someone I know carries a knife and I've been threatened by people with a knife!"



Where do young people from Uttlesford think the crime hotspots are near them?

- 1) Parks & outdoor recreational places ~ Skate park, The Commons, Battlefield Ditches, Bridge End Gardens,
- 2) Alleyways (in Saffron Walden generally and near the library)
- 3) Town (Town Market, Market Square at night)
- 4) Streets & estates (roads around South St & Victoria Ave (no lights)
- 5) Supermarket car parks (top floor of Waitrose car park, Dunmow Co-op)
- 6) Transport - (Audley End Station mentioned by young people over 16)

Skate Park and The Commons were mentioned by 3 different groups, and both were mentioned more times than any other area.

Young person's comment about the Skate Park:
"We used to go down there but there are some sketchy people now so we don't go"

What helps young people from Uttlesford feel SAFE when they are out with their friends in the local area?

BEING WITH FRIENDS

TRUSTED ADULTS

HAVING A PHONE

SAFE SPACES

POLICE PRESENCE

STREET LIGHTS

CAMERAS

KNOWING THE AREA

“Streetlights” was the most frequently given answer as to what helps young people in Uttlesford feel safe (This was second last year, as *“Being with friends”* was the highest answer in 2023-2024)

The majority of young people that said *“Cameras”*, specifically mentioned CCTV cameras in town, but there were a number of young people who said that house doorbell cameras helped them feel safe too.

One group of girls mentioned to their youth leader that *“Having a plan of what to do if they are attacked”* makes them feel safer. This group of girls also said *“Boys are not under the same pressure as girls, and boys don’t worry or have to plan in case of being attacked!”*

What makes young people from Uttlesford feel UNSAFE when they are out with their friends in the local area?

BEING ALONE

LACK OF POLICE

BAD PHONE SIGNAL

SKETCHY LOOKING PEOPLE

POORLY LIT AREAS

GANGS

GROUP OF YOUNG PEOPLE

PEOPLE SMOKING IN ALLEYS

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

DRUG USERS

MEN/BOYS

DRUNK PEOPLE

The most frequent comments for this question involved *“Men and boys”*, with statements about older boys harassing them, boys taking photos without consent and girls being followed by men.

“They just think they have the right to do what they want”

Harassment and violation from men and boys is repeatedly raised by young people in Uttlesford, with some suggesting that even if incidents are reported, nothing is done about it.

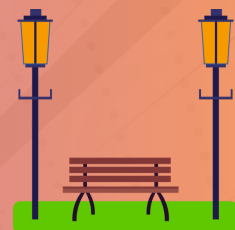
“Think about all the girls you know who have been assaulted; how many of them went to the police? And those who have, what happened? Nothing!!”

“Poorly lit areas” was the second highest answer (the same as last year, 2023-2024).

Young people who talked about *“Sketchy looking people”*, referenced people wearing balaclavas and tracksuits, and the fear they had that those people might be carrying weapons.

What do young people from Uttlesford think should be done to help them feel safer in their local area?

1. More street lighting ~ especially in parks and alleyways
2. More safe places for young people to hang out
3. Free phone charging stations ~ with the suggestion of these being in cupboards because they were worried phones could be vandalised or stolen
4. A greater police presence "Better responses from police when things happen"
5. People should have the 'Walksafe' App ~ Phone app combining journey sharing features and the Safe Space map
6. Have a better phone signal in town for safety
7. Provide self-defence classes ~ "For free or in school would be great"
8. Make shops stay open later
9. Have more trusted adults on the street ~ especially at night
10. More CCTV



Phones are very important to young people to help them feel safe

If all the responses about phones were added together, this would be the highest category.



Other suggestions included:

- A safe place where children can go if they get lost or separated from friends or family
- Better taxi services
- Reduce the sale of vapes
- Emergency contact boxes *"With free phones that connect to the police or something!"*

What activities would young people like to see more available for them to take part in?

18% Affordable/ free activities

17% Social/chill out spaces

14% Sport

14% Music/ Art/ Drama

12% Youth Clubs

11% Organised trips/ residential

9% Gaming

5% Arts & crafts



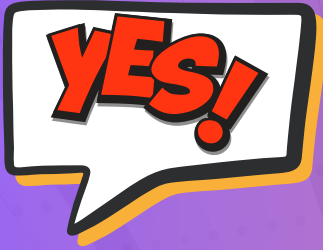
It is very important to young people that groups, activities and services are affordable



Many young people in Uttlesford were keen to have safe and affordable social/chill out places. These places should-

- Serve affordable drinks and snacks
- Have computers for homework and gaming
- Have games such as a pool table, football etc
- Music
- Charging points
- Be run by youth workers

Have young people seen content of serious violence* on social media?



75%

of the young people who took part in Uttlesford said they had seen violent content on social media

In one group of 31 young people, 26 said "Yes" The remaining 5 who said "No" said this was because they did not have a phone with access to social media

Which platform have young people seen the serious violence on?



1) TikTok 34%



2) Snapchat 29%



3) WhatsApp 20%



4) Instagram 10%



5) X/Twitter 7%

Of those young people who have seen violence on social media:

34%

have seen content of people they know – friends, friends of friends or people they know from their local area

99%

have seen content of people they don't know

Some young people mentioned that they had seen serious violence on the news



Comments and Observations

Three quarters of the young people that took part in the listening project in Uttlesford, **HAVE** seen serious violence on social media.

Almost a third of young people that said they **HAVE** seen content online involving people they **KNOW**, said this was of fighting in and around school!

The majority of these young people said this was seen on Snapchat.

Over a third of these young people said it involved people that they know.

Out of the 90 young people that had seen violence on social media, 89 of them said they had seen content involving people that they do not know!





KEY OBSERVATIONS, COMPARISONS AND COMMENTS FOR UTTLESFORD



More young people from Uttlesford have engaged with the listening project this year, and there has been a shift in what young people are saying is their biggest concern around youth violence. This year ‘harassment’ and ‘bullying’ were the top concerns for young people.

Last year 50% of the young people in Uttlesford said that drugs was their biggest concern. This has dropped considerably to 10.1%.

The number of young people saying that knife crime is their biggest concern has also reduced from 21.6% last year (out of 95 young people) to 11.6% (out of 120 young people).

The sale of vapes and cigarettes to those underage was third on the list of concerns for young people last year but was not mentioned at all in the feedback this time.

The feedback and comments from young people in Uttlesford about what makes them feel UNSAFE indicated a proportionately high level of concerns around harassment, and specifically harassment from boys and men.

“Boys in this area glorify sexual violence, this is not ok and we really need to have a conversation about it”

“Some people think violence against women and girls is just the way of life, and are too scared to speak out or don’t think anyone will believe them so they don’t report it”

Through discussions with youth leaders, young people expressed opinions that if girls report incidents of sexual harassment they fear judgement from not only their peers, but also from adults saying that they are seeking attention or are over-reacting. They are also worried that they would not be believed.

“You’re just being dramatic”

“No one believes you, and nothing will happen if you report it anyway”

20% LESS young people are worried about being exploited by a gang compared to the previous report.

However, this year, there are less young people that said that they feel safe in their local area with their friends-

Last year 86% of young people said they do feel safe, and this year it was 65%

“Street lights” and ***“Being with friends”*** continue to be the most common responses for young people from Uttlesford about what helps them to feel safe.

When comparing young people’s experience of violent crime this year to the last report it shows that; there has been an increase in those saying they have been a victim, a decrease in young people witnessing violent crime and a decrease in young people saying that they have taken part in a violent crime.

Young people from Uttlesford have asked for more streetlights (especially in parks and alleyways) as this would help them to feel safer.

They would also like more safe places for young people to ‘hang out’, free phone charging stations and more of a police presence around the area.



746 Young People
took part in the
HARLOW DISTRICT
(654 of these answered two of the
questions)

The brilliant youth
organisations
that took part;



Harlow Youth Council
(Youth Council)



Respect Project
(Essex Boys and Girls Clubs)

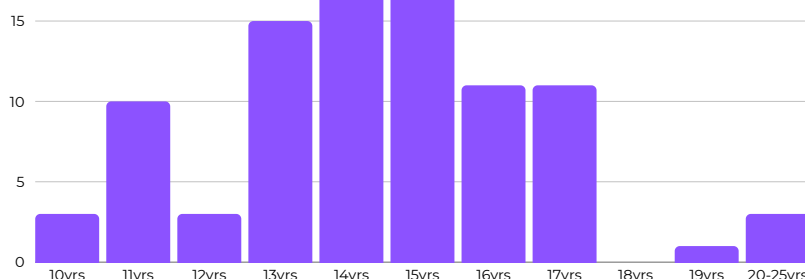


Church Langley Girl Guides
(Girl Guides)



Rainbow Services
(Youth Training)

Distribution, by age, of young people who took part across Harlow,
in all the questions at their local youth club/group/activity



Gender: Female 56%. Male 44%.

What is the biggest concern for young people around youth violence in Harlow?

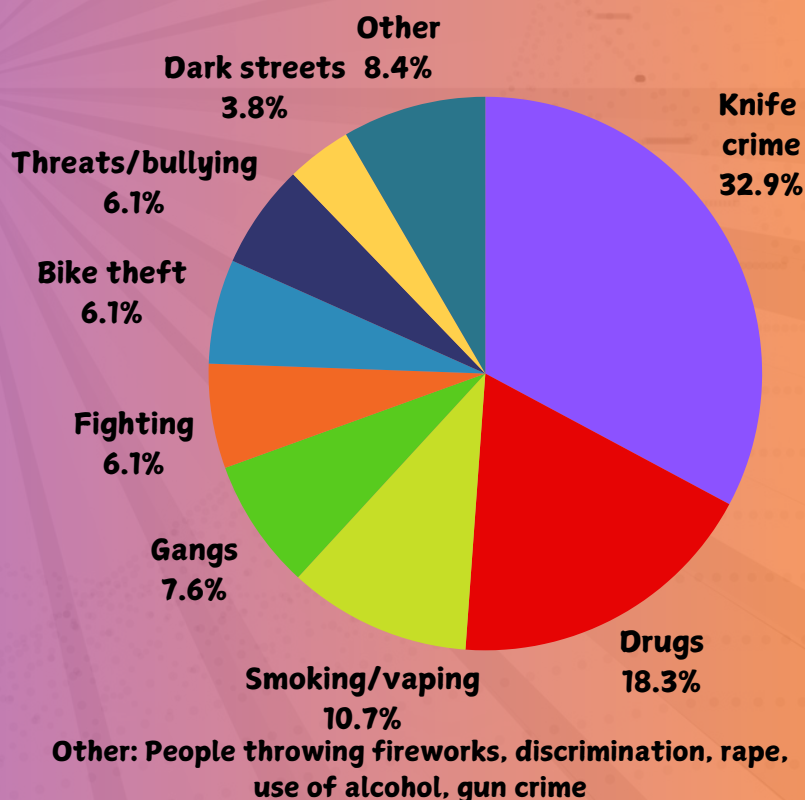
*"We're worried about knife crime because
there was a stabbing recently in Staple Tye"*
(This feedback was provided between
January/February 2025)

"I don't want my friends getting stabbed"

"Taking drugs is normal, everyone does it!"

"The gangs are running Harlow"

*"We worry about the safety of our friends
and family"*



This year sees an increase in the number of young people from Harlow saying that knife crime is their biggest concern. Last year it was 27%, and this year it is 32.9%

18.3% of young people in Harlow said that drugs were their biggest concern, which remains the second most frequent response. However, the proportion of young people saying this has decreased from 22%.

There are less young people expressing that gangs are their biggest concern in Harlow, dropping from 22% last year to under 8%.

Likewise, there was also a decrease in the number of young people saying that fighting was their biggest concern compared to last year, from 10% to just over 6% this year.

Are young people in Harlow worried about being exploited by a gang in their local area?



51%

of young people said they ARE worried

Over half of the young people that took part from Harlow said they ARE worried about being exploited by a gang. Last year this figure was 58%, so this has decreased slightly.

"I've heard about people getting involved with gangs, but I'm not worried about it personally"

"I am 100% worried!"

"Gangs lead young people down the wrong path"

Do young people in Harlow feel safe when they are out with their friends in their local area?

82%

of young people said they DO feel safe



There has been an INCREASE in the number of young people saying that they DO feel safe in their local area with their friends, compared to last years report of 65%.

However, this is dependent on where young people are, the time of day, and which friends they are with.

"We feel safer with more confident friends than with younger friends who could not stick up for you and have your back"

This question was put to an extra 654 young people via Harlow Youth Hub.

Without their responses the feedback showed that 71% of young people DO feel safe in their local area with their friends.

In the last year, have young people from Harlow had experience of violent crime either as a victim, a witness or have they taken part in it?

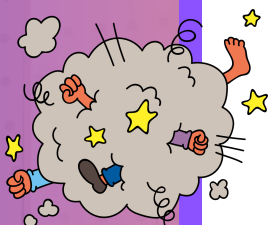
As a Victim 87% said NO

As a Witness 69% said NO

Someone who took part 90% said NO

ALL of these figures have improved since last year-

**In the 2023-24 project:
74% had NOT been a victim
47% had NOT been a witness
82% had NOT taken part**



Where do young people from Harlow think the crime hotspots are near them?

- 1) Shopping centres ~ Bush Fair, Staple Tye, The Stow, Queensgate
- 2) Harlow Town centre
- 3) Temporary bus station
- 4) Pubs ~ Ladyshot, Weatherspoons
- 5) Town Park
- 6) Staple Tye
- 7) Skate park
- 8) Outside school



Other places mentioned:

- Car parks
- Shops near Salvation Army
- Pennymead Tower
- Brookles Mead Flats

What helps young people from Harlow feel SAFE when they are out with their friends in the local area?

HAVING A PHONE

BEING TRANSPORTED BY PEOPLE YOU TRUST

STREET LIGHTS

SAFETY IN NUMBERS

POLICE PRESENCE

KNOWING THE AREA

BEING IN BUILT UP AREAS

“Safety in numbers” was the most common answer regarding what helps young people feel safe. There were varying comments which centred around young people feeling protected and less vulnerable when they are in large groups of friends.

“We feel less intimidated when with our friends”

“Better when you’re with friends, maybe they see something that you don’t”

There were comments about having tracking apps on their phones, keeping parents/guardians informed as to their whereabouts regularly, and making a call if they were alone.

What makes young people from Harlow feel UNSAFE when they are out with their friends in the local area?

POORLY LIT AREAS

BIG GROUPS OF PEOPLE WE DON'T KNOW

- LESS FREQUENT RESPONSES:
- PEOPLE ON DRINK OR DRUGS
- BALACLAVAS/DARK CLOTHES
- MOTORCYCLES/BIKES
- NOT HAVING A PHONE

SPECIFIC LOCATIONS

LARGE OPEN & QUIET AREAS

UNKNOWN AREAS

BEING ROBBED WITH A KNIFE

For the **sixth** year in a row, “Poorly lit areas” is the most frequent answer for what makes young people in Harlow feel unsafe.

Young people named specific locations in Harlow which make them feel unsafe, such as ; railway and bus stations, outside pubs, car parks and they said that *“areas which look run down ~ attract the wrong people”*

More than double the amount of young people said that “specific areas make us feel unsafe”, compared to the next most popular answer that was “being robbed with a knife”

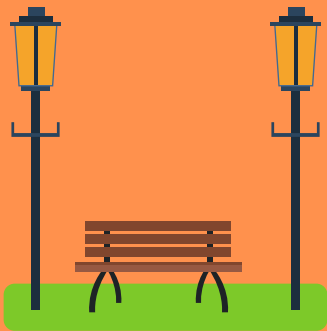
“I feel unsafe when friends abandon me”

“We don’t feel unsafe when we’re in a group of 5 or more, but would feel unsafe if there was less of us”



What do young people from Harlow think should be done to help them feel safer in their local area?

1. More street lighting ~ especially in alleyways
2. Having a mobile phone
3. Having a safe place to go with friends, to hang out
4. Not going out at night
5. Staying with friends and family
6. CCTV ~ "Knowing that it's functioning and someone is looking out for you"
7. Making areas look nicer and feel safer ~ "Get rid of abandoned cars"
8. More police
9. Free phone charging stations
10. Affordable transport



Other suggestions included:

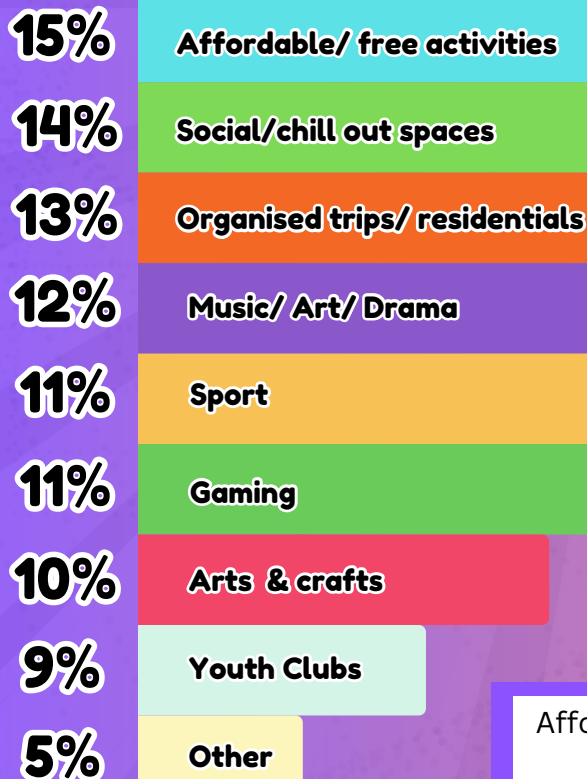
- Better detours around building works ~ **"Not dark or scary to walk through"**
- Having company to walk to and from school

Comments from young people:

"Knowing where to go when going out"

"Having company to walk to and from school"

What activities would young people like to see more available for them to take part in?



It is very important to young people that groups, activities and services are affordable



Affordability was the top response for this question for young people in Harlow in the 2023-24 report.

Providing safe, welcoming and indoor social spaces specifically for young people, came in at a close second and clearly important to them.

Other activities young people mentioned they would like to see more available were:

- **Bike riding club**
- **Fishing**



Have young people seen content on social media of serious violence*?



76%

of young people in Harlow said they have seen content on social media

Examples included:

- Fighting
- Sexually violent threats & images
- Selling and taking drugs

Which platform have young people seen the serious violence on?



1) Snapchat 43%



2) TikTok 32%



3) Instagram 11%



4) X/ Twitter 6%



5) Facebook 3%



6) Reddit 2%



7) Discord 1%



8) YouTube 1%



9) WhatsApp 1%

Of those young people who have seen violence on social media:

83%

have seen content of people they know - friends, friends of friends or people they know from their local area

87%

have seen content of people they don't know

This comment from a youth leader is an example of how violence may have been normalised:

"Young people did NOT consider fights in school as **SERIOUS VIOLENCE** and were going to say they had not seen serious violence on social media of friends, friends of friends or people from their local area"

Harlow Youth Hub asked 654 young people:
Do you think violent videos are easy to access online?

74%

of young people in Harlow said



Comments and Observations

More than half of the young people that said they HAVE seen serious violence on social media said that this was of **fighting**, and a third of all those that HAVE seen content online said the content that they had seen was of "**school fights**"

Other examples of serious violence that young people have seen include:

- Glorifying previous attacks of young people
- Young people being part of or promoting gangs
- Young people carrying, promoting or using weapons



Snapchat and TikTok are the main platforms where young people in Harlow are viewing serious violence



KEY OBSERVATIONS, COMPARISONS AND COMMENTS FOR HARLOW

This year there was a rise in number of young people that took part in the listening project in Harlow, from 76 in 2023 to 92 (from youth clubs and groups) in the recent project, and yet **there is a higher percentage of young people expressing that knife crime is their biggest concern.**

Young people continue to say that drugs are their second biggest worry, however, it is positive to note that **there has been a decrease in the percentage of young people saying that “Gangs” are their biggest concern by almost two thirds. From 22% last year down to 7.6% in this years feedback.**

This is also evident in the responses to “Are young people worried about being exploited by gangs”, with less young people saying that they are worried compared to last year’s report.

More young people in Harlow are saying that they feel safe with their friends in their local area compared to the previous report, and this is mirrored in the responses to the question; ‘what helps young people feel safe’ with the majority of young people making comments like **“Safety in numbers,”** and **“Being with friends is comforting”**



For the past six years young people have been saying that poorly lit areas is the top reason for them feeling unsafe. This year young people let us know specific locations that make them feel unsafe too, including shopping centres, public transport stations and parks.

Affordability remains the most important factor when we asked what activities young people in Harlow would like more available.

Social and chill out spaces, followed by organised trips and residentials, were the top activities they would like to be made more available to them in their local area.

Comparing the results from last year, there were less young people who have been a victim of a violent crime, that have witnessed or that have taken part, this year.

Over three quarters of the young people that took part in the listening project in Harlow **HAVE seen serious violence on social media**, and a high proportion of these young people said this **involved people THEY KNOW (83%)**, and even more said this involved people they don’t know **(87%)**

This topic evoked interesting discussions, and youth leaders fed back to us that young people’s views of violence is being normalised by the content they are exposed to on social media.

The platforms mentioned where they view this content the most was Snapchat and TikTok



62 Young People took part in the EPPING FOREST DISTRICT

The brilliant youth organisations that took part;



Youth Unity
(Lime Farm)



Epping Forest Youth Council
(Youth Council)

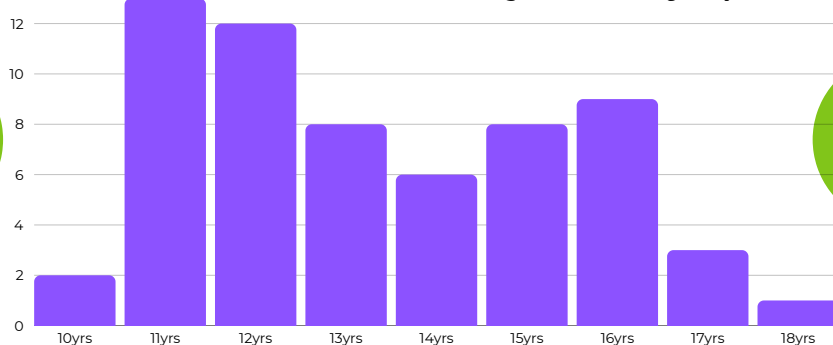


Action for Family Carers
(Young Carers)



Bancroft Cricket Club
Epping Forest

Distribution, by age, of young people who took part across Epping Forest in all the questions at their local youth club/group/activity



Gender: Female 52%. Male 48%.

What is the biggest concern for young people around youth violence in Epping Forest?

Compared to last year's report, concerns around knife crime from young people has dropped by two thirds in Epping Forest

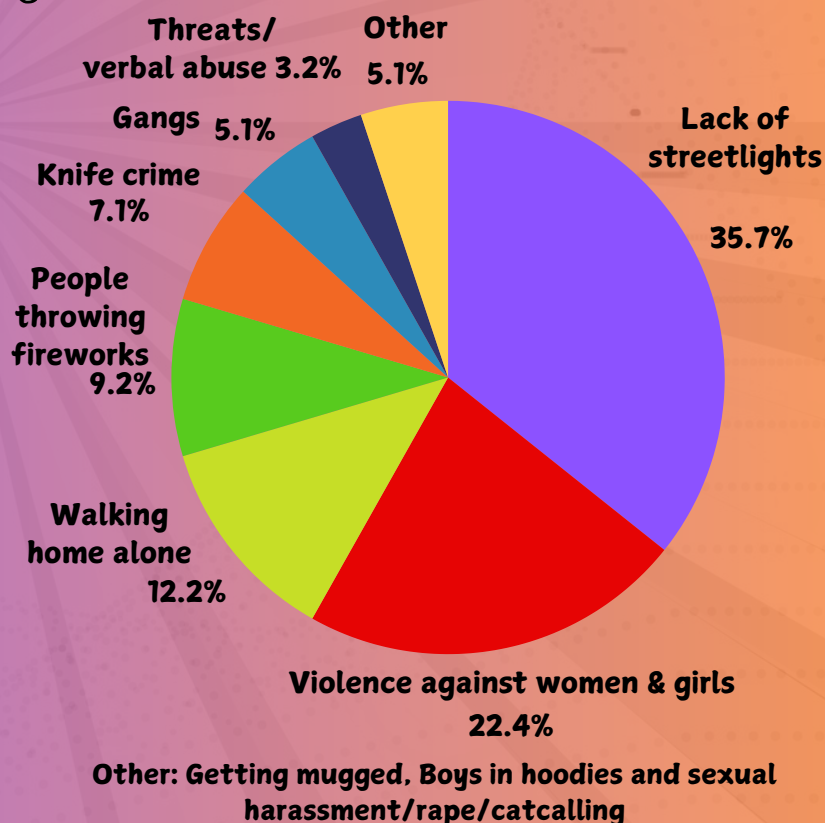
"Knives are being brought into school by kids"

"We know a gang selling drugs to younger kids, inside school"

"Why are there no police on the estate anymore" ~ Young person from Limes Farm

Comment from a youth leader:

"A few people have been mugged at knife point across Epping Forest"



'Poorly lit areas' is the main concern for over a third of young people in Epping Forest, and despite there being an almost 50/50 split between males and females taking part in this district this year, **nearly a quarter of young people said that violence against women and girls is their biggest concern.**

Last year there were many young people who said their biggest concern was around fighting in school, bullying, and other young people hanging around school. None of these issues were mentioned this year. However, through discussions with young people, they did speak about gangs inside school selling drugs to younger children, phones getting stolen outside school and students bringing knives into school.

Are young people in Epping Forest worried about being exploited by a gang in their local area?



75%
of young people
said they are
NOT worried

This year sees a huge change in the level of young people's worries about being exploited by gangs in Epping Forest-
Down from 71% saying they ARE worried, to 25% this year.

Those that expressed their concerns said-
"County Lines use young people as 'mules'"

"Because there are gangs here"

"The threats are outside school"

The young people who are NOT worried about exploitation from gangs say that they don't mix with people involved in gangs.

Do young people in Epping Forest feel safe when they are out with their friends in their local area?

53%
of young people
said they **DO**
feel safe



Less young people are saying that they feel safe in their local area with their friends compared to the last listening project.

There were comments from young people that they have seen muggings take place at local public transport stations and alleyways recently.

"We've seen people get mugged at the station"

In the last year, have young people from Epping Forest, had experience of violent crime either as a victim, a witness or have they taken part in it?

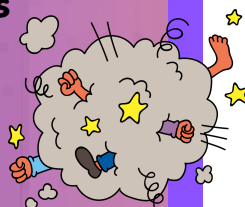
As a Victim 90% said NO

As a Witness 63% said NO

Someone who took part 98% said NO

ALL of these figures have improved since last year!!!

In the 2023-24 project:
88% had NOT been a victim
44% had NOT been a witness
95% had NOT taken part



Where do young people from Epping Forest think the crime hotspots are near them?

- 1) Train stations ~ Loughton, Debden and Epping Forest**
- 2) Debden Broadway**
- 3) Parks ~ Loughton and Epping Forest**
- 4) Bus stops**
- 5) Outside pubs**
- 6) Epping High Street**
- 7) School ~ inside and outside**
- 8) Woolston Manor**
- 9) Honey Lane in Waltham Abbey**

Debden train station was at the top of the list for hot spot areas last year, followed by Debden Broadway.

Public transport stations and parks are consistently mentioned across most districts as areas young people feel are crime hotspots.

What helps young people from Epping Forest feel SAFE when they are out with their friends in the local area?

SAFETY IN NUMBERS

FAMILY KNOWING YOUR LOCATION

HAVING A PHONE

STREET LIGHTS

LESS FREQUENT RESPONSES:

- POLICE PRESENCE
- KNOWING A LOT OF PEOPLE IN THIS AREA
- CAMERAS/CCTV
- KNOWING THE AREA
- SHOPS BEING OPEN



The majority of young people in Epping Forest feel protected and safe when they are with a group of friends.

“The fact we’re together makes us feel safe”

“We feel safe when we’re in a large group ‘cos we stick together”

“Having a phone” was the second most frequent answer with a third of the young people saying that having location apps on their phone helps them feel safe.

“Nothing makes me feel safe, I stay at home”

What makes young people from Epping Forest feel UNSAFE when they are out with their friends in the local area?

GROUPS OF BOYS

GANGS FROM LONDON WITH WEAPONS

ALLEYWAYS/ UNDERPASSES

LESS FREQUENT RESPONSES:

- PHONE OUT OF CHARGE
- PEOPLE ON DRUGS
- CARS ON THE ROAD
- ROBBERY

POORLY LIT AREAS

PEOPLE WE DON'T KNOW

LACK OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT

TAKING ISOLATED ROUTES

“Poorly lit areas” remains the top answer from young people in Epping Forest as what makes them feel unsafe. The next most recurrent responses are “confined alleyways and underpasses”, followed by “groups of boys”.

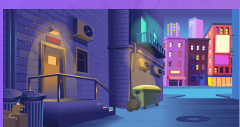
Young people in Epping Forest mentioned that the lack of transport makes them unsafe because they feel that it is inconsistent, infrequent and

“Public transport is unsafe, gangs use it and you can’t get away easily”

Some other comments from young people in Epping Forest were;

“Being with a small number of people is not safe”

“Creepy men make me feel unsafe”



What do young people from Epping Forest think should be done to help them feel safer in their local area?

1. Better phone signal
2. More police presence
3. More street lights ~ to be kept on later
4. Parents collecting them from school
5. More (and better) paved walkways
6. Free phone charging stations
7. More CCTV cameras
8. Street wardens



The same number of young people that suggested phone charging stations were unsure about this proposal because they thought that phones could be stolen or personal information taken from the phones.

~

A small group of young people were against more police presence because they felt that having more police walking around relates to there being “trouble” close by.

What activities would young people like to see more available for them to take part in?



It is very important to young people that groups, activities and services are affordable



There is a big difference in the types of activities young people in Epping Forest would like to see made more available to them. Last year just over 64% of young people asked for more sporting activities. This year (after affordable/free activities) 16% of young people voted on social and chillout spaces.

Have young people seen content on social media of serious violence*?

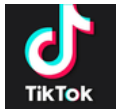


95%

of young people in Epping Forest said they have seen content on social media

Over 50% of young people that have seen serious violence on social media said that this involved fighting!

Which platform have young people seen the serious violence on?



1) TikTok 51%



2) Snapchat 18%



3) X/Twitter 14%



4) Reddit 7%



5) Instagram 6%



6) Facebook 2%



7) WhatsApp 1%



8) YouTube 1%

Of those young people who have seen violence on social media:

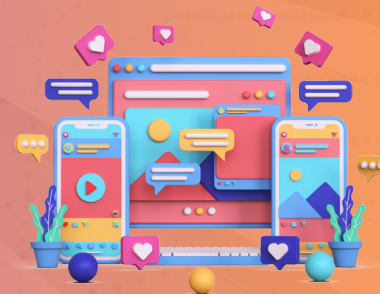
39%

have seen content of people they know – friends, friends of friends or people they know from their local area

100%

have seen content of people they don't know

OVER HALF of the comments from young people who said that the serious violence that they had seen online involving people they know, said it was because "People from school shared videos of school fights"



Comments and Observations

MORE THAN 35% of the young people that **HAVE** seen violence on social media said they have seen **KNIFE ATTACKS**

Other examples of serious violence seen by young people include-

- Riots
- Muggings
- Threats to beat up another child or group of children
- Sexually violent content or threats
- Young people being part of, or promoting, gangs
- Young people using, or promoting, illegal drugs
- Glorifying previous attacks of other young people



KEY OBSERVATIONS, COMPARISONS AND COMMENTS FOR EPPING FOREST

Young people in Epping Forest said that their biggest concern around youth violence was the **lack of street lights (35.7%)**. Last year the top concern was getting robbed or mugged (28%).

This year **22.4% of young people said their biggest concern is about violence against women and girls**. This was **NOT** raised as a concern last year.

Knife crime, as young people's biggest concern, has dropped by two thirds since last year

This year, young people in Epping Forest are much less worried about being exploited by a gang, with 75% this year saying they are **NOT** worried, compared to 71% last year saying that they **WERE** worried about being exploited by a gang.

53% of young people from Epping Forest said that they feel safe when they are out with their friends in their local area. Last year 82% said that they feel safe.



When asking young people what helps them feel safe, **nearly 45% of young people expressed that when they are in big groups with friends they feel protected and safe.**

Having a phone is really important for young people to help them feel safe, and this has increased in importance from just 2% last year to over 24% this year. A third of the young people that mentioned their phone, also talked about location apps on their phone.

Poorly lit areas, and alleyways and underpasses make young people feel unsafe in Epping Forest.

Last year, young people said that "groups of people" made them feel unsafe. This year young people specifically mentioned **"Groups of boys"**

To help young people feel safer they have asked for- more police presence, better phone signals and more street lights

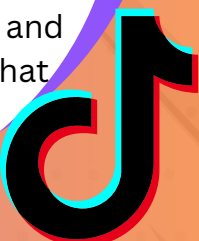
Any new activities provided for young people needs to be **AFFORDABLE**.
"Social chill out spaces" was the next most recurring answer.

Compared to last year, LESS young people have been a victim of violent crime, LESS have taken part in it, and over 20% LESS have witnessed it.

95% of the young people that took part in Epping Forest HAVE seen serious violence on social media and ALL of these young people said it involved people they DO NOT know. 39% said they have seen content involving people they DO know and over half of these said the content they had seen were of videos of school fights being shared.

35% of the young people that HAVE seen violent content on social media said they have seen knife attacks.

50% of young people said that they have viewed violent and sexual content on TikTok, and this was the most predominant platform where any violent content was viewed. Snapchat was second on the list at 18%.



161 Young People
took part in the
COLCHESTER DISTRICT
(60 of these answered two of the
questions in an assembly)

**The brilliant youth
organisations
that took part;**



Myland Youth Club
(Essex YMCA, open access)



Tiptree youth project outreach
(Open access)



The Underdog Crew
(SEND group)



St Annes youth club
(Open access)

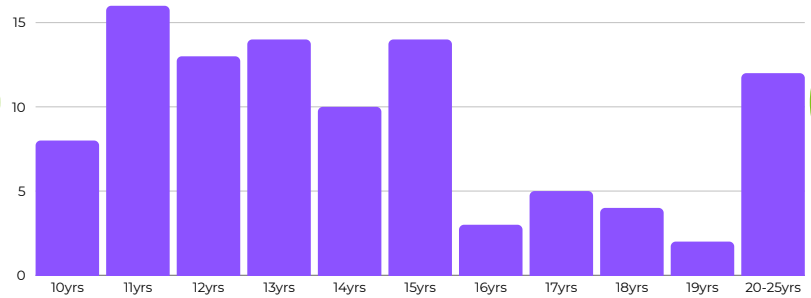


Colchester YES
(yr 6 School assembly)



The Outhouse
(Lgbtq+ youth club)

**Distribution, by age, of young people who took part in Colchester
in all the questions at their local youth club/group/activity**



Gender: Female 61%. Male 28%. Non-binary 11%.

**What is the biggest concern for young people around youth violence
in Colchester?**

Knife crime is still the biggest concern for
young people around youth violence in
Colchester

“Drugs are in the area where we live”

*“Younger children seem more vulnerable
to gangs, especially if they have
disabilities they are at higher risk as they
may be more trusting and end up being
groomed”*

Comment from a youth leader:
*“Gang exploitation is evidenced within
schools too as we have heard several
worrying stories of drug lines recruiting in
Colchester schools”*



Just under a third of young people who mentioned “theft” as a concern, specifically mentioned
“Phone theft on e-scooters”

Over 38% of the young people that said “drunk people” are their biggest concern, told youth leaders about
people getting drunk and violent on the street.

Those that said “global affairs” was their biggest concern were referring to the homophobic opinions and
policy changes from the USA and are worried these are having an impact in the UK.

Within the vehicle related crime category, there were comments such as **“Boy racing and modified cars are
scary to pedestrians (loud back-firing noise)”** and that as new drivers themselves they had concerns about
navigating the roads.

Are young people in Colchester worried about being exploited by a gang in their local area?



61%

of young people said they ARE worried

In Colchester there are still more young people concerned about being exploited by a gang than those who are not, however...

Since last year there has been a 19 percent drop in the number of young people worried about being exploited by a gang.

"Young people don't have enough safe spaces to hang out, like youth club, to stop them getting involved in gang activity"

This question was put to 60 extra young people in assembly, WITHOUT their responses the feedback would be 68% said THEY ARE worried.

Do young people in Colchester feel safe when they are out with their friends in their local area?



55%

of young people said they DO feel safe

The percentage of young people that feel safe when with their friends locally has decreased since last year.

Last year 67% said they felt safe.

"There's a problem with verbal abuse and intimidation on the street. It's harmful and leaves a mark on you"

"Being harassed at bus stops by strangers, makes you feel worried about your safety"

This question was also asked in assembly, of the 60 extra young people, and WITHOUT their feedback the data showed 58% said they DO feel SAFE

In the last year, have young people from Colchester had experience of violent crime either as a victim, a witness or have they taken part in it?

As a Victim 65% said NO

As a Witness 51% said NO

Someone who took part 83% said NO

These responses show that in the last year, LESS young people have witnessed violent crime since the previous project report.

However, 20% MORE young people HAVE been a victim of a violent crime, and 14% MORE young people HAVE taken part in violent crime compared to last year.



Where do young people from Colchester think the crime hotspots are near them?

- 1) Parks (Castle Park, Tiptree Claxton Close Playground at night)**
- 2) Bus station/Train station - especially after dark**
- 3) Outside shops**
- 4) Colchester City Centre/High Street**
- 5) Greenstead (including Greenstead drug dealing activity)**
- 6) School**
- 7) Highwoods**
- 8) Tiptree ASDA car park - "there are 2 pedestrian routes so easy to escape"**
- 9) Alleyways**

Parks were mentioned more than twice as many times as the other hotspots listed, and Colchester Castle Park was mentioned as a crime hotspot more times than any other hotspot.

What helps young people from Colchester feel **SAFE** when they are out with their friends in the local area?

KNOWING
THE
AREA

STREET
LIGHTS

YOUTH
CLUB

TRUSTED
ADULTS

SAFETY IN NUMBERS

CCTV/
CAMERAS

HAVING A
PHONE

LOCATION
JEWELLERY

Almost 40% of the young people that took part in Colchester said that being in a big group helps them feel safe.

"Safety in numbers as you've always got someone to reassure you if you find yourself in a vulnerable situation"

Of the young people that mentioned that having a phone helps them feel safe, two thirds of them specifically mentioned phone location apps as they can share their location with family and friends.

Some of the other comments from young people in Colchester included-

"Having my keys for a weapon"

"We don't leave home much" ~ said by many young people

What makes young people from Colchester feel **UNSAFE** when they are out with their friends in the local area?

BALACLAVAS/
HOODIES

MEN/
BOYS

FOLLOWED BY
STRANGERS

GANGS/
LARGE GROUPS OF YOUNG ADULTS

POORLY LIT AREAS

VERBAL
ABUSE

LESS FREQUENT RESPONSES:
• LACK OF POLICE PRESENCE
• BEING ALONE

DRUNK &
DISORDERLY
BEHAVIOUR

The percentage of young people saying that poorly lit areas makes them feel unsafe has doubled since last year.

Almost 30% of the young people in Colchester said that being approached or followed by strangers makes them feel unsafe.

Last year 10.5% of young people mentioned that teenage boys make them feel unsafe, and this year almost 12% made comments about men or boys.

"Men approaching me or walking close when I'm out makes me feel unsafe"

"Everywhere seem to be trouble right now, with many people getting their phones stolen"



What do young people from Colchester think should be done to help them feel safer in their local area?

1. Better/ more street lights
2. More police presence
3. Having more safe places to go ~ "like youth group"
4. Free phone charging stations
5. Searches at schools ~ bags and blazers
6. More trusted adults ~ Young people mentioned the 'Ask Angela scheme'
7. More maps/signage to help you know your location
8. More security cameras
9. Action to stop bullying



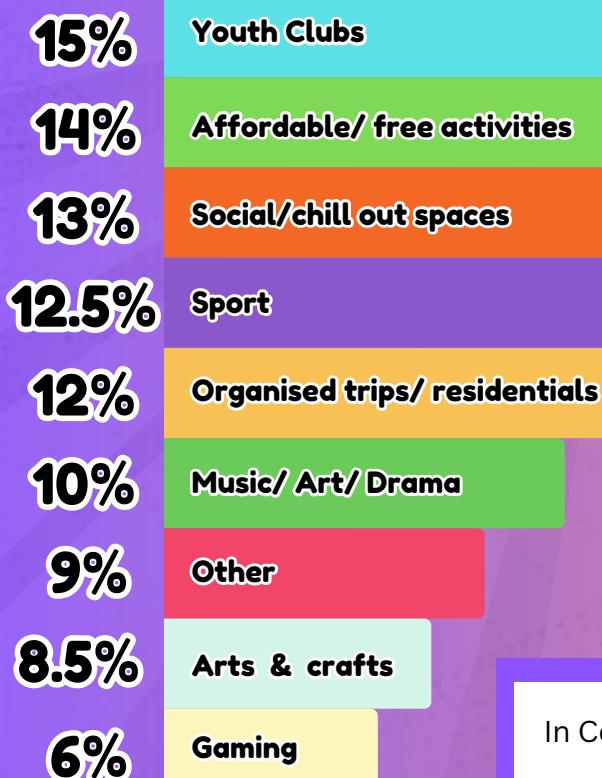
Better/ more street lighting is the top suggestion from young people about how to help them feel safer.

Young people said they would like more safe places to go, and they specifically mentioned youth groups that are open during school holidays, and clubs that cater for different groups of young people.

The majority of young people that asked for free phone charging stations, specifically said this would be helpful on public transport.

One group of young people talked about bullying issues at school that have had an impact on the local area, even after school hours.

What activities would young people like to see more available for them to take part in?



15% OF YOUNG PEOPLE in Colchester would like more youth clubs



In Colchester, young people have stated that having more youth clubs and affordable activities are important to them.

Those that said youth clubs, specifically mentioned more accessible clubs that welcome people with disabilities and have an emphasis on taking part rather than achieving certain levels of skill.

Within the "Other" category, young people suggested animal handling sessions, first aid training and film clubs

Have young people in Colchester seen content on social media of serious violence*?

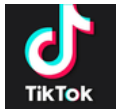


75%

of young people in Colchester said they have seen content on social media

75% of young people that have seen serious violence on social media said they had seen content that involved fighting

Which platform have young people seen the serious violence on?



1) TikTok 37%



2) Snapchat 16%



3) Facebook 12%



4) X/Twitter 10%



5) Instagram 10%



6) WhatsApp 9%

7) The Main Hub 4%



YouTube

8) YouTube 2%

Of those young people who have seen violence on social media:

64%

have seen content of people they know – friends, friends of friends or people they know from their local area

66%

have seen content of people they don't know

"Gangs are often linked to graffiti/tagging on estates, like Greenstead, and young people are attracted to this artform in real life, or by connecting on platforms like Discord"



Comments and Observations

There is only 2% difference in the number of young people that said they have seen content on social media that involves people THEY KNOW, compared to seeing content that involves people they DO NOT know.

Other examples of serious violence seen by young people in Colchester:

- Promoting drugs, and drug use
- Sexually related violence and graphic discussions
- Posting trophies of crimes and victims
- Someone shooting themselves
- Videos of drunk females who have not given consent to be filmed
- Students in school uniform being interviewed and encouraged to say derogatory things about other pupils, teachers and their school



KEY OBSERVATIONS, COMPARISONS AND COMMENTS FOR COLCHESTER

Over 30% of young people say that their biggest concern around youth violence is knife crime- this is the same as last year

Theft has increased as a concern for young people in Colchester from 6.6% last year to 13.5% this year.

Sexual harassment was mentioned as a concern by 4.8% of young people in Colchester. Sexual harassment was NOT given as a response to this question last year.

The percentage of young people that said gangs are their biggest concern has dropped from 8.3% last year to 4.8% this year. This is also reflected when we asked young people if they were worried about being exploited by a gang. **Last year 80% said they were worried, and this year that has decreased to 61%**



This year's feedback shows a drop of 12% in the amount of young people in Colchester that feel safe in their local area with their friends, compared to last year.

Young people were concerned about poorly lit areas as these make them feel unsafe. They also mentioned that they feel unsafe on/ around public transport, and being followed by strangers and people shouting abuse in the street.

“Being with big groups of friends” was the most popular response from young people about what helps them feel safe. This is the same as last year.

Having a phone is really important for young people to help them to feel safe.

To help young people in Colchester feel safer, they would like better lighting, more police presence, more safe places to go with friends and free phone charging stations. This is reiterated in the responses about activities that they would like to see made more available to them. Youth clubs are the top most requested activity, followed by activities being affordable.



The percentage of young people from Colchester that have experienced violent crime as a victim has increased by 20% this year.

The percentage of young people that have taken part in serious violence has increased by 14% since last year.

This year shows a decrease in the percentage of young people that have witnessed a violent crime, from 77% last year to 49% this year.

Three quarters of the young people that took part in this project in Colchester HAVE seen serious violence on social media, 75% of these young people said it was fighting that they had seen, and 64% said the content that they had seen involved people they know, friends of friends or people from their local area.

TikTok was the most common place for young people to see this content and was mentioned more than double the amount of the next platform mentioned.

131 Young People took part in the TENDRING DISTRICT

The brilliant youth organisations that took part;



Teen Talk (Open Access)



London Bus Theatre Company (Drama group)



Youth Inspired (CVS, SEN group)



Mistley Kids Club (Afterschool club for young people with SEN)



2nd Frinton Girl Guides (Uniformed group)

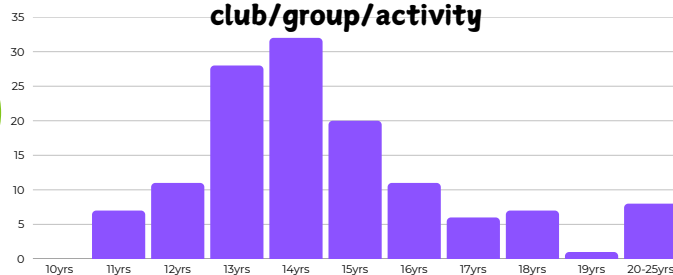


Walton youth club (Faith based youth club)



The Outhouse (LGBTQ+ youth club)

Distribution, by Age, of young people who took part in Tendring in all the questions at their local youth club/group/activity



Gender: Female 55%. Male 37%. Non-binary 8%

What is the biggest concern for young people around youth violence in Tendring?

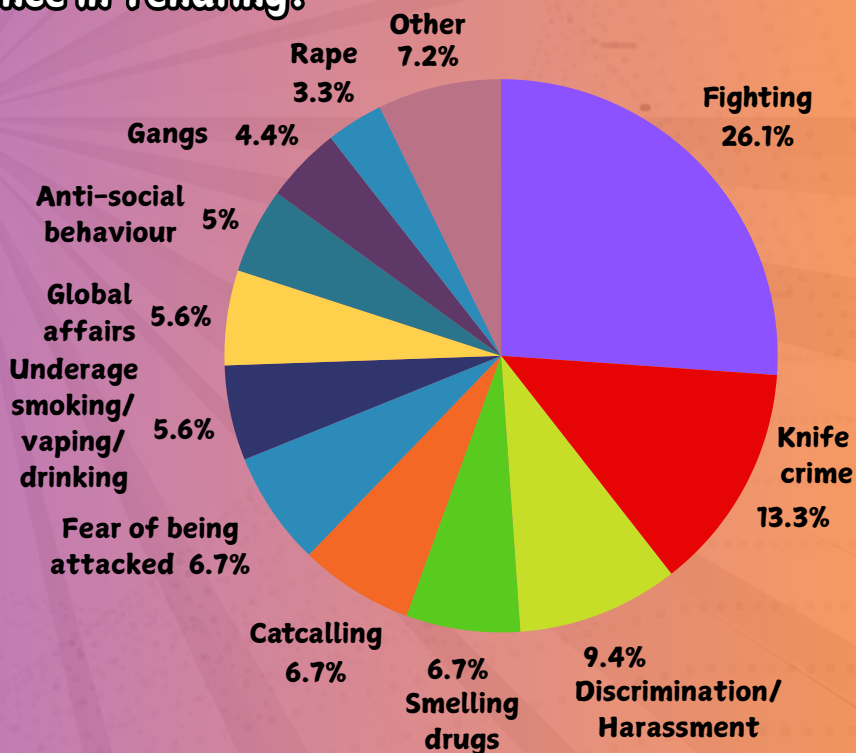
The percentage of young people who said that knife crime is their biggest concern, has increased from 8.9% last year to 13.3% this year

"There's loads of fighting and it gets spread online"

"A friend got involved with a gang which was drug related"

"My biggest concern is people coming out of pubs shouting and swearing"

"Our biggest concern is that younger children do not understand the seriousness of their behaviour"



Other: Groups on bikes, gun crime, kidnapping, domestic abuse, walking in the dark, mobile phone theft

Last year 60% of the young people who took part in Tendring said that "fighting" and "youth violence" was their biggest concern. This has more than halved to 26.1% this year.

There were various answers given this year by young people as their biggest concern- Discrimination and harassment at 9.4%, smelling drugs, cat calling and the fear of being attacked were said by 6.7% of young people.

4.4% of the young people in Tendring said that gangs are their biggest concern, and although this is a small percentage, gangs were NOT given as a response to this question last year.

Are young people in Tendring worried about being exploited by a gang in their local area?

NO!

74%

of young people said they are **NOT** worried

There has been a 43% INCREASE in the number of young people saying that **THEY ARE NOT WORRIED** about being exploited by a gang in Tendring compared to last year.

"We don't get involved in gangs"

"It's easy to be pressured into joining a gang to make friends and for vulnerable people"

Comment from a youth leader:

"This isn't something known to them, they don't hear about it in their local area"

Do young people in Tendring feel safe when they are out with their friends in their local area?

YES!

74%

of young people said they **DO** feel safe

More young people said they do feel safe with their friends in their local area compared to last year (66%)

Feeling safe for young people is very much dependent on being with their friends and knowing where is safe to hang out.

"If I'm not with my friends then I don't feel safe"

"We stick to safe places we know and stay in a group"

In the last year, have young people from Tendring, had experience of violent crime either as a victim, a witness or have they taken part in it?

As a Victim

87% said NO

As a Witness

71% said NO

Someone who took part

95% said NO

ALL the figures have improved since last year-

**In the 2023-24 project:
86% had NOT been a victim
57% had NOT been a witness
90% had NOT taken part**



Where do young people from Tendring think the crime hotspots are near them?

- 1) School
- 2) Fields (Roydon Playing Fields, Heronsgate - which backs onto TTC Upper School; it's an unlit big open field)
- 3) Parks (Harwich, Manningtree, Frinton, Clacton by Oakwood school)
- 4) Alleys/underpass/side streets (Harwich, Back of McDonalds in Clacton, underpass & alley by Tesco at Brooke Retail Park)
- 5) Train stations (Harwich, Frinton)

**Other places mentioned more than once:
Blue House Avenue, pubs in town, Percy King Estate.**

A youth leader from Jaywick commented:
"The group said they were worried to go outside their local area, and Colchester and Ipswich are seen as dangerous"

What helps young people from Tendring feel SAFE when they are out with their friends in the local area?



“Being at youth club” was the most frequent response to this question, and demonstrates the importance of local youth clubs in Tendring helping young people feel safe.

“We stay in safe places like youth club”

“We feel safe in youth clubs that are run well”

“Having a phone” was a close second place (said only 6 times less than “being at youth club”) These responses were twice as popular as the next top answers of “Having friends in the area” and “Safety in numbers”.

What makes young people from Tendring feel UNSAFE when they are out with their friends in the local area?



“Poorly lit areas” was said nearly four times more than the next most popular answer “smelling drugs”

The top answer last year was “Groups of people” with over a quarter of the young people saying this.

Some of the young people that said that drugs make them feel unsafe, specifically mentioned “drug dealers”

“I don’t feel safe when there’s no street lights”

“People shouting at you at night, mainly guys shouting at girls”

“Groups in hoodies make me feel unsafe”



What do young people from Tendring think should be done to help them feel safer in their local area?

1. More places to go with friends that are free, inside and safe
2. Free phone charging stations
3. More street lights ~ especially in parks
4. Help/emergency contact points ~ like they have with defibrillators
5. More accessible youth clubs
6. More police presence ~ police patrolling parks and skate parks



Young people were especially keen to have free and safe places to go inside in the winter.

It was suggested that streetlights are left on during the whole night or at least alternate lights are left on so it's not so dark.

Young people also mentioned:

Coffee shops open till later

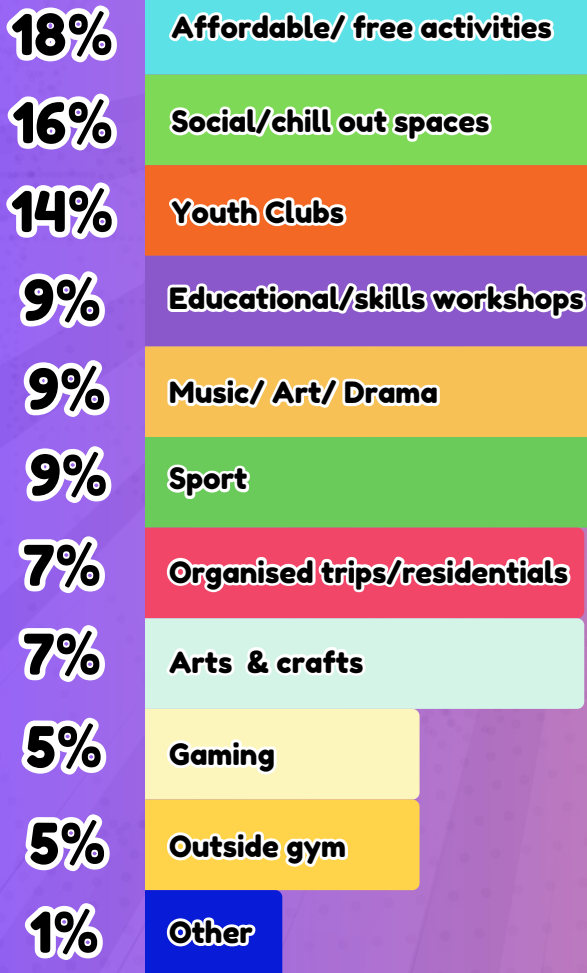
More cameras/speed cameras

Free buses to get around easily and safely

Free phone in case of emergency

Places to go for further education

What activities would young people like to see more available for them to take part in?



It is very important to young people that groups, activities and services are affordable



Affordability of activities is an important factor of any new provision for young people in Tendring, followed closely by more social and chill out spaces and youth clubs.

The young people that mentioned educational/skills workshops said; carpentry, mechanics and beauty.

Within the 'Other' category, young people said they would like to see multi courts (clean with lighting) and more volunteering opportunities.

Have young people in Tendring seen content on social media of *serious violence?



88%

of young people in Tendring said they have seen content on social media

58% of young people that said they have seen serious violence on social media, said they had seen content involving weapons

Which platform have young people seen the serious violence on?



1) TikTok 41%



2) Snapchat 25%



3) Instagram 13%



4) X/Twitter 13%



5) WhatsApp 3%



6) Facebook 3%



7) Reddit 1%



YouTube

8) YouTube 1%

Of those young people who have seen violence on social media:

60%

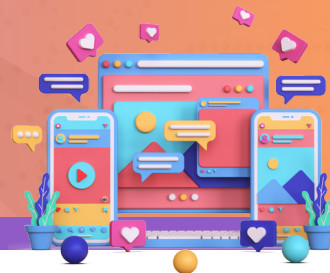
have seen content of people they know - friends, friends of friends or people they know from their local area

95%

have seen content of people they don't know

The 54% of young people that **HAVE** seen serious violence on social media **INVOLVING PEOPLE THEY KNOW** said the content was of "fights in school"

These young people were all from groups in Jaywick, Clacton and Walton



Comments and Observations

TikTok and Snapchat are the platforms where young people from Tendring are viewing serious violence the most.

67% of young people that have seen serious violence on social media said that the violence was fighting involving young people and 45% said it involved drugs.

Comments:

"Snapchat and TikTok are the platforms used the most by young people and used to circulate school fights"

"We see school fights the most but stabbings too"

Out of the young people that said they **HAVE SEEN SERIOUS VIOLENCE ON SOCIAL MEDIA OF PEOPLE THEY DO NOT KNOW**, over 13% specifically mentioned 'Drill clips' with young people in masks glorifying weapons on YouTube.



KEY OBSERVATIONS, COMPARISONS AND COMMENTS FOR TENDRING

Although the top response for “What is young people’s biggest concern” is the same as last year, **the percentage that said “fighting” and “youth violence” has more than halved this year.** There has been an **increase, from 8.9% to 13.3%, of young people expressing that knife crime is their biggest concern around youth violence compared to last year.** **Gangs was mentioned as the biggest concern by 4.4% of young people in Tendring and this was not given as a response at all last year.** **This year 26% of young people said that they ARE WORRIED about being exploited by a gang compared to 69% last year.** **Youth leaders from the two SEN groups did say that some of their young people were unsure what gangs are.**

More young people said they feel safe in their local area with their friends compared to the last report.

Poorly lit areas was mentioned nearly four times more than the next most frequent answer for “What makes young people feel unsafe”

Youth clubs in Tendring play an important role in helping young people feel safe, with **almost half of them that took part saying that “Being at youth club” helps them feel safe.** This was closely followed with the response, “Having a phone”.

These things are reiterated in the responses to **“What do young people think should be done to help them feel safer”**, with the top three answers being:

- **A safe, indoor space to hang out with friends**
- **Free phone charging stations**
- **More street lighting**

In regards to what activities they would like to see more of, the top answer was that whatever activity or service is provided, it be affordable, and there were many interesting suggestions around educational and skills workshops.

This year **LESS young people have been a victim of violent crime, LESS have taken part in it, and LESS have witnessed it, compared to last year.**

~

88% of young people in Tendring have seen serious violence on social media, with TikTok and Snapchat being the platforms where they have seen this content most frequently.

Almost 60% of those that have seen content online said that this involved weapons and 67% said it involved fighting amongst young people.

95% of young people that HAVE seen serious violence on social media said that it involved PEOPLE THEY DO NOT KNOW and

60% said this content involved people THEY DO KNOW, and out of these young people, 54% of them said the violence was of “Fights in school”



59 Young People took part in the Braintree DISTRICT

The brilliant youth organisations that took part;



H.A.P.P.Y youth club
(Open access youth club))



The Outhouse
(LGBTQ+ youth club)

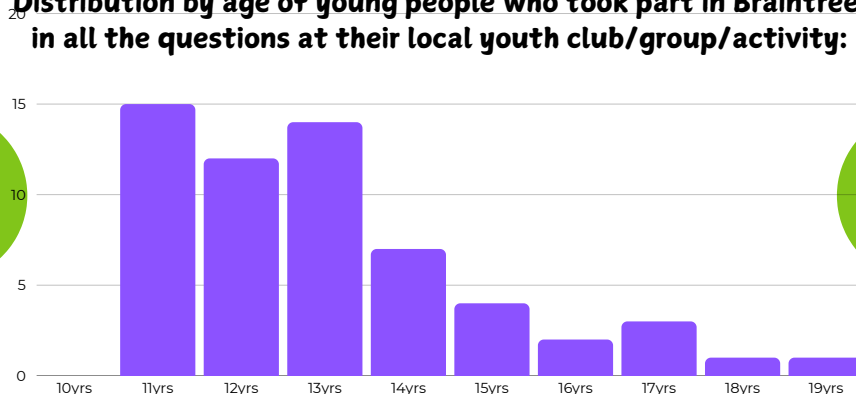


7th Witham Guides
(Uniform)



The Third Space Youth Club
(Open access)

Distribution by age of young people who took part in Braintree in all the questions at their local youth club/group/activity:



Gender: Female 61%. Male 36%. Non-binary 3%.

What is the biggest concern for young people around youth violence in Braintree?

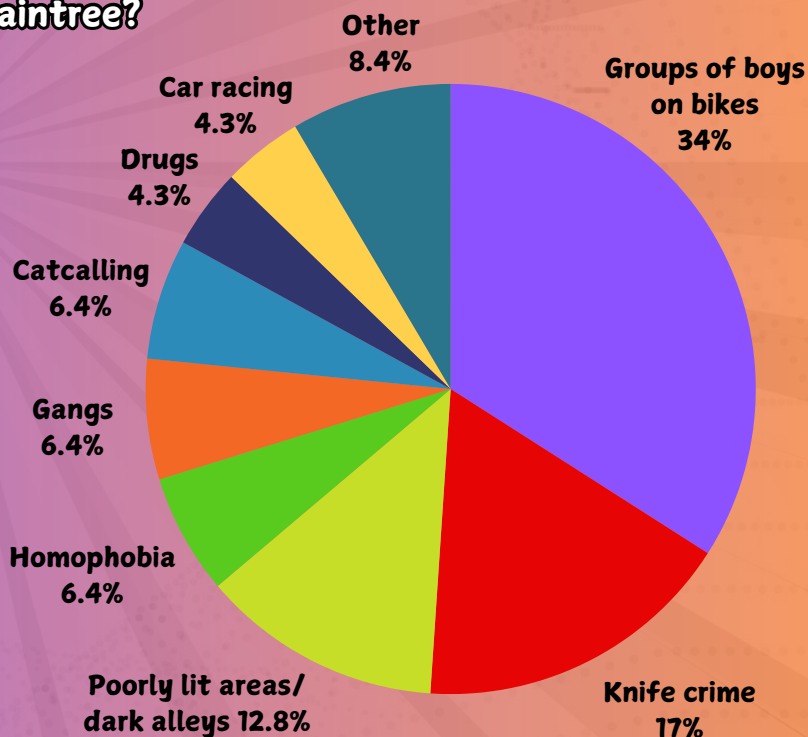
17% of the young people that took part in Braintree said that KNIFE CRIME is their biggest concern around youth violence. This has INCREASED from 6.7% last year.

“Someone brought a 12" blade into school and only got put into isolation”

“A student in my school brought in knives and screwdrivers”

“Someone I used to be friends with is involved with a gang and is using drugs”

“There’s a lot of car racing in Braintree which is dangerous”



Other: Groups of 17 & 18 year olds, weird men, attacked by people in my year, fights outside hotels and pubs

Over a third of the young people said that “Groups of boys on bikes” is their biggest concern around youth violence.

Young people’s concerns around drugs has DECREASED from 24%, and was the top answer last year, to 4.3% this year.

Poorly lit areas remains third on the list but has INCREASED from 10.7% last year to 12.8% this year.

The percentage of young people in Braintree saying that “Gangs” are their biggest concern has almost halved since last year, it WAS 12% and this year it is 6.4%.

Are young people in Braintree worried about being exploited by a gang in their local area?



72%
of young people
said they are
NOT worried

LESS young people are worried about being exploited by a gang in Braintree. This has dropped from 49% last year to 28% this year saying they ARE worried.

There were concerning comments though...
"We are worried about being targeted by the gangs of boys (verbal abuse) but not about being exploited" ~ from 7th Guides

"There's a gang in the area that groom and recruit girls and sexually assault them"

Do young people in Braintree feel safe when they are out with their friends in their local area?



53%
of young people
said they **DON'T**
feel safe

The percentage of young people that said they DO NOT feel safe when out with their friends in their local area is MORE THAN THREE TIMES HIGHER than last year.

"My brother was physically attacked by a gang in Braintree Town Centre"

"I don't feel safe because you never know what could happen"

"We don't go out much, we'd rather be at home"

In the last year, have young people from Braintree, had experience of violent crime either as a victim, a witness or have they taken part in it?

As a Victim 83% said NO

As a Witness 54% said NO

Someone who took part 95% said NO

There were LESS young people that said they HAVE been a victim and witnessed violent crime compared to last year.

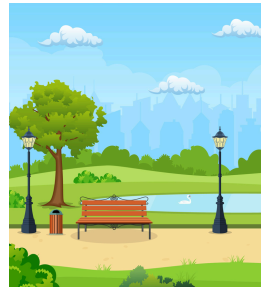
A small INCREASE in the percentage of young people that said they HAVE taken part in crime.

In the 2023-24 project:
67% had NOT been a victim
48% had NOT been a witness
96% had NOT taken part



Where do young people from Braintree think the crime hotspots are near them?

- 1) Parks and Outdoor recreational spaces ~ King George's, Skate Park, Halstead Public Gardens
- 2) Town Centre
- 3) Halstead River Walks
- 4) Transport
- 5) Alleyways
- 6) Abandoned places
- 7) Outside pubs/clubs



In Braintree district' young people from Braintree, Witham and Halstead mentioned parks and recreational spaces as crime hotspots. King Georges was mentioned more times than any other hotspot

What helps young people from Braintree feel **SAFE** when they are out with their friends in the local area?

HAVING A PHONE RIDING MY BIKE FAST WALKING MY DOG **SAFETY IN NUMBERS** KNOWING SELF-DEFENCE STREET LIGHTS YOUTH CLUB STAYING CLOSE TO HOME **BUSY PLACES**

“Being in a group of trusted friends” is what helps the majority of young people feel safe in Braintree.

“If I’m with friends I trust I feel safer in public”

“People don’t go for you when you’re in a group”

The second most frequent answers were about having a phone and the phones having battery charge.

“Having my phone makes me feel safe but I worry the battery will run out”

These two answers were the top answers in last year’s report.

What makes young people from Braintree feel **UNSAFE** when they are out with their friends in the local area?

BEING ALONE GLOBAL AFFAIRS **POORLY LIT AREAS** OLDER PEOPLE AND OLDER KIDS PEOPLE DRIVING FAST VIOLENCE AND GANGS **OTHER GROUPS OF PEOPLE** **GROUPS OF BOYS** LESS FREQUENT RESPONSES:

- **OLD MEN FOLLOWING YOU**
- **PEER PRESSURE TO VAPE**
- **PEOPLE IN MY YEAR AT SCHOOL**

NOT HAVING A PHONE

“Poorly lit areas” was the most recurrent answer young people in Braintree gave to what makes them feel unsafe. This is the same as last year.

Those that mentioned not having a phone, specifically spoke about phone batteries dying or forgetting their phone.

Although a low number of young people said that “People driving fast” makes them feel unsafe, there were comments around car racing from young people when they were asked what their biggest concern is. This was also raised in last year’s report.

“I feel unsafe having friends who act before they think”

“When I feel unsafe I run away or go into a shop where I know a worker”

What do young people from Braintree think should be done to help them feel safer in their local area?

1. More police presence
2. More street lights
3. Free phone charging stations
4. Knowing about safety apps/having an alarm to carry
5. More cameras ~ speed cameras and CCTV in parks and town centres
6. More trusted adults
7. Stop people selling drugs ~ specifically "Weed"
8. Shops open later
9. Free food



Young people in Braintree would like to see more police presence to feel safer. The majority of young people that gave this response said...
"We would like to have more police to deal with the groups of boys who are causing trouble"

Young people specifically asked for more lighting in parks and alleyways and suggested phone charging stations in parks where young people hang out.

Those that would like to see more speed cameras specifically mentioned
"People driving at 60mph in 30mph limits. It's dangerous"

What activities would young people like to see more available for them to take part in?



23% OF YOUNG PEOPLE in Braintree would like more youth clubs

The most popular response for "What activities would young people like to see more available", was youth clubs followed closely with sport.

It is interesting to see that affordability was further down the list compared to most of the other areas.

Dungeons and Dragons club was mentioned in the "Other" category and although this is more of a facility, some young people said that they would like to see more *"Accessible safe toilets for trans people"*



Have young people seen content on social media of serious violence*?

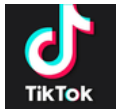


63%

of young people in Braintree said they have seen content on social media

Over 36% of young people that have seen serious violence on social media said that this involved fighting!

Which platform have young people seen the serious violence on?



1) TikTok 48%



2) WhatsApp 23%



3) Snapchat 13%



4) Instagram 6%



5) Facebook 6%



YouTube

6) YouTube 2%



7) X/Twitter 2%

Of those young people who have seen violence on social media:

33%

have seen content of people they know - friends, friends of friends or people they know from their local area?

78%

have seen content of people they don't know

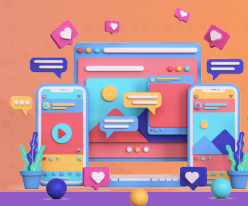
Comments from individual young people about what they'd seen included:

"Person nearly raped"

"A 16 year old physically abusing a 4 year old on TikTok"

"Heard people talking about people they are going to rape"

(Youth workers followed up about these being reported)



Comments and Observations

MORE THAN HALF the young people that **HAVE SEEN** violence on social media said that it **INVOLVED PEOPLE THEY KNOW**.

This feedback shows that TikTok is the most common platform where young people view this content.

"Most content is seen on TikTok"

Interesting to note is that WhatsApp is the second most frequent platform, which is different compared to the majority of the other areas.





KEY OBSERVATIONS, COMPARISONS AND COMMENTS FOR BRAINTREE

The most frequent response to “What is the biggest concern for young people around youth violence” was “Groups of boys on bikes”, with over a third giving this answer.

17% of young people in Braintree said that “Knife crime” is the biggest concern. This has risen from 6.7% last year.

The previous report showed that “Drugs” was the top answer for almost a quarter of young people and this has dropped to 4.3% in this year’s feedback.

“Gangs” was the second most recurrent answer last year, at 12% and this has ALMOST HALVED to 6.4% of young people giving this response this year.

There are **LESS young people saying that they are worried about being exploited by a gang** compared to the previous project. **49% last year compared to 28% saying they ARE worried this year.**



The percentage of young people that said they DO NOT feel safe when out with their friends has INCREASED, from 16% last year to 53% in this report.

The same as last year, poorly lit areas was at the top of the list for “What makes young people feel UNSAFE”

In regards to what helps them feel safe, the most recurrent responses was about being in big groups with trusted friends. This was followed closely by “Having a phone”

To help young people feel safer in their community, young people mentioned...

- More police presence
- Better street lights
- Free phone charging stations

More youth clubs and sport were the top two responses for “What activities would young people like to see more available in their area”

Affordability came much further down this list in priority order which is different to most of the other areas.

This year’s feedback shows that LESS young people have experienced violent crime as a victim and as a witness, with a 1% increase in those saying that they have taken part.

One young person admitted to being pressured into stealing sweets from a shop when they were younger.

“I had my bike stolen and vandalised”

“I was physically assaulted in school by another student”

“I witnessed domestic abuse at home”



63% of the young people that took part in Braintree HAVE seen serious violence on social media.

Out of those that HAVE seen content, 33% said this involved people THEY KNOW and 78% said it involved people THEY DO NOT KNOW.

Almost HALF the young that have seen content online said they viewed it on TikTok and WhatsApp was the second most frequently said response which is different to the majority of the other areas.

144 Young People
took part in the
Chelmsford DISTRICT
 (52 of these answered two of the
 questions through detached work)

**The brilliant youth
 organisations
 that took part;**

BRENNAN & BURCH

YMCA

Essex YMCA;

- 1.) 'Y' Club - City Centre
- 2.) Galleywood Youth Club
(Open access youth clubs)
- 3.) Detached youth work in the City Centre
and Great Baddow



The Outhouse
(LGBT+ youth club)

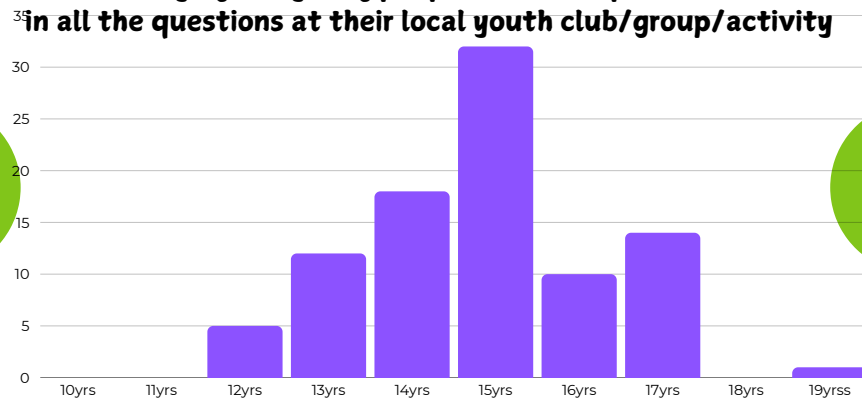


Zodiac Rangers
(Guides)



Kraken ESU
(Scouts)

Distribution by age of young people who took part in Chelmsford
in all the questions at their local youth club/group/activity



Gender: Female 54%. Male 34%. Non-binary 12%.

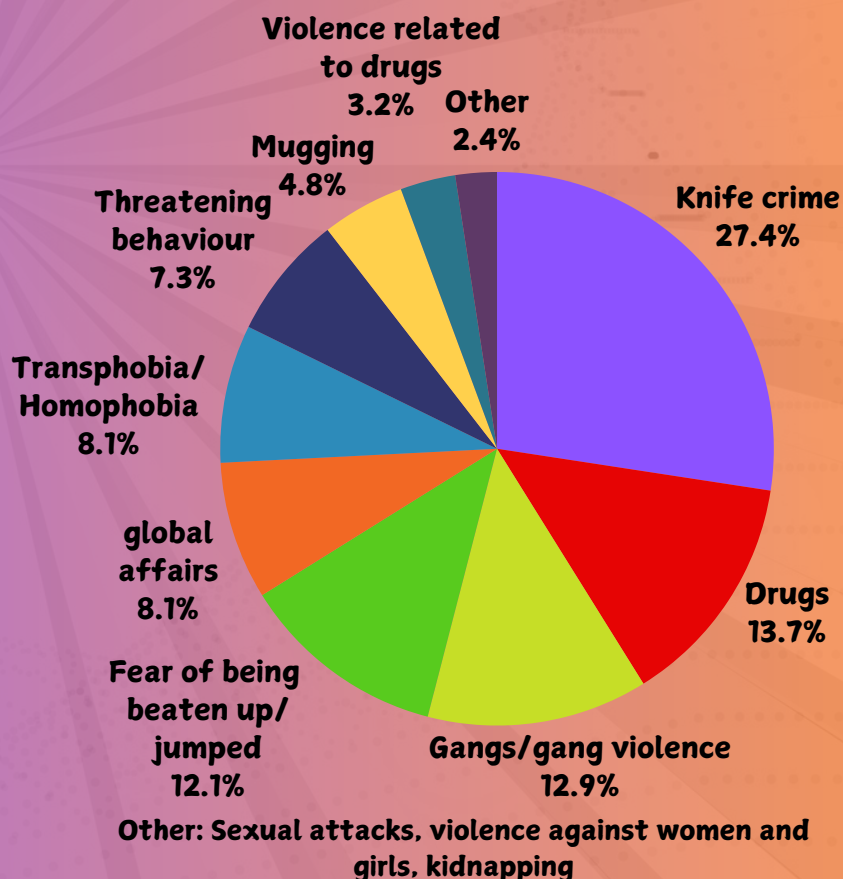
What is the biggest concern for young people around youth violence in Chelmsford?

There has been an **INCREASE** of
 almost 10% of young people saying
 that "Knife crime" is their biggest
 concern compared to last year in
 Chelmsford.

*"So many people carry knives, you
 don't even know"*

*"There's a big drug culture in
 Chelmsford" ~ said by many*

*"Gangs want people to be scared of
 them"*



Last year, over a quarter of young people said that "Being attacked" was their biggest concern. This year 27.4% said their biggest concerns are about knife crime - an **INCREASE** from 17.7% in the 2023-24. This year "Drugs" was the second most recurrent answer, at 13.7%. This was mentioned by almost **DOUBLE** THE NUMBER of young people compared to last year.

Concerns around "Gangs and gang violence" has also **INCREASED** since last year.

This year bike theft, sharing of violence of social media and bullying were NOT mentioned, as they were last year. However, there were concerns around sexuality discrimination which links in with the concerns about global affairs, specifically global affairs from the USA.

Are young people in Chelmsford worried about being exploited by a gang in their local area?



56%

of young people said they ARE worried

This year's feedback shows a **REDUCED** percentage of young people ARE worried about being exploited by a gang.

Last year 83% said they ARE worried.

Interesting to note is that these figures changed once we incorporated the feedback from the Detached group of 52 extra young people.

Without the feedback from the young people on Detached, the percentage would have been:

YES! 77% of young people said they ARE worried about being exploited by a gang.

Do young people in Chelmsford feel safe when they are out with their friends in their local area?

57%

of young people said they DO feel safe



Less young people are saying that they feel safe in their local area with their friends compared to the last listening project.

In the previous report 88% of young people said that they feel safe with their friends in their local area.

These responses were dependant on the time of day the young people are out.

"We don't feel safe when it's dark"

"I don't feel safe because of the amount of crime reported in the area"

Without the 52 extra young people from Detached, this would be 67% of young people DO feel safe in their local area.

In the last year, have young people from Chelmsford, had experience of violent crime either as a victim, a witness or have they taken part in it?

As a Victim **74% said NO**

As a Witness **70% said NO**

Someone who took part **96% said NO**

There are **LESS** young people that have experienced crime as a victim and as a witness, compared to last year.

It is the same percentage of young people that said they have **NOT** taken part in crime.

In the 2023-24 project:
72% had **NOT** been a victim
59% had **NOT** been a witness
96% had **NOT** taken part



Where do young people from Chelmsford think the crime hotspots are near them?

1) Parks - (The Park, Chelmer Park, Central Park)

2) Baddow and Baddow Rec

3) Meadgate (Meadgate shops)

4) Chelmsford Town

5) Outside shops/fast food

6) Train/bus station

7) Melbourne

8) Outside school

ALL of these figures have improved since last year!!!

Although some parks were named

'The Park'

was said more times than any specific park or recreational area



What helps young people from Chelmsford feel **SAFE** when they are out with their friends in the local area?

**STREET
LIGHTS/
DAYLIGHT**

BUSY PLACES

**BEING
WITH
CERTAIN
PEOPLE**

**HAVING A
PHONE**

**TRUSTED
ADULTS**

**SAFETY
IN
NUMBERS**

CCTV

**POLICE
PRESENCE**

Being in a big group of trusted friends was the most popular response to this question

"We feel safe because there's a number of us that hang out together"

The second most frequent responses were "Street lights/daylight" and there was only a difference of a few young people between these two answers.

The young people that said "Having a phone" helps them feel safe, specifically mentioned having a fully charged phone. This is a concern for young people and is recurrent in the feedback.

Although there was a relatively low number of young people that mentioned "Police presence" helps them feel safe, this was not mentioned in the previous report and positive to see this year.

What makes young people from Chelmsford feel **UNSAFE** when they are out with their friends in the local area?

**PEOPLE ACTING
'DODGY' &
WEARING
CRIMINAL
CLOTHING**

**UNDER-
PASSES**

**TRANS/
HOMOPHOBIA**

CATCALLING

**QUIET
PLACES**

**POORLY
LIT
AREAS**

**NOT HAVING
A PHONE**

**ADULTS
STARING**

PARKS



The most frequent response for "What makes young people in Chelmsford feel **UNSAFE**" was "Poorly lit areas"

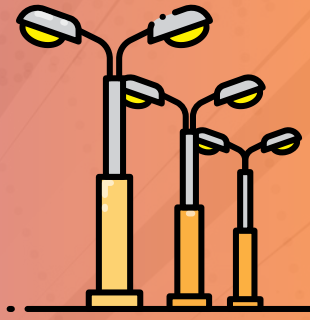
This answer was the second most frequent reply in the previous report, however, last year we put "Alleyways" in a separate category because young people had NOT specifically mentioned **dark** alleyways.

This year we have combined dark alleyways with poorly lit areas. Had we combined these categories last year, "Poorly lit areas/dark alleys would have been the top answer..

The young people that mentioned "People acting dodgy and wearing criminal clothing" expressed views that they feel unsafe around people wearing hoodies and sports clothes

What do young people from Chelmsford think should be done to help them feel safer in their local area?

1. More street lighting
2. More police presence
3. More CCTV
4. Free phone charging stations
5. More safe places for young people and awareness of these places
6. Bad people NOT being allowed out at night (regulating criminals)
7. Free torches
8. Open roads rather than alleyways



The feedback from this question and “What makes young people feel unsafe” demonstrates the importance of good street lighting.

Young people specifically mentioned better lighting in parks and suggested...

“Keeping lights on in the side roads all night”

“Floor streetlights”

More CCTV and more police presence was said the same number of times and closely followed by free phone charging stations.

More street lighting and police presence were the top two responses in last years feedback.

What activities would young people like to see more available for them to take part in?



Having a social, chill out space was mentioned by the majority of young people in CHELMSFORD

Affordability and sport were in joint second place and only 1% less than the top activity young people would like to see more available.

Almost 31% of young people that asked for more sport specifically mentioned “Self-defence classes” and some of the girls suggested “Girl only sports clubs and girl only gym sessions”

In the “Other” category, young people suggested

- Cooking lessons
- Life skills



Have young people seen content on social media of serious violence*?











89%

of young people in Chelmsford said they have seen content on social media

Over 36% of young people that have seen serious violence on social media said that this involved fighting!

Which platform have young people seen the serious violence on?

	1) Instagram	26%
	2) Snapchat	22%
	3) X/Twitter	20%
	4) TikTok	17%
	5) Facebook	7%
	6) Reddit	6%
	7) WhatsApp	1%
	8) Discord	1%

Of those young people who have seen violence on social media:

38% have seen content of people they know - friends, friends of friends or people they know from their local area?

67% have seen content of people they don't know

OVER 27% of the young people who have seen violence online of people they **DO NOT KNOW** said what they had seen involved carrying/promoting or using weapons



Comments and Observations

ALMOST 90% of young people in Chelmsford **HAVE SEEN** serious violence on social media and **OVER A THIRD** of these young people said it involved fighting.

Other examples of violence seen were...

- *“videos of people we don’t know being beheaded”*
- *“People getting blown up”*
- Glorifying previous attacks on other young people

55% of the young people that **HAVE** seen serious violence online of people **THEY DO NOT KNOW** said it involved fighting and **OVER 38%** said the content involved young people using drugs.

The most frequent platform young people said where they viewed this content was **Instagram**.



KEY OBSERVATIONS, COMPARISONS AND COMMENTS FOR CHELMSFORD

Compared to last year's report there has been an **INCREASE**, from 17.7% to 27.4%, of young people that said their biggest concern around youth violence is ***"Knife crime"***.

The number of young that said ***"Drugs"*** has almost **DOUBLED** and there has been an **INCREASE** in the number of young people saying that ***"Gangs/gang violence"*** is their biggest concern compared to feedback in the previous project.

This year **LESS** young people are worried about being exploited by a gang. Last year 83% said they **WERE** worried, this year 56% said they **ARE** worried.

This year sees an **INCREASE** of **OVER 30%** of the young people saying that they **DO NOT FEEL SAFE** when they are out with their friends in their local area (Last year 12% of young people said they **DO NOT FEEL SAFE**, compared to 43% this year)

Young people in Chelmsford said they feel **UNSAFE** in ***"Poorly lit areas"*** and by ***"Dodgy looking people wearing criminal clothing"***.

Last year the feedback for the top two responses were similar with young people saying ***"Unknown people"*** and ***"Poorly lit areas"***

The top 5 things suggested to help young people feel safer in their community were...

- **More street lights**
- **More police presence**
- **More CCTV**
- **Free phone charging stations**
- **More safe places for young people to hang out and awareness of these places**



In regards to "What activities young people would like to see more available for them, their top suggestions were **Social/chill out spaces**, closely followed by **activities/services being affordable and sport**.

Over a third of young people that said sport, specially said ***"Self-defence classes"***

This year's feedback shows that **LESS** young people have experienced violent crime as a victim and as a witness, with the same percentage of young people saying that they have taken part in crime, compared to the previous year's feedback.

Young people feel that there should be ***"Stricter consequences for people doing illegal things to make youth feel safer"***

89% of the young people from Chelmsford **HAVE** seen serious violence on social media.

Over a quarter of these young people said that they viewed this content on Instagram and almost 37% of that that **HAVE** seen serious violence, said that it involved fighting.

38% of the young people that **HAVE** seen content online said that involved people **THEY KNOW**.

67% said that what they viewed involved people they **DO NOT KNOW**.



33 Young People took part in the Maldon DISTRICT

The brilliant youth organisations that took part;



Action for Family Carers
(Young Carers)

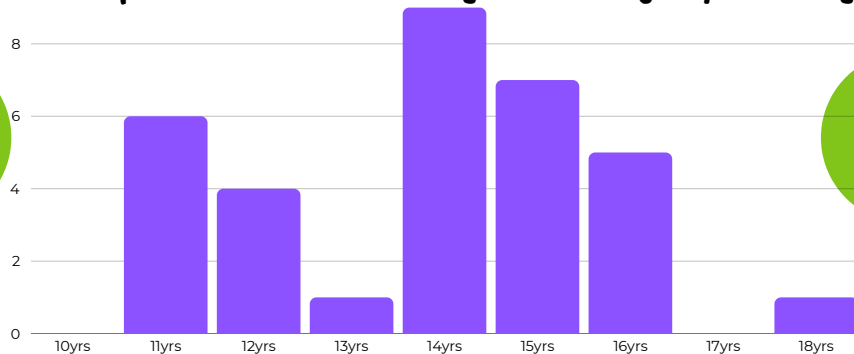


Maldon & District CVS:
Community Gaming Initiative
(Open access)



Sea Cadets
(Uniformed group)

Distribution, by age, of young people who took part in Maldon in all the questions at their local youth club/group/activity



Gender: Female 48%. Male 52%.

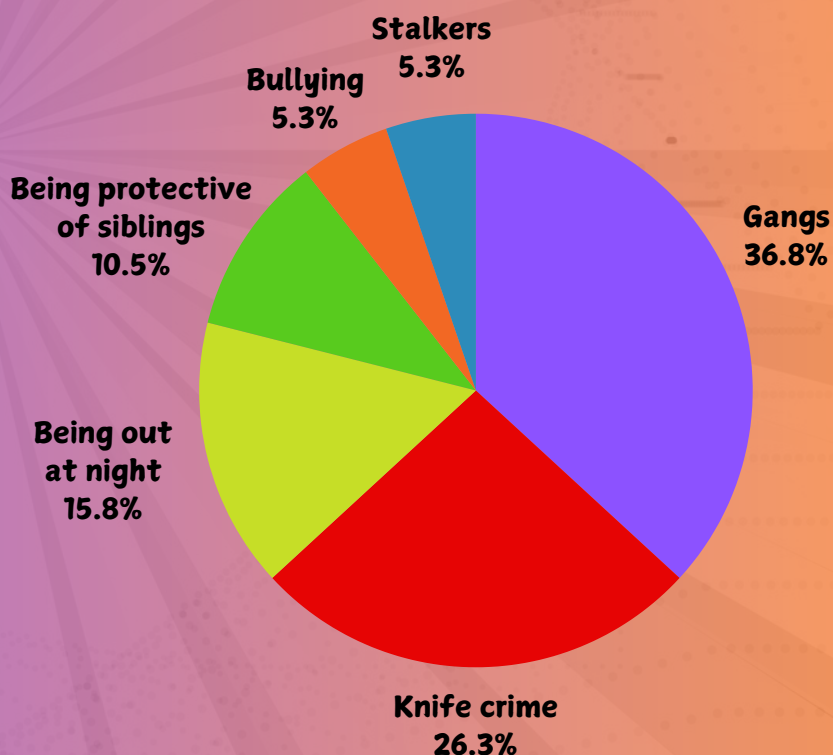
What is the biggest concern for young people around youth violence in Maldon?

OVER A THIRD of young people in Maldon said “Gangs” are their biggest concern around youth violence and it was the top answer at 36.8%

“I worry about friends interacting with others who are involved in gangs”

“People are willing to do anything for a reward, including getting involved in gangs”

“We worrying about people carrying knives, you hear so much about it”



Young people in Maldon DID NOT mention “Gangs” at all in their responses to “What is their biggest concern around youth violence” in the previous report.

This year “**Knife crime**” was the second most frequent answer, with 26.3%, and last year 31.3% of young people said “**People carrying knives/weapons**” and was the top response.

Although these statistics look high, unfortunately this year we had less groups and young people take part in the Maldon District.

There were MORE young people that said “**We have no concerns in Maldon**” than the number of young people that said “Gangs” was their biggest concern.

Are young people in Maldon worried about being exploited by a gang in their local area?



70%
of young people
said they are
NOT worried

A higher percentage of young people said they ARE worried about being exploited by a gang in Maldon compared to last year's feedback.

Last year 17% said they ARE worried
This year 30% said they ARE worried

"They end up running your life if you get involved with gangs"

"People are gullible and will anything for money"

Do young people in Maldon feel safe when they are out with their friends in their local area?



70%
of young people
said they **DO**
feel safe

The percentage of young people in Maldon that said they DO feel safe with their friends has **DROPPED BY 23%** since last year.

"Even when I'm with my friends, loud groups of people swearing makes me feel unsafe"

Feeling safe for young people in Maldon is dependent on them being in large groups and staying in places where they know.

"We only feel safe when there's loads of us"
"We stick to places we know"

In the last year, have young people from Maldon, had experience of violent crime either as a victim, a witness or have they taken part in it?

As a Victim 100% said NO

As a Witness 91% said NO

Someone who took part 100% said NO

ALL of these figures have improved since last year!!!

In the 2023-24 project:
93% had NOT been a victim
71% had NOT been a witness
96% had NOT taken part



Where do young people from Maldon think the crime hotspots are near them?

- 1) Park(s)**
- 2) Town**
- 3) Streets (Dark Streets)**
- 4) Local Shops**
- 5) Alleyways**
- 6) School**



The young people in Maldon think parks and other public places are the crime hotspots.

One young person said:
'Alley near my house'

What helps young people from Maldon feel **SAFE** when they are out with their friends in the local area?

YOUTH CLUB
KNOWING THE AREA
TRUSTED ADULTS
STREET LIGHTS
SAFETY IN NUMBERS
BEING WITH A TRUSTED FRIEND
HAVING A PHONE
BEING WARY

The same as many other areas, the most frequently given response by young people in Maldon for “What helps young people feel **SAFE** when they are out with their friends was “Being in a big group”

This answer was given almost double the number of times as the next most frequent answer, which was “*Knowing the area*”.

Being with friends they trust and having good street lighting is also important.

Last year almost a third of the young people said that they “Stay at home” to feel safe.

What makes young people from Maldon feel **UNSAFE** when they are out with their friends in the local area?

CREEPY MEN
LOUD GROUPS SWEARING
STRANGERS APPROACHING US
POORLY LIT AREAS
LARGE GROUPS
BEING FOLLOWED BY WEIRD LOOKING PEOPLE



“*Poorly lit areas*” continues to be the top answer, the same as the previous year’s report, for what makes young people in Maldon feel **UNSAFE**.

Dark alleyways and dark streets were mentioned specifically.

The young people that said “*Creepy men*”, also mentioned the creepy men taking photos without the young people’s permission.

Other than “*Poorly lit areas*”, all the other responses given are about other people, example: “*Strangers approaching us*”, “*Being followed by weird looking people*”

Positive to note is that last year over 15% of young people said “School” made them feel **UNSAFE**, and this was **NOT** given as a response this year.

What do young people from Maldon think should be done to help them feel safer in their local area?

1. More police
2. Better lighting ~ especially in dark walkways
3. Free phone charging stations
4. More youth groups
5. Better paths
6. More free public phones ~ for emergencies

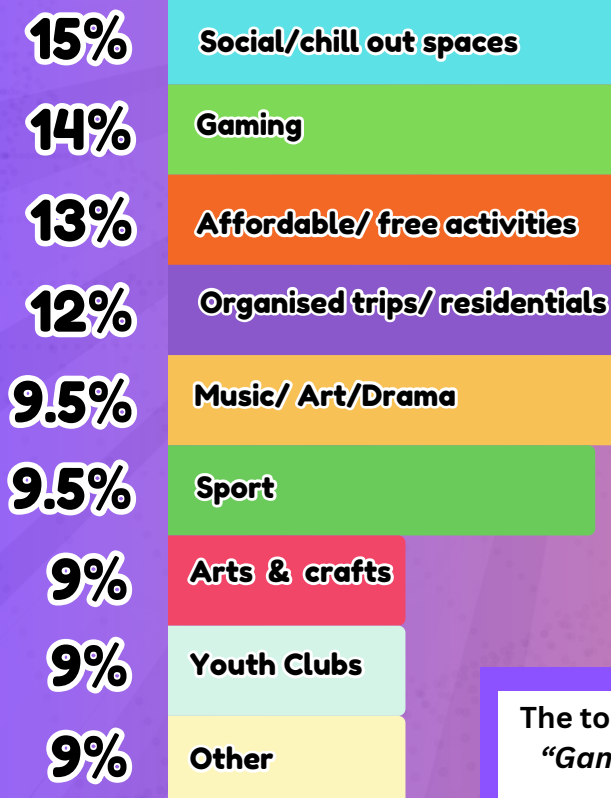


100% of the young people that took part in the listening project in Maldon said that **“MORE POLICE”** would help them feel safer.

Better street lighting and free phone charging stations are also high on the list of priorities that would help young people in Maldon feel safer in their community, and have been consistent responses for this question across the majority of areas.

“We don’t see any police in Maldon”

What activities would young people like to see more available for them to take part in?



CHILL OUT

Having a social, chill out space was mentioned by the majority of young people in Maldon

The top four activities were very close in percentage of popularity with **“Gaming”** coming in at second place and the highest for this activity across the areas.

Affordability remains a high priority for what activities young people would like to see more available for them to take part in, in Maldon.

Within the **“Other”** category the biggest proportion of young people asked for **“Boating activities”** but also mentioned **“Laser tag”** and **“Train spotting club”**



Have young people seen content on social media of serious violence*?



48%

of young people in Maldon said they **HAVE** seen content on social media

5 young people in one group have no access to social media

Which platform have young people seen the serious violence on?



1) **TikTok** 36%



2) **YouTube** 36%



3) **Snapchat** 7%



4) **Reddit** 7%



5) **Instagram** 7%



6) **Discord** 7%

Of those young people who have seen violence on social media:

25%

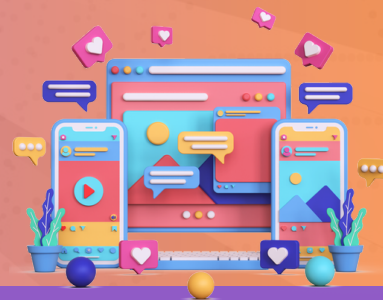
have seen content of people they know - friends, friends of friends or people they know from their local area?

63%

have seen content of people they don't know

The young people said they had seen: 'fighting'

At least 12% of young people in Maldon who said they **HAVE** seen violence on social media **DID NOT** share which platform they had seen it on



Comments and Observations

The feedback from the young people that took part in the listening project in Maldon shows that **LESS THAN HALF** the young people said they **HAVE** seen serious violence on social media.

This is a low percentage when comparing the feedback from across the other areas.

This figure will have been impacted by the fact that some of the young people **DO NOT HAVE ACCESS TO SOCIAL MEDIA**.

ALMOST A THIRD of young people that **HAVE** seen serious violence online said that it involved fighting.

Both TikTok and YouTube were the most frequent answers as to which platform young people viewed the content on social media.



KEY OBSERVATIONS, COMPARISONS AND COMMENTS FOR MALDON

This year, the top answers from young people in Maldon about “What is their biggest concern around youth violence” was “Gangs” at 36.8% and “Knife crime” at 26.3%.
In the 2023-24 listening report the top two responses were “People carrying weapons/knives” and “Vaping”, both at 31.3%.

Although the percentages are high for those that said “Gangs” are their biggest concern, there were MORE young people that said “We *DON’T* have any concerns in Maldon”.

The PERCENTAGE of young people saying that they ARE worried about being exploited by a gang has almost doubled since the last report, 17% last year compared to 30% this year.

This year’s feedback showed a 23% DECREASE in the percentage of young people that said they feel safe in their local area when out with their friends.

Being in large groups was the top response for “What helps young people feel SAFE in Maldon” but they also said that “Being with a trusted friend” and “Knowing the area” are important to them.

When asked what can be done to help them feel SAFER, 100% of the young people that took part in Maldon said “More police”

Other responses included:

- Better street lighting
- Free phone charging stations
- More youth groups

Having a safe space to socialise with friends and chill out was the most frequent answer for “What activities would young people like to see more available”

This was followed closely with “Gaming” and the affordability of any activity or service continues to be a priority, in the top three responses.

100% of the young people that took part in Maldon said they have NOT been a victim or taken part in violent crime over the past year and 20% LESS young people said they have witnessed violent crime compared to the previous report.

LESS THAN HALF the young people, 48%, said they HAVE viewed serious violence on social media.

This is a low percentage when comparing to other districts across Essex, Southend and Thurrock.

ALMOST A THIRD of young people that said they HAVE seen content online, said that it involved “Fighting”

TikTok and YouTube were the joint top answers when young people were asked which platforms they viewed the serious violence.

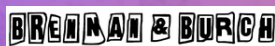


76 Young People took part in the Brentwood DISTRICT

The brilliant youth organisations that took part:



Doddington Road
Community Church
(school work with year 7)



Brennan & Burch
(Art youth club)



Endeavour Youth Club
(SEN group)

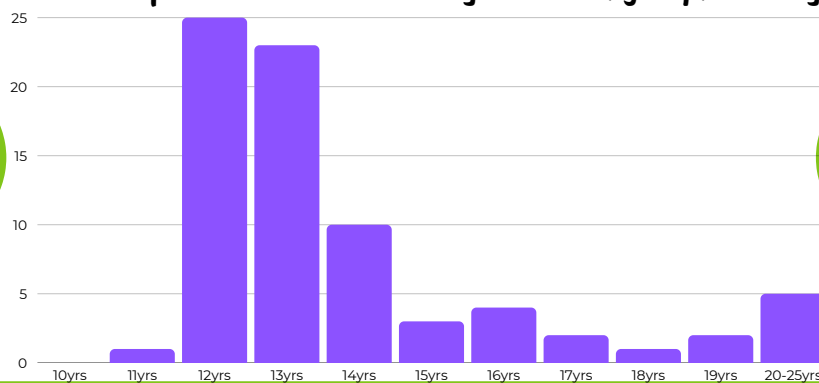


Ingatestone Boys Own Club
(Essex Boys & Girls open access youth club)



Snap Charity
(SEND Theatre Group)

Distribution, by age, of young people who took part in Brentwood in all the questions at their local youth club/group/activity



Gender: Female 49%. Male 49%. Non-binary 2%.

What is the biggest concern for young people around youth violence in Brentwood?

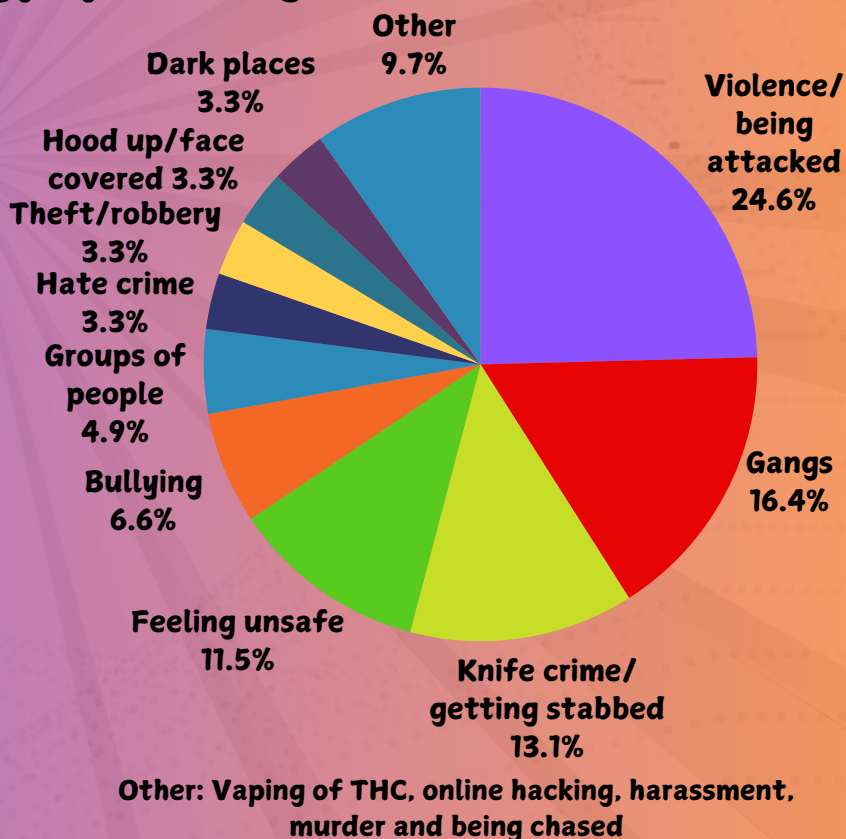
The percentage of young people in Brentwood saying that *"The fear of violence and being attacked"* is their biggest concern around youth violence has **INCREASED** by **OVER 10%** since last year

"We hear about a lot of crime attacks in the area"

"I worry about people carrying knives"

"I have male friends who are already involved in gangs and drugs and they can't get out"

"We worry because people could get hurt"



Over a third of young people in Brentwood said *"Knife crime/being stabbed"* was their biggest concern last year and this has **DROPPED** to 13.1% in this report.

A **LARGER** percentage of young people mentioned that *"Gangs"* are their biggest concern compared to feedback last year. Last year 10.2% said gangs, this year 16.4% gave this answer.

New this year was young people saying *"Feeling unsafe"* and *"Bullying"*.

Last year young people's responses included concerns about *"Drug dealing"* and *"Guns"*. These were **NOT** mentioned in this year's feedback.

The percentage of young people that said *"Theft/robbery"* has dropped from 8.2% last year to 3.3% this year.

Are young people in Brentwood worried about being exploited by a gang in their local area?



65%
of young people
said they **ARE**
worried

There has been **NO CHANGE** to the percentage of young people that said they **ARE** worried about being exploited by a gang in Brentwood compared to last year.

There were mixed views in the comments...

"It happens a lot and I'm scared it might happen to me"

"There are no gangs in my area"

"I haven't seen gangs but I worry because I don't know who is in a gang"

Do young people in Brentwood feel safe when they are out with their friends in their local area?

73%

of young people
said they **DO**
feel safe



3% less young people are saying that they **feel safe** in their local area when out with their friends compared to the last listening project.

12% of the young people that answered this question, said they DO feel safe
"Sometimes"

These young people said that it is dependent on where they are, who they are with and if it is daytime or dark.
These are included in the **73%**

In the last year, have young people from Brentwood, had experience of violent crime either as a victim, a witness or have they taken part in it?

As a Victim **62% said NO**

As a Witness **60% said YES**

Someone who took part **92% said NO**

This year's feedback shows that there has been a slight drop in the percentage of young people that have experienced violent crime as a witness and taken part in it.

2% MORE have been a victim.

In the 2023-24 project:
64% had NOT been a victim
68% HAD been a witness
91% had NOT taken part



Where do young people from Brentwood think the crime hotspots are near them?

- 1) High Street and outside shops/fast food restaurants (KFC, outside shops in Pilgrims Hatch)**
- 2) Parks and recreational areas (North Rd Park/behind Sainsburys, King George's Skatepark)**
- 3) Alleyways (at back of the High Steet, Baytree Car Park to High Street, Sainsburys to North Rd)**
- 4) Train station/near train station**



2 of the 5 groups taking part didn't share any places that they thought were crime hotspots

What helps young people from Brentwood feel **SAFE** when they are out with their friends in the local area?

**POSTERS:
WHAT TO DO
IF IN TROUBLE**

STREET LIGHTS

TRUSTED ADULTS

**PARENTS/
GUARDIANS
NEARBY**

**SAFETY
IN
NUMBERS**

BEING IN A BUSY PLACE

**POLICE/
PEOPLE IN
UNIFORM**

**SAFE
AREAS/KNOWING
THE AREA**

**HAVING MY
PHONE**

Young people in Brentwood continue to get a strong sense of feeling safe when they are around people they trust. This could be friends, professionals or family, as this feedback shows with the top three responses.

"Being in a big group makes you less targeted by roadmen"

"We feel safe having someone waiting in a car nearby"

Responses about feeling safe in big groups of friends was mentioned almost four times more than the next most frequent answer.

What makes young people from Brentwood feel **UNSAFE** when they are out with their friends in the local area?

**WHEN ADULTS DON'T
INTERVENE/
ACT AFTER FIGHTS**

**BEING
ALONE**

**THE WAY
PEOPLE
DRESS**

**HEARING ABOUT
CRIME/ARRESTS**

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

**BEING
FOLLOWED**

**GROUPS OF
STRANGERS
BEING
HORRIBLE**

CROWDED PLACES

GANGS

**DODGY
LOOKING
PEOPLE**

**BULLYING
FROM
PEERS**

**PEOPLE IN
SHOPS/
AUTHORITY
WE DON'T
KNOW**

**POORLY LIT
AREAS**

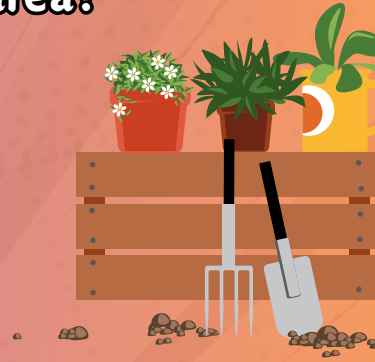
**UNKNOWN
AREAS**

The most frequent responses for "What makes young people feel **UNSAFE**" were comments about groups of strangers, how they talk to each other and/or are horrible to others. Young people in Brentwood specifically referred to *"Groups of youths they don't know"* Last year the top answer for this question was "Gangs" and this year this was only mentioned by a few.

The young people that mentioned *"The way people dress"* specifically said *"Youths dressed in black"* and *"People with hoods up and face covered"*

What do young people from Brentwood think should be done to help them feel safer in their local area?

1. More police
2. More street lighting ~ especially in alleyways
3. More cameras ~ and more people monitoring the cameras
4. More trusted adults/people we know, in the area
5. More security guards
6. More Staff patrolling public transport
7. Emergency (safe) places to go
8. Maintaining recreation areas so they look nice



Young people in Brentwood are still saying that **“More police”** would help them feel safer in their community, the same top answer as the last report. The majority that said **“More cameras”** specifically mentioned there should be **“cameras in parks to protect young people”**.

Young people suggested **“More street pastors/youth workers in the area”** would help them feel safer as well as **“more security staff on the trains, buses and on the platforms”**.

Other young people suggested **“taking more care of areas with plant pots and flowers to make it more desirable and less likely to attract ‘dodgy’ people hanging out there”**



What activities would young people like to see more available for them to take part in?



The most popular answer from young people in Brentwood was “More sport”

Sport was mentioned by the highest percentage of young people in Brentwood last year too.

The majority of these activities were very close in the amount of young people that voted for them.

Affordability of any activity or service that is provided, continues to be a key factor for young people in Brentwood, much the same as many of the other areas.

Providing a safe, indoor space for them to chill and socialise with their friends is also important for young people in this district.

**CHILL
OUT**

Have young people seen content on social media of *serious violence?



51%

of young people in Brentwood said they **HAVE** seen content on social media

5 out of 17 in one group do not have access to social media

Which platform have young people seen the serious violence on?



1) TikTok 44%



2) Snapchat 25%



8) YouTube 15%



7) WhatsApp 9%



6) Facebook 5%



5) Instagram 2%

Of those young people who have seen violence on social media:

36%

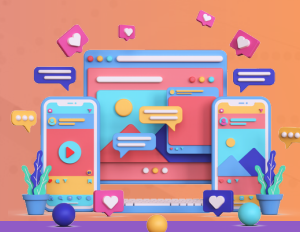
have seen content of people they know - friends, friends of friends or people they know from their local area?

53%

have seen content of people they don't know

Content described included:

- Fighting/Attacks
- Bullying
- Nudity/Sexual content/Violent porn
- Drugs
- Swearing/Verbal abuse/Shouting (including verbal racial abuse)
- Suicide
- Use of weapons (glass bottle/waving knife)



Comments and Observations

The percentage of young people that said they **HAVE** seen serious violence online of people they **DO NOT KNOW** is relatively low when compared to the other areas. However, over 39% of the young people that took part in Brentwood, **DID NOT** answer this question.

Examples of content viewed of people they **DO KNOW** included:

• People threatening to rape/kidnap

• Sexual abuse

Examples of content seen of people they **DO NOT KNOW** included:

• Selling 'shanks' on Snapchat

• Gang adverts

• Fights in group chat

• Nudes in group chat



KEY OBSERVATIONS, COMPARISONS AND COMMENTS FOR BRENTWOOD

The feedback in this report shows there has been an **INCREASE** in the percentage of young people saying their biggest concern around youth violence is *“Being attacked/violence”*. From **13.7% last year to 24.6% this year**.

A **HIGHER** percentage of young people said that *“Gangs”* are their biggest concern compared to last year’s feedback. From 10.2% last year to 16.4% this year.

There has been a **DECREASE** of more than 20% in the percentage of young people expressing that *“Knife crime/getting stabbed”* is their biggest concern.

65% of the young people in Brentwood said they ARE worried about being exploited by a gang. This is the SAME percentage as in the previous report.

There is a marginal **DROP**, of 3%, in the percentage of young people that said they **DO** feel safe when out with their friends locally but this **IS** dependent on if it is dark and who they are with.

The top three most frequent responses for “What helps young people feel **SAFE** in Brentwood”, were all about being with people they trust. The highest answer was *“Safety in numbers”*, followed by *“Police/people in uniform”* and *“Parents/guardian near by”*.

The responses to “What do young people think should be done to help them feel safer in their community” follow a similar theme with young people asking for *“More police”* as the top answer, *“More street lighting and CCTV”* and *“More trusted adults in the area”*, *“More security guards”* and *“More staff patrolling public transport”*.

Sport was at the TOP of the list for what activities young people would like to see more available for them, the same as the previous report.

However, the feedback demonstrates that affordability of any provision or service is still pertinent, and this was closely followed with a safe space to chill with friends.

The percentage of young people that have experienced violent crime as a witness, or taken part in it, has **DROPPED** since last year, and a **2% INCREASE** in those that **HAVE** been a victim.

OVER HALF the young people that took part in Brentwood **HAVE** seen serious violence on social media.

36% said this involved people THEY KNOW.

53% said this content involved people they DO NOT KNOW.

This is a comparatively low percentage, when looking at the feedback from other areas, nor is this a clear representation for this district because one group did not answer this question and they made up 39% of young people in Brentwood who took part.

TikTok and Snapchat were the top two most frequently given responses to “Which platform are young people viewing this content.



117 Young People took part in the Basildon DISTRICT

The brilliant youth organisations that took part;



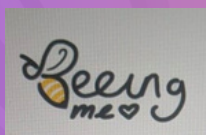
Maru karate Kai
(Martial arts group)



Flex Youth Club
(Ethnic minority group)

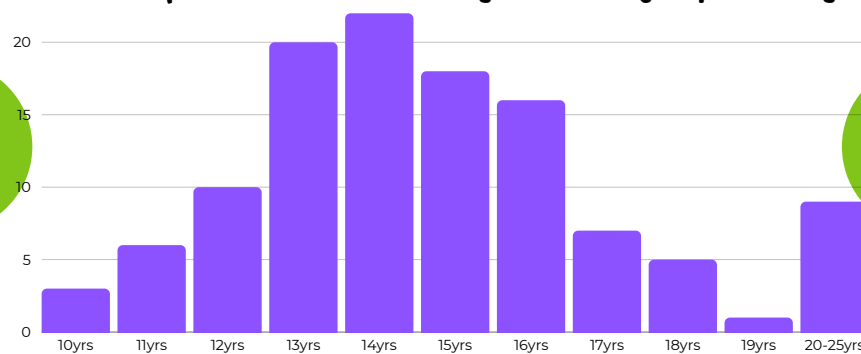


Chantry Rangers
(Girl Guides)



Bar n Bus: Being Me
(All girls group)

Distribution, by age, of young people who took part in Basildon in all the questions at their local youth club/group/activity



Female 56%. Male 40%. Non-binary/Not disclosed 4%

YOUTH SERVICE Inspire Enable Achieve

Essex Youth Service:

1. Friday youth club
(Open access Youth Club)
2. Gateway
(SEN group)

HERITAGE MIX

Heritage Mix
(Ethnic minority group)



Gateway Radio Club
(Open access youth club)

What is the biggest concern for young people around youth violence in Basildon?

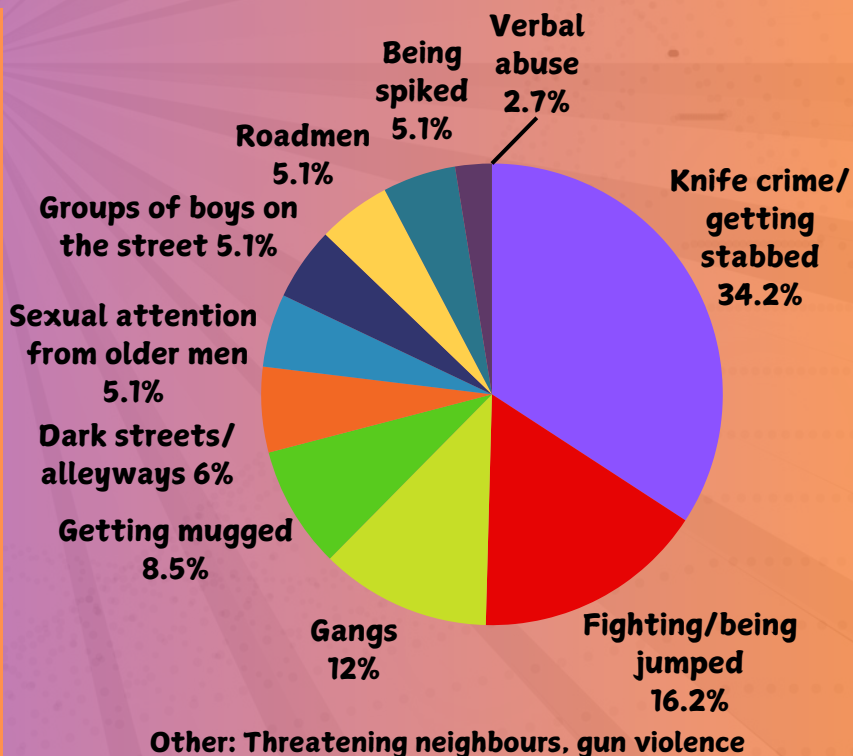
KNIFE CRIME is still the **BIGGEST** concern for the **MAJORITY** of young people in Basildon **BUT...**

the percentage has **DROPPED** from 39.1% since the last report

"We're scared of knives because so many people carry them, and they are dangerous"

"My biggest concern is getting into fights and dangerous situations"

"More young people seem to be getting involved in drug activity"



A **LARGER** percentage of young people in Basildon said that their biggest concern is **"Fighting/being jumped"**, this has risen from 9% last year to over 16% in this report.

Last year 7.5% of the young people said **"Thieves"** are their biggest concern and, although they did NOT specifically say the same this year, 8.5% of young people DID say **"Getting mugged"**.

This year sees a **3% DROP** in the percentage of young people saying that **"Gangs"** are their biggest concern.

New to this year's feedback, young people mentioned **"Dark streets/alleyways"**, **"Sexual attention from older men"** and **"Being spiked"**.

Young people did NOT mention **"Bullies in school"** or anything related to drugs this year.

Are young people in Basildon worried about being exploited by a gang in their local area?



53%

of young people said they are **NOT** worried

This shows **MORE THAN 45% LESS** young people in Basildon are worried about being exploited by a gang compared to last year.

“No, as there are few gangs in my local area”

“No, I don’t know there were gangs”

“Some people are not educated in exploitation and don’t know the signs to look out for and get pulled into it”

Do young people in Basildon feel safe when they are out with their friends in their local area?

69%

of young people said they **DO** feel safe



The percentage of young people saying that they feel safe when they are out in their local area, with their friends has **DECREASED**, last year this was **88%**

Of those that said they **DO** feel **SAFE**, over 21% said that it depends where they are and only during the day.

“We feel safe during the day but feel scared if it’s dark”

In the last year, have young people from Basildon, had experience of violent crime either as a victim, a witness or have they taken part in it?

As a Victim **90% said NO**

As a Witness **78% said NO**

Someone who took part **99% said NO**

MORE young people **HAVE** been a **VICTIM** of violent crime in Basildon when comparing the figures from last year.
LESS young people have **WITNESSED** it.

In the 2023–24 project:
94% had **NOT** been a victim
67% had **NOT** been a witness
99% had **NOT** taken part



Where do young people from Basildon think the crime hotspots are near them?

- 1) Town Centre and areas with shops (Basildon Town Centre especially at night, Asda town centre multi storey, Pitsea centre)**
- 2) Parks and recreational areas (Swanmead Park, Gloucester Park, Sun Corner, Behind the cricket club in Lake Meadows)**
- 3) Underpasses and alleyways (Tinklerside, Stock Road)**
- 4) Transport (Basildon Bus Station, Laindon Train Station, Stations)**
- 5) Housing estates (generally, Markhams Chase)**

Basildon Town Centre (especially after dark) was said more times than any other area.

What helps young people from Basildon feel **SAFE** when they are out with their friends in the local area?

USE HOUSE
KEYS AS A
WEAPONS

STREET
LIGHTS

ABILITY
TO RUN

BEING WITH
ADULTS

TRACKER ON
MY PHONE

**SAFETY
IN
NUMBERS**

SCREAMING
TO GET
ATTENTION

KNOWING
THE
AREA

HAVING
MY
PHONE

KNOWING
SOMEONE IS
NEARBY IF
SOMETHING
HAPPENS

MORE THAN DOUBLE the number of young people that said *"Having my phone"* answered with comments about *"Safety in numbers"* helps them feel **SAFE** when out in their local area.

"We walk in groups and people think we're up to no good but we're just trying to stay safe"

"Power in numbers"

"Knowing I have support from others"

"My friends are NOT deemed approachable"

"Street lights" was only said slightly less frequently than *"Having my phone"*

What makes young people from Basildon feel **UNSAFE** when they are out with their friends in the local area?

POORLY LIT
AREAS

DODGY/SKETCHY
PEOPLE

PEOPLE
SMOKING
DRUGS

**LARGE
GROUPS OF
PEOPLE**

BEING
FOLLOWED

NOT
TRUSTING
THE PEOPLE
YOU'RE WITH

CATCALLING

NEVER
KNOWING IF
SOMETHING
WILL KICK
OFF

LACK OF
CCTV

GRAFFITI ON
WALLS

POLICE SIRENS

GANGS

There were comments about *"Groups of teenagers we don't know"* and *"Groups on bikes"* included in the *"Large groups of people"* category regarding what makes young people in Basildon feel **UNSAFE**.

Young people specifically mentioned *"Gangs in alleyways and the underpass"* and several young people said *"Gangs that threaten violence or drugs near younger children and they don't care"*

Almost HALF the young people that said *"Being followed"* makes them feel unsafe, specifically said *"Men following us"*

What do young people from Basildon think should be done to help them feel safer in their local area?

1. Better street lights
2. More support groups specifically for young people
3. Free Wi-Fi areas
4. More youth clubs
5. Police education talks at school about gangs and violence
6. More trusted adults available in school
7. More police
8. More CCTV



“Fix the broken street lights” and *“We need extra lighting”* were amongst the comments about improving the street lights in Basildon to help young people feel safer.

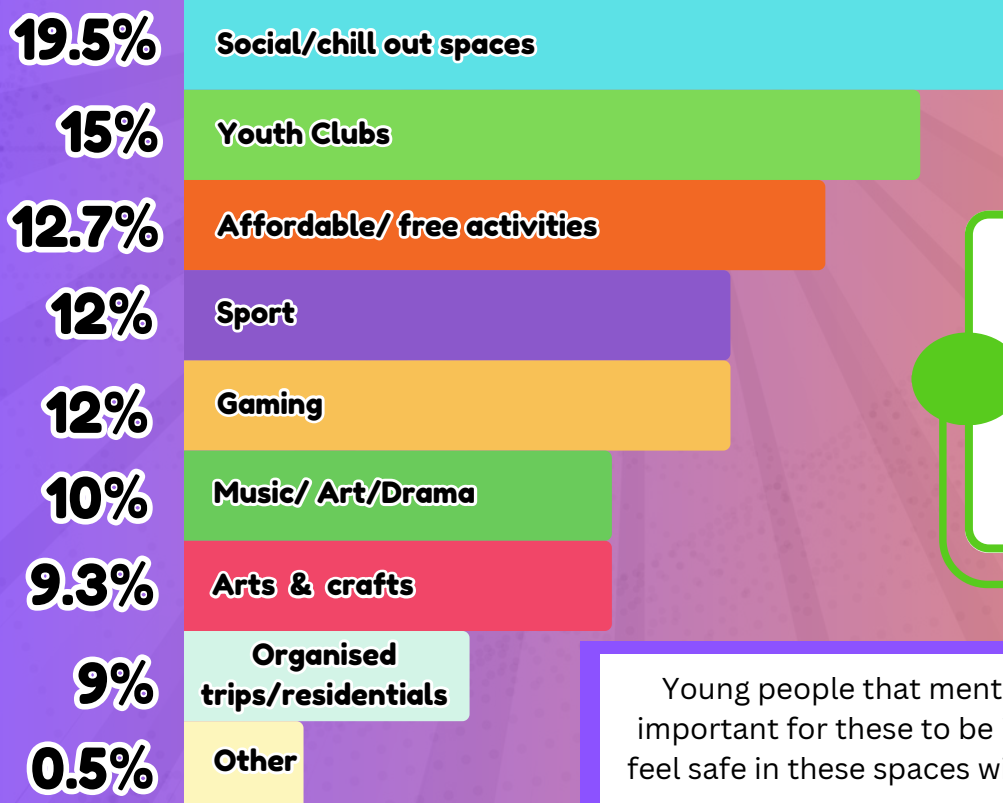
More than half the young people that asked for *“More youth support groups”* specifically said *“Having somewhere safe to go if we felt scared, with trusted adults”*. Others mentioned *“A service for young people to talk and report things”*

Other young people suggested...

- *“More phone charger stations”*
- *“If there were no more gangs”*
- *“Stop people smoking weed and doing laughing gas”*



What activities would young people like to see more available for them to take part in?



Having a place to chill out and socialise with friends was the top answer for young people in Basildon

Young people that mentioned *“Youth clubs”* said that it is important for these to be in accessible places and for them to feel safe in these spaces with approachable and trusted adults.



Within the sport category, young people specifically asked for *“Boxing”* and *“Self-defence classes”*

Other suggestions included *“Job clubs”* and *“DJ opportunities”*
Affordability continues to be a high priority for any service or activity.

Have young people seen content on social media of serious violence*?



77%

of young people in Basildon said they have seen content on social media

35% of young people who said they had seen violent content online, said it involved fighting

Which platform have young people seen the serious violence on?



1) **TikTok** 44%



2) **Snapchat** 22%



3) **WhatsApp** 12%



4) **Instagram** 11%



3) **X/Twitter** 5%



6) **Facebook** 3%



YouTube

7) **YouTube** 2%



8) **Telegram** 1%

Of those young people who have seen violence on social media:

31%

have seen content of people they know – friends, friends of friends or people they know from their local area?

86%

have seen content of people they don't know

36% of young people that said they **HAVE** seen serious violence on social media of people **THEY KNOW**, said it involved "Videos of fights in school"



"AI is an issue - portraying things you don't know if they are real or not"

Comments and Observations

OVER THREE QUARTERS of the young people that took part in Basildon said they **HAVE** seen serious violence online.

Examples of content seen included:

- 35% said "*Fighting*" including fights in school
- Threats to beat up children or groups of children
- Violent sexual content and threats
- Children and young people carrying or promoting weapons
- Glorifying previous attacks
- Children and young people using and promoting illegal drugs

TikTok and Snapchat were the highest percentage for the platforms young people are seeing this content.



KEY OBSERVATIONS, COMPARISONS AND COMMENTS FOR BASILDON

Although the percentage has dropped, from 39.1% to 34.2%, ***“Knife crime/getting stabbed”*** is still the most frequent answer young people in Basildon gave for ***“What is their biggest concern around youth violence”***.

The percentage of young people that said ***“Fighting/being jumped”*** is their biggest concern, has risen from 9% last year to over 16% this year.

There has been a drop in the percentage of young people that stated ***“Gangs”***. This was 15% in the previous report and has reduced to 12% in this project.

The feedback from asking young people if they are worried about being exploited by a gang shows a **47% DROP** this year for young people in Basildon compared to last year.

LESS young people said that they feel safe when out with their friends in their local area. This has **DROPPED FROM 88% to 69%** saying that they **DO** feel **SAFE**.

A large proportion of young people in Basildon said they feel **SAFE** when they are with a group of friends, referring to feeling protected and supported by trusted friends.

The next most frequent answer was ***“Having a phone”*** but this was mentioned half the times compared to comments around ***“Safety in numbers”***.

To help young people feel safer in their community they asked for ***“Better street lights”***, ***“Support groups for young people”*** ~ specifically mentioning safe places to report incidents and talk to trusted adults.

“Free Wi-Fi areas”, ***“More youth clubs”*** and ***“Educational assemblies from police”*** were amongst the top suggestions.

In regards to what activities young people would like to see more available, the largest percentage said they would like chill out spaces which were appropriate for young people to feel safe and socialise with friends in a welcoming environment.

This year's feedback shows that there is a slight **INCREASE** in the percentage of young people that **HAVE** been a **VICTIM** of violent crime in Basildon.

Positive to note is that **MORE THAN 10% LESS** young people **HAVE WITNESSED** violent crime compared to the previous report.

77% of young people in this district **HAVE** seen serious violence on social media, with **35%** of these young people saying that this content involved ***“Fighting”***

The most frequently given response to which platform this content is viewed was TikTok at 44% and Snapchat at 22%.

31% of the young people that **HAVE** seen content online, said it involved **PEOPLE THEY KNOW**.

Out of these young people 36% said that it involved ***“Videos of fights in school”***

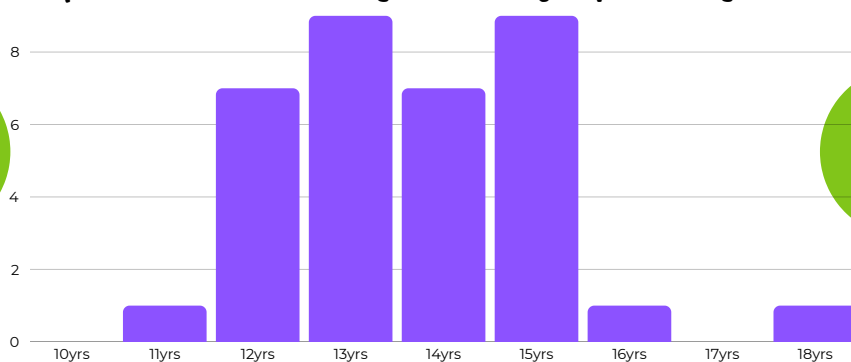
86% of the young people that **HAVE** seen violent crime said that it involved **PEOPLE THEY DO NOT KNOW**.



275 Young People
took part in the
Rochford DISTRICT
 (240 of these answered two of the
 questions in an assembly)

**The brilliant youth
 organisations
 that took part;**

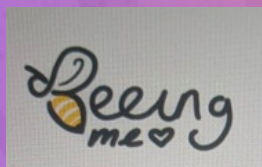
**Distribution, by age, of young people who took part in Rochford in
 all the questions at their local youth club/group/activity/detached**



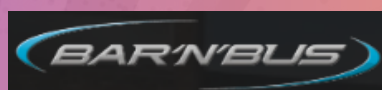
Gender: Female 60%. Male 40%.



KAOS Youth Club
 (Open access youth club)



Bar n Bus: Being Me
 (All girls group
 AND two questions through an
 assembly with Yr7's)



Bar' n' Bus
 (Detached)



**The Megacentre:My Youth
 Wellbeing (Wellbeing group)**

What is the biggest concern for young people around youth violence in Rochford?

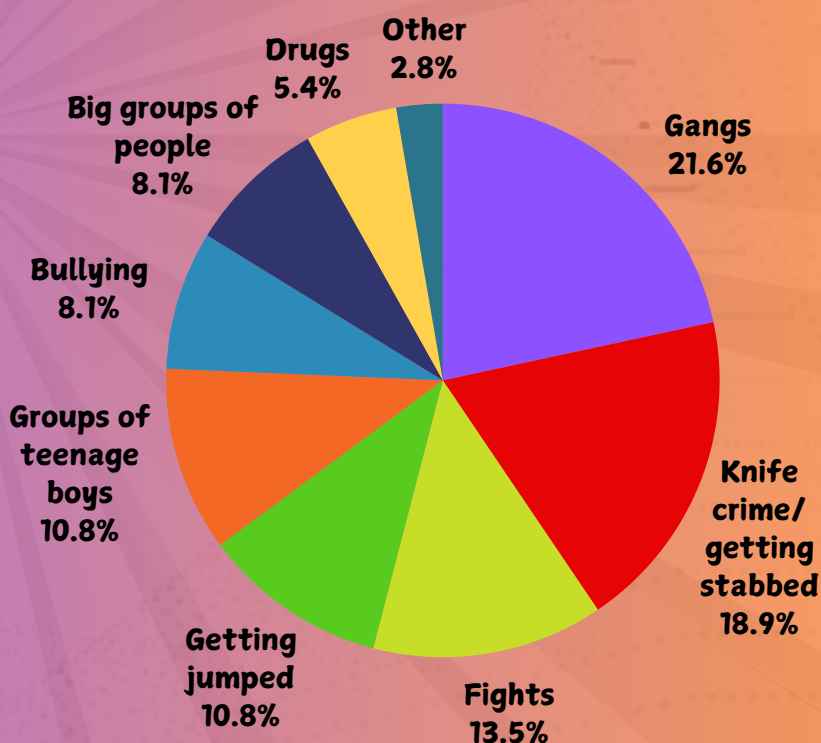
Young people in Rochford did NOT
 mention “Gangs” last year.
 In this year’s feedback, MORE THAN 20%
 said “Gangs” is their biggest concern
 around youth violence

*“It’s the little gangs that hang about and
 think they’re hard carrying knives”*

*“I witnessed a random attack on the
 street”*

“My biggest concern is getting stabbed”

*“I’m concerned about drugs being forced
 on to you and getting addicted to them”*



Other: Other students in my school

The percentage of young people that said “**Knife crime/getting stabbed**” is their biggest concern has
INCREASED, from 16.7% in the previous report to 18.9%.

Over a quarter of young people in Rochford last year said that “**Drugs/drug related crime**” was their biggest
 concern. This has **DROPPED** to 5.4% this year.

The fear of fights has **INCREASED** from 6.7% in the last report to 13.5% in this year’s feedback.

There was a much bigger percentage of young people that said “**Groups of boys**” were their biggest concern
 last year. This percentage has **DROPPED** from 23.3% last year to 10.8% this year.

Are young people in Rochford worried about being exploited by a gang in their local area?



98%
of young people
said they are
NOT worried

LESS young people are worried about being exploited by a gang in Rochford compared to last year. Only 21% said they were NOT worried in the previous report in comparison to the 98% this year!

This question was also put to the young people involved in the Rochford Youth Hubs, an extra 240 young people.

The percentage above is combining the feedback from the Youth Hub and the organisations that run the listening project.

When using the feedback from the organisations only the result was 93% of young people said they are NOT worried.

Do young people in Rochford feel safe when they are out with their friends in their local area?



62%
of young people
said they **DO** feel
safe

This year's feedback shows **MORE THAN A 20% DROP** in the percentage of young people that said they **DO** feel **SAFE** in their local area when out with their friends.

In the previous report 86% of the young people said they **DO** feel **SAFE**.

This was the other question that the Youth Hub in Rochford asked at a school assembly of Year 7 young people.

There is a difference in the result if we just use the feedback from the youth groups that took part in the listening project.

Those figures showed that 74% of young said they **DO** feel **SAFE**.

In the last year, have young people from Rochford had experience of violent crime either as a victim, a witness or have they taken part in it?

As a Victim 78% said NO

As a Witness 61% said NO

Someone who Took Part 100% said NO

MORE young people **HAVE** been a **VICTIM** of violent crime in Rochford in comparison to last year.

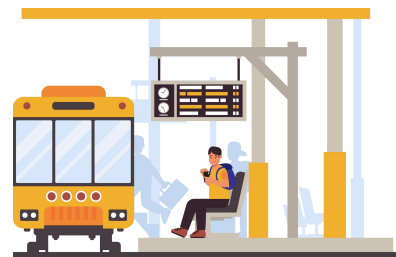
LESS young people **HAVE TAKEN PART** and **WITNESSED** crime in the past year.

In the 2023-24 project:
94% had NOT been a victim
43% had NOT been a witness
89% had NOT taken part



Where do young people from Rochford think the crime hotspots are near them?

- 1) Parks**
- 2) Transport – Trains and Train Station**
- 3) Alleyways**
- 4) Town/Town Centre/outside corner shops**
- 5) Outside school**



Young people in Rochford also described Southend and Basildon as crime hotspots near them.

What helps young people from Rochford feel **SAFE** when they are out with their friends in the local area?

BEING ON
MY BIKE

STAYING
AT HOME

**SAFETY
IN
NUMBERS**

TRACKER
ON MY
PHONE

KNOWING
PEOPLE
IN THE
AREA

BEING IN
A NICE
PUBLIC
PLACE

WE CALL 999 FROM
OUR PHONES

**HAVING
MY
PHONE**

For young people in Rochford *“Being in a large group”* and other related comments were the most frequent responses to “What helps them feel **SAFE** when out with their friends in their local area”.

“Having my phone” was a close second being said only a few less times.

Young people stated that having tracker devices on their phones and knowing emergency numbers to call also helped them feel safe, reinforcing the importance for them having a phone to feel safe.

What makes young people from Rochford feel **UNSAFE** when they are out with their friends in the local area?

**POORLY
LIT
AREAS**

PEER
PRESSURE

**DRUG USE
& DEALING**

**BEING
WITH LESS
PEOPLE**

NOT BEING NEAR
HOME

**LARGE
GROUPS OF
TEENAGE
BOYS**

**PEOPLE
ON BIKES**

**NOISY GANGS
OF YOUTHS**

VAPING

Being in poorly lit areas was marginally the most frequent answer given by young people in Rochford for “What makes them feel **UNSAFE**?”, this was followed with comments about *“Large groups of teenage boys”*.

“Teenagers in the teens shelter are territorial and wouldn’t let me sit there”

Half the young people that mentioned *“Drug dealing”* specifically said *“Crack down on young people doing drugs openly”*

Through discussion with youth leaders one young person stated
“I feel unsafe because the gang want me to try vaping”

What do young people from Rochford think should be done to help them feel safer in their local area?

1. More police
2. Free phone charging stations
3. More street lights
4. More safe spaces for young people
5. Tougher punishments for young offenders
6. More street cameras
7. NOT more police



"More police" could help young people in Rochford feel safer in their community.

Only one young person did not want more police presence.

As seen from the feedback about what helps young people feel safe, young people asked for ***"Free phone charging stations"***.

Ensuring there are better street lights and providing safe places for young people to go were also popular responses for what could be done to help young people feel safer in Rochford.

What activities would young people like to see more available for them to take part in?



The most popular answer from young people in Rochford was "Organised trips/residentials"

Although the majority of young people in Rochford asked for more organised trips/residentials, providing youth clubs was only a fraction behind in popularity.

"We need more groups for 18-25 year olds"

Affordability continues to be a key factor and was said as many times as social/chill out spaces, for what activities young people would like more available in their area.

"We would like cafes for youths"



Have young people seen content on social media of serious violence*?

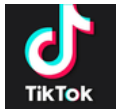


75%

of young people in Rochford
said they **HAVE** seen content
on social media

50% of young people
who had seen content of
people they **DO NOT**
KNOW said it was of
young people promoting
fighting/violence

Which platform have young people seen the serious violence on?



1) TikTok 58%



2) Snapchat 20%



3) X/Twitter 8%



4) Instagram 5%



5) WhatsApp 5%



6) Facebook 2%



YouTube

7) YouTube 2%

Of those young people who have seen violence on social media:

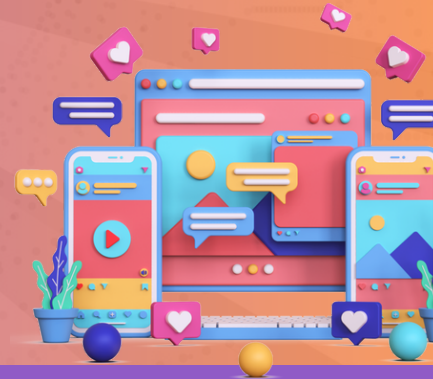
24%

have seen content of
people they know –
friends, friends of friends
or people they know from
their local area?

64%

have seen content of
people they don't know

66% of young people that have seen
serious violence on social media
involving people **THEY KNOW** said it
was fights in schools or young people
fighting rival schools



Comments and Observations

Three quarters of the young people that took part in Rochford **HAVE** seen serious violence on social media.

Nearly a quarter of these young people said that this content involved people THEY KNOW. Although this is **NOT** good, this is the lowest percentage of young people in comparison to the other areas.

Other examples of content seen by young people were:

- *Young people promoting the use of weapons*
- *Young people promoting suicide and self-harm*
- *Young people being attacked/fighting*
- *Drug use*
-



KEY OBSERVATIONS, COMPARISONS AND COMMENTS FOR ROCHFORD

Over the previous two years, young people in Rochford consistently said that their biggest concern was drugs. This has **DROPPED** from **OVER A QUARTER** of the young people to 5.4%. **This year's feedback shows that their biggest concern is "Gangs", closely followed by the fear of "Knife crime and getting stabbed"**

There has also been an INCREASE in the percentage of young people expressing concerns about fighting. This figure has MORE THAN DOUBLED from last year.

It is interesting to note that the percentage of young people that said they are NOT worried about being exploited by a gang has INCREASED dramatically, from 21% last year to 98% in this year's feedback, despite the young people saying that their biggest concern around youth violence is "Gangs"

"I'm not worried about being exploited but I am worried about being stabbed"

Much the same as many of the other areas, young people in Rochford feel SAFE when they are in large groups and when they have their phones.

The comments around having a phone included ***"Having a tracking device on my phone"*** and ***"Knowing emergency numbers to call if we get in trouble"***



These responses reiterate the importance of having a phone and why many of them said that providing them with free phone charging stations would help them feel safer in their community.

Young people in Rochford also said that "More police" and "Better street lights" would help them feel safer.

The most frequent answer for what activities would young people like to see more available, was organised trips and residentials, however, youth clubs was only mentioned 0.5% less and affordability of any service or activity continues to be paramount.

In comparison to the previous report, there has been an INCREASE in the percentage of young people that HAVE BEEN A VICTIM of violent crime in Rochford.

This year's feedback shows that there is a **DECREASE** in the percentage of young people that **HAVE WITNESSED** and **TAKEN PART** in violent crime.

75% of young people, from this district HAVE seen serious violence on social media with ALMOST 60% saying that they viewed this content on TikTok, more than double the percentage of the next most frequent platform, which was Snapchat.

Out of the young people that **HAVE** seen violence online, 24% said that this involved people **THEY KNOW**, and out of these young people **66% said that the content was "Fights in school" or "Rival schools fighting"**

64% of the young people that **HAVE** seen violence on social media said that this content involved people they **DO NOT KNOW**.

HALF of these young people said that the content was young people promoting violence and fighting.



90 Young People took part in Castle Point DISTRICT

The brilliant youth
organisations
that took part;



Next Level: TrustLinks &
Yellow Door
(Performing arts group)



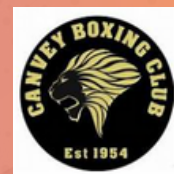
2nd Hadleigh Guides
(Girl Guides)



Canvey Island Youth
Project/Yellow Door
(Open access youth club)

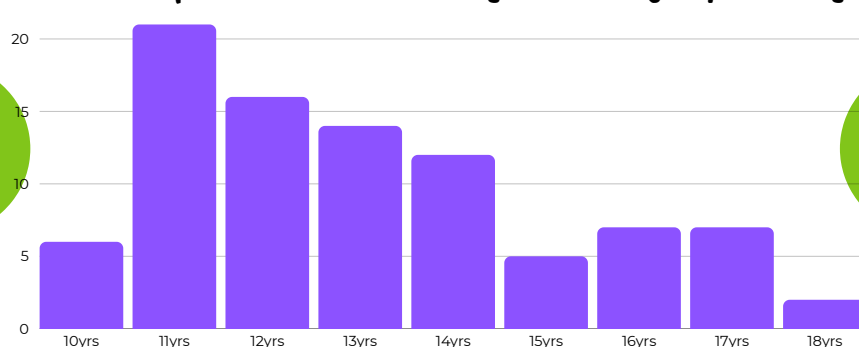


ATF
(Sports outreach)



Canvey Island Boxing Club
(Essex Boys and Girls Clubs)

Distribution, by age, of young people who took part in Castle Point in all the questions at their local youth club/group/activity



Female 54%, Male 36%. Non-binary/Not disclosed 10%

What is the biggest concern for young people around youth violence in Castle Point?

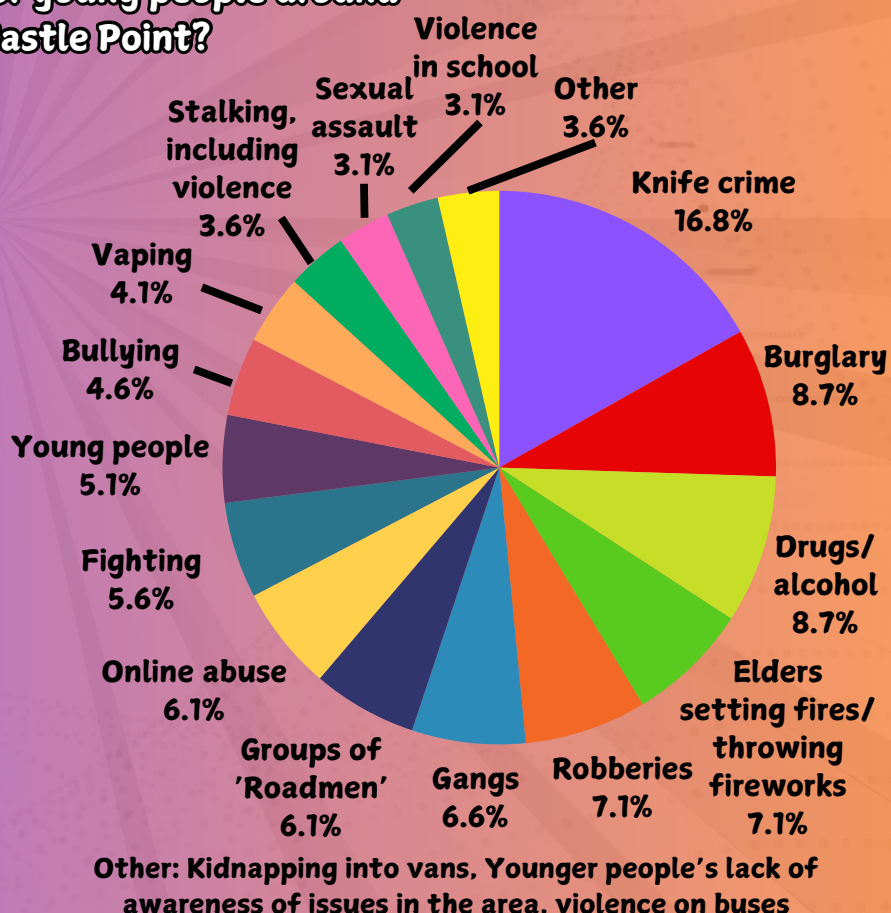
KNIFE CRIME IS STILL THE MOST
FREQUENT RESONSE given by young
people in Castle Point when asked
“What is their biggest concern around
youth violence”

“Our biggest concern is knife crime ‘cos
you never know what people are
carrying”

“We worry about people breaking into
houses and trashing them”

“People get drunk and it leads to
violence”

“Loads of people take drugs at the
park”



Although “Knife crime” is still at the top of the list of young people’s concerns, this HAS DROPPED from 40.7% in the previous report.

Last year “Drugs/drug dealing” was second on the list at 16.5% and this report shows that there has DROPPED by almost HALF, to 8.7%

Young people’s concerns around “Robberies” included over 64% specifically mentioning mobile phones being stolen by people on bikes.

“Gangs” were NOT given as an answer to this question last year in Castle Point, and this year 6.6 % stated it, with nearly 77% of these young people specifically saying “Gangs in the local area”

Are young people in Castle Point worried about being exploited by a gang in their local area?



75%

of young people
said they **ARE**
worried

This is the second consecutive year that the percentage of young people in Castle Point, said that they **ARE** worried about being exploited by a gang, has **INCREASED**.

From 28% in 2022-23

To 71% in 2023-24

"Gangs threaten you if you don't follow their instructions"

"Gangs from Leigh are recruiting"

"Gangs are in school and everywhere"

Do young people in Castle Point feel safe when they are out with their friends in their local area?

62%

of young people
said they **DO**
feel safe



It is positive to see that there are **MORE** young people that feel **SAFE** in Castle Point when out with their friends, compared to last year.

However, this is dependent on knowing the area, who they are with and it being daylight.

"We go where we know is safe to play"

"We know our friends will have our back"

"We don't go out at night"

"We feel safe when we're doing activities and events with our friends"

In the last year, have young people from Castle Point, had experience of violent crime either as a victim, a witness or have they taken part in it?

As a Victim 83% said NO

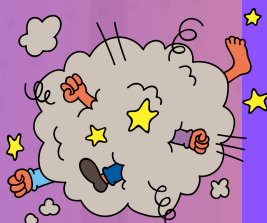
As a Witness 62% said NO

Someone who Took Part 98% said NO

There has been an **INCREASE** in the percentage of young people that have experienced violent crime as a **VICTIM** and **TAKEN PART** in it, this year.

LESS young people have **WITNESSED** violent crime.

In the 2023-24 project:
95% had NOT been a victim
35% had NOT been a witness
100% had NOT taken part



Where do young people from Castle Point think the crime hotspots are near them?

- 1) Town/Town Centre/The Street
- 2) Parks and recreational areas – Canvey Lake, John Burrow Park, woods
- 3) Dark fields/Any dark, unlit areas that aren't busy
- 4) Shopping Centres/Supermarkets
- 5) Alleyways

After the town/town centre, Canvey Lake was mentioned more times than any other hotspot area.

"Anywhere can be dangerous – it's more about the people than the place"

What helps young people from Castle Point feel SAFE when they are out with their friends in the local area?

SAFETY IN NUMBERS

DOING ACTIVITIES
CCTV
KNOWING THE AREA
BEING WITH TRUSTED ADULTS
BEING IN A BUSY PLACE
SHOP OWNERS WHO CAN SEE OUTSIDE
DAYLIGHT
TRACKER ON MY PHONE
PROPER ROAD CROSSINGS

It is clear from this feedback that young people in Castle Point get a sense of safety when they are in large groups of friends, with almost 85% giving this response.

Knowing the area, staying local and being aware of where in their community is safe for them to hang out with their friends, is also an important factor to help them feel safe.

More than 27% of these young people said that taking part in activities and events helps them feel safe.

Other responses were similar to other areas; *“Being with trusted adults”, “Tracker on my phone”*

What makes young people from Castle Point feel UNSAFE when they are out with their friends in the local area?

POORLY LIT AREAS

OLDER PEOPLE
BULLIES
BEING FOLLOWED
BEING ALONE
PEOPLE IN BALACLAVAS & ON MOTOR BIKES
GROUPS OF OTHER PEOPLE
MEN
PEOPLE WATCHING YOU
FIGHTING
DRUNK PEOPLE

Comments around being in darkness, dark alleys and poor lighting made up the majority of the responses for what makes young people in Castle Point feel UNSAFE.

All the other responses relate to other people, whether these other people are in a group, are older, are men, are seen to be following or watching young people, bullies or people who are drunk or on drugs.

“Older people that are drunk or high on drugs make me feel unsafe”

“Men wearing dark clothes make us feel unsafe”

“We feel unsafe when people record you on their phones”

What do young people from Castle Point think should be done to help them feel safer in their local area?

1. More police
2. More CCTV cameras
3. Better street lights
4. More FREE organised activities ~ over 46% of these young people specifically mentioned football tournaments
5. More security
6. Less people carrying knives
7. Volunteering opportunities
8. More restrictions on when and where alcohol can be consumed



The top three responses have been suggested across the majority of the areas; more police, more cameras and better street lighting, for what could be done to help young people feel safer in their community.

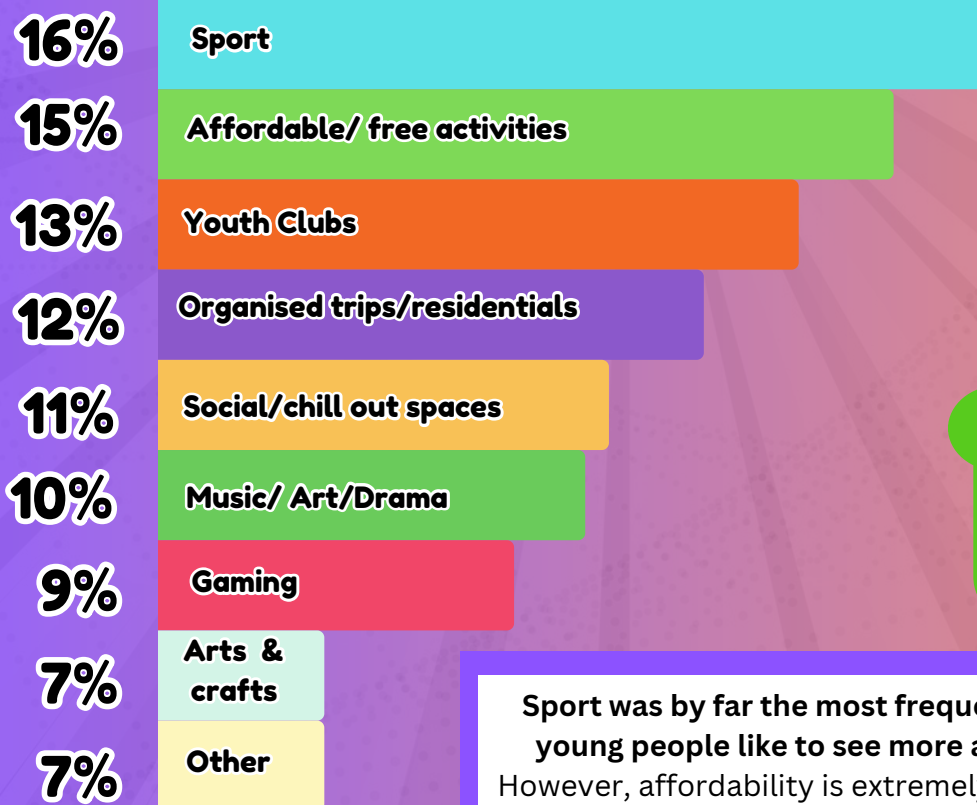
What was different in this district was young people asking for tighter restrictions on the consumption of alcohol.

“Pubs only open in the evening, not when we come home from school”

“Reduce adults drinking alcohol in public places”

Other young people asked for *“More safe places to go and places to get help”* and for *“Shops to stop selling vapes”*

What activities would young people like to see more available for them to take part in?



Young people in Castle Point would like MORE SPORT available to take in



Sport was by far the most frequent answer for what activities would young people like to see more available, the same as the last year. However, affordability is extremely important to ensure accessibility for all young people.

“There are not many organised activities that are free in this area”

Other activities that were suggested were:

- Cooking classes
- Swimming galas
- Beauty classes

Have young people seen content on social media of serious violence*?

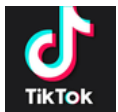


79%

of young people in Castle Point said they have seen content on social media

23% of young people who had seen serious violent content mentioned it involving racism

Which platform have young people seen the serious violence on?



1) **TikTok** 42%



2) **Snapchat** 24%



3) **YouTube** 19%



4) **Facebook** 8%



6) **Instagram** 3%



7) **X/Twitter** 3%

Of those young people who have seen violence on social media:

25%

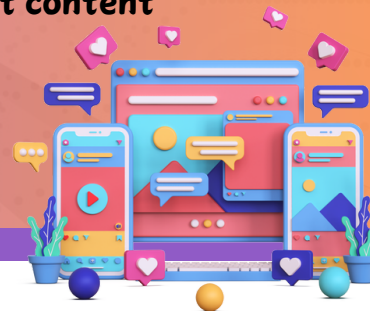
have seen content of people they know - friends, friends of friends or people they know from their local area?

95%

have seen content of people they don't know

Young people who had seen content of people they **DON'T KNOW** said they'd seen content showing:

- Children using drugs,
- Threats to beat up children,
- Fights,
- Children carrying weapons,
- Glorying of previous attacks,
- Sexually violent content



Comments and Observations

Nearly **HALF** the young people that **HAVE** seen serious violence on social media said that it involved **FIGHTING** and **OVER 32%** said the content involved children using/promoting drugs.

In relation to the other areas, the percentage of young people in Castle Point that **HAVE** seen content online of people **THEY KNOW** is low, however **OVER 56%** of these young people said that it involved **FIGHTING**.

Out of the young people that **HAVE** seen serious violence on social media of people **THEY DO NOT KNOW**, **OVER 45%** of them said it involved promoting/using drugs.

"Kids accounts on social media still have inappropriate content" ~ said by many

The platforms where the majority of the young people said they are viewing this content are TikTok and Snapchat which is consistent across many of the areas.



KEY OBSERVATIONS, COMPARISONS AND COMMENTS FOR CASTLE POINT

16.8% of young people in Castle Point said that their biggest concern around youth violence is “Knife crime” and this is STILL the MOST FREQUENT response for this question.

On a positive note, this percentage HAS DROPPED from 40.7% since the last report.

Concerns around “Drugs/drug dealing” has also DROPPED from 16.5% to 8.7% this year, although this was in joint second place on the list with “Burglary”.

6.6% of young people said that **“Gangs”** are their biggest concern and although this appears a low percentage, this was NOT mentioned last year, **the majority of these young people specifically said “Gangs in the local area”** and there were many different concerns given by the young people.

75% of young people said that they ARE worried about being exploited by a gang. THIS IS THE SECOND CONSECUTIVE YEAR THAT THIS HAS INCREASED.

“Young people feel threatened and at risk of doing things they don’t want to do such as dealing/trying drugs” ~ said by youth leader

The bulk of young people in Castle Point, OVER 84%, said that they gain a sense of SAFETY when they are with friends in large groups. This response was given nearly double the number of times the next most frequent answer was stated, that response was “Knowing the areas”

To help young people feel safer in their community they asked for:

- More police
- Better street lights
- More cameras
- More FREE organised activities
- More restrictions on when and where adults can consume alcohol

Sport was at the top of the list for “What activities would young people like to see more available in their area?”

However, affordability of any activity or service that is provided was a close second.

Compared to the previous year, feedback from this report shows that the percentage of young people that have experienced violent crime, as a victim and taken part in it, HAS INCREASED.

In comparison to last year, the percentage of young people that have WITNESSED VIOLENT CRIME HAS DROPPED from 65% to 38%.

Almost 80% of the young people in Castle Point HAVE seen serious violence on social media. With 49% of these young people saying that it involved fighting and 32% said it involved children promoting/using drugs.

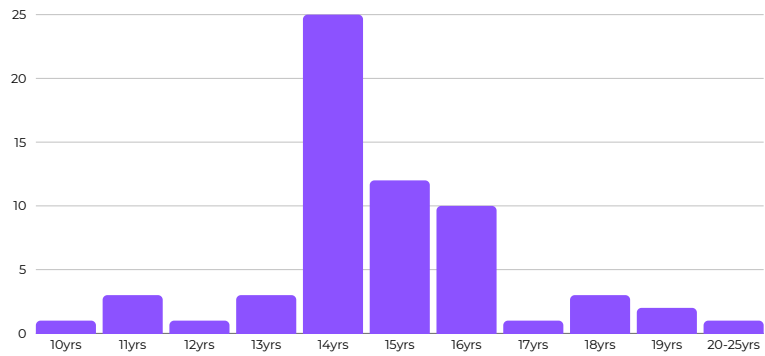
There was a relatively low percentage of 25% of young people that said they HAVE seen content online that involved people THEY KNOW.

95% of young people said that they HAVE viewed serious violence on social media involving people THEY DO NOT KNOW and over 45% of these young people said that it involved promoting drugs/drug use.



91 Young People
took part in Thurrock
(29 of these answered two of the
questions through detached work)

Distribution, by age, of young people who took part in Thurrock in all the questions at their local youth club/group/activity



Gender: Female 50%. Male 50%.



Thurrock Youth Cabinet



Super Social (SEN group)



Open Door (Detached youth work)



Arts Outburst Express (Art group)



Seabrook Rise Community (Open access youth clubs)



Riverview Charitable Trust (Open access)



Orsett Fire Cadets (Uniformed)

What is the biggest concern for young people around youth violence in Thurrock?

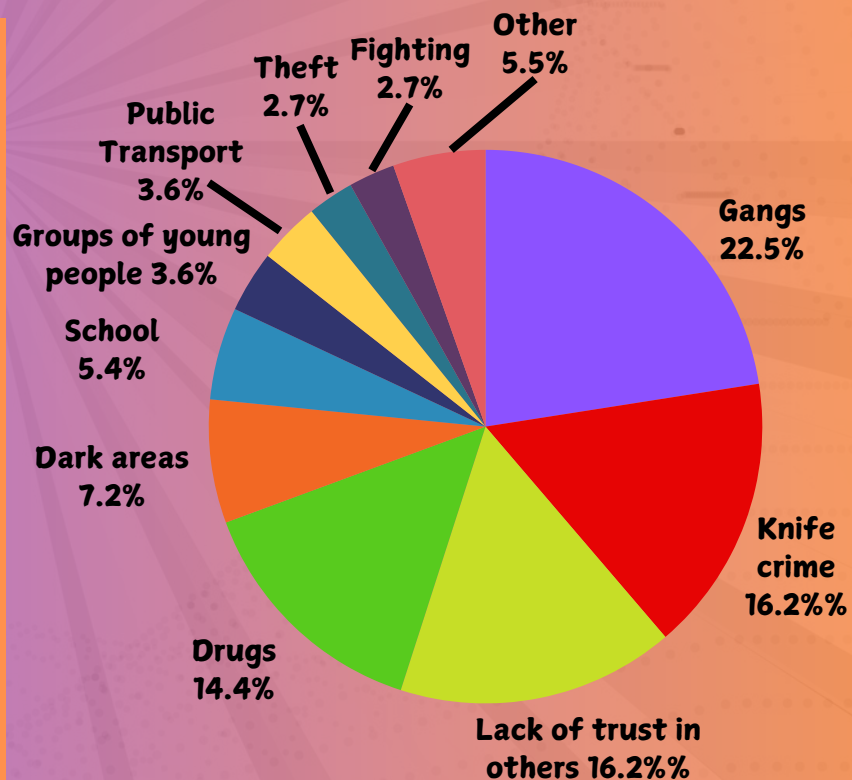
“Gangs” and “Knife crime” are still the top two concerns for young people, in Thurrock, around youth violence.

“Our biggest concern is getting groomed into gangs”

“I worry about all the kids that carrying knives in secondary school”

“Gangs selling drugs, sitting in parks and stairwells waiting for older people to drop off more drugs”

“We worry about young people walking around with knives and bats, thinking they’re hard”



Other: Being alone, kidnapping, vaping

This year’s feedback shows that the concerns around gangs has **INCREASED** from 18.9% last year and knife crime has **DECREASED** from 24% in the previous report.

When young people discussed **“A lack of trust in others”** they mentioned **“Not knowing who is in with who”** and this was said by the same number of young people who said **“Knife crime”**.

Drugs was raised as a concern by 14.4% of young people, with many comments about **“Substance misuse and addiction”**, **“Drug dealing”**. Drugs were **NOT** given as a response to this question last year.

The 5.4% of young people that said **“School”** is their biggest concern, talked about the lack of authority, they believe, the teachers have, bullying that is not dealt with and that they do not feel valued by teachers.

Are young people in Thurrock worried about being exploited by a gang in their local area?



65%

of young people said they ARE worried

Although this is clearly still a concern for many young people in Thurrock, the percentage that ARE worried about being exploited by a gang has **DECREASED** by 24% since last year.

“We worry about the gangs in Purfleet”

“We worry we might be attacked or approached by gang members”

This question was also put to the young people during detached work with Open Door. The percentage above is combining the feedback from detached and the organisations that run the listening project. When using the feedback from the organisations **ONLY**, the result was 75% of young people said they **ARE** worried.

Do young people in Thurrock feel safe when they are out with their friends in their local area?

60%

of young people said they DO feel safe



This is the second consecutive year that shows there are **LESS** young people saying that they feel **SAFE** when out, locally, with their friends

2022-23 ~ 88% said YES

2023-24 ~ 64% said YES

The percentage above includes the young people that were asked this question during detached youth work with Open Door.

If we only used the feedback from the organisations that took part in the listening project the result would be 74% of young people said they DO feel SAFE in their community when out with their friends.

In the last year, have young people from Thurrock had experience of violent crime either as a victim, a witness or have they taken part in it?

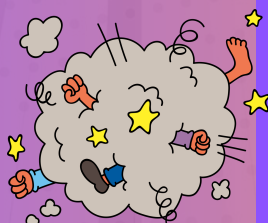
As a Victim 82% said NO

As a Witness 56% said NO

Someone who took part 87% said NO

ALL of these figures have improved since last year!!!

**In the 2023-24 project:
79% had NOT been a victim
47% had NOT been a witness
85% had NOT taken part**



Where do young people from Thurrock think the crime hotspots are near them?

- 1) Grays – (Burger King, Subway, Town Centre and Beach front)**
- 2) Train stations**
- 3) Parks/sports courts – (Grays Park & Blackshots Park)**
- 4) Underpasses/alleyways/subways (subway in Hardie Park in Stanford)**
- 5) Tilbury – (including Tesco Express)**
- 6) Lakeside – (including Lakeside car park)**
- 7) High Streets/High Street stores**

One group mentioned that they thought parks and playgrounds are not lit to deter people hanging around them at unsavoury hours. However, sometimes the young people have no choice but to walk through them en-route home or to other places.

What helps young people from Thurrock feel **SAFE** when they are out with their friends in the local area?

SAFETY IN NUMBERS

BEING INSIDE
KNOWING THE AREA WELL
STAYING CLOSE TO HOME
KNOWING POLICE/SECURITY IN THE AREA
SAFETY MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

The top response to “what helps young people feel safe in Thurrock when out with their friends” was said **MORE THAN DOUBLE** the times the next answer was given,

“Friends look after each other”

“We’re not scared when we’re in a group”

There were various comments in the *“Safety management strategies”*

“Having a ring watch near me”

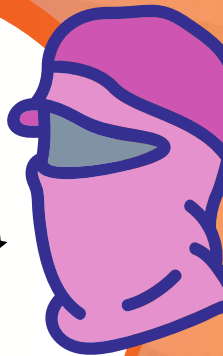
“Parents having a locator/tracker on their phone”

“Having loving and caring parents that check on you regularly”

What makes young people from Thurrock feel **UNSAFE** when they are out with their friends in the local area?

POORLY LIT AREAS

WORRIED WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN
BEING ALONE
OTHER GANGS
PEOPLE CONCEALING THEIR FACE
CREEPY MEN
PEOPLE SMOKING WEED
INTIMIDATING PEOPLE
FIGHTING
GROUPS OF OTHER PEOPLE



Young people specifically mentioned *“Broken street lights”* and *“Dark alleys and subways”* when stating that poorly lit areas make them feel **UNSAFE** in Thurrock. Other young people mentioned *“Feeling like others don’t understand you when spoken to”* and *“Lack of police presence”* makes them feel unsafe.

“Grays is not safe, I don’t go out there even though I live there”

“I don’t feel safe because you get picked on if you don’t roll with a gang”

Last year **MORE** young people commented about *“People being involved in gangs”* and *“Gang members”* making them feel unsafe than this year.

What do young people from Thurrock think should be done to help them feel safer in their local area?

1. Better street lights
2. More Police/security ~ knowing how to report crime and more female officers
3. More youth clubs ~ inclusive indoor safe hubs for SEND young people
4. Better signage for people with impaired vision
5. More awareness of SEND and invisible disabilities
6. Personal safety alarms given out
7. Speed dial phone boxes
8. Banning hoodies and face coverings



Providing better lighting, more police and accessible and inclusive youth clubs were the top three recommendations for what could be done to help young people in Thurrock feel safer in their community.

Young people suggested that there should be ***“More community policing”*** and that ***“Police should build better relationships with young people, so young people don’t feel intimidated”***

There were other suggestions:

Tougher punishments

More people young people trust to talk to

Knowing more about where to get support in the area



What activities would young people like to see more available for them to take part in?



Providing youth clubs was the most popular response for young people in Thurrock

The top five responses for “What activities would young people like to see more available in Thurrock”, were very close.

Equipping young people with accessible youth clubs and ensuring any provision is affordable were the most frequent answers.

Young people specifically mentioned inclusive sports for SEND such as tag rugby.

Other activities proposed included:

- Creative writing workshops
- Stress management/wellbeing sessions



Have young people seen content on social media of serious violence*?



88%

of young people in Thurrock said they have seen content on social media

Over 50% of young people who had seen serious violent content of people THEY KNOW said they had seen fights

Which platform have young people seen the serious violence on?



1) **Instagram** 23%



2) **Snapchat** 22%



3) **TikTok** 19%



4) **Facebook** 10%



5) **X/Twitter** 10%



6) **YouTube** 7%



7) **Reddit** 6%



8) **WhatsApp** 3%

Of those young people who have seen violence on social media:

56%

have seen content of people they know - friends, friends of friends or people they know from their local area?

90%

have seen content of people they don't know

Young people who had seen content of people they don't know said it included:

Fights/previous fights,

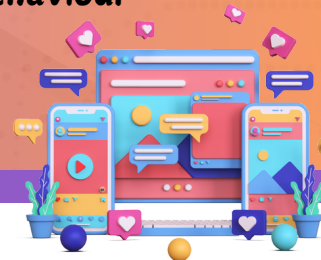
Verbal harassment

Selling drugs

Knife crime

Sexual content

**Verbal sexual harassment and
Intimidating behaviour**



Comments and Observations

88% of young people in Thurrock said they HAVE seen serious violence on social media, this is the third highest percentage across all areas.

37% said they had seen fighting and other examples of content included:

- Children and young people carrying, promoting or using weapons
- Children and young people being part of or promoting gangs
- Someone being shot

These questions evoked interesting and scary conversations between youth leaders and young people, and young people disclosed seeing sexually violent content and threats which included videos of previous incidents and screenshots of abusive messages.

“We’ve seen children carry and using weapons such as screwdrivers, knives and batons”



KEY OBSERVATIONS, COMPARISONS AND COMMENTS FOR THURROCK

Although the percentage of young people in Thurrock saying *"Knife crime"* is their biggest concern, has **DROPPED** from 24% to 16.2% this year it is still the second most frequent answer. Concerns around *"Gangs"* is at the top of the list and has **RISEN** from 18.9% to 22.5% this year.

Young people expressed their lack of trust in others, with the same percentage saying this as those who mentioned knife crime as their biggest concern around youth violence.

***"Drugs"* are the biggest concern for 14.4% of young people and this was not given as a response last year.**

Contrary to more young people saying that gangs are their biggest concern, this year sees a **24% DECREASE** in young people saying they **ARE** worried about being exploited by a gang.

Similar comments were raised by young people for this question, about ***"Not being able to trust people"*** and ***"You don't know who people might know"***.

There were conversations around young people being driven by money and, therefore, susceptible to being coaxed into gang involvement.



LESS young people said that they feel safe in Thurrock when out with their friends compared to last year, this is the second consecutive year this figure has dropped.

"The police can't keep us safe"

"I used to live in London, it's much better here"

Over 66% of the young people that answered the question "What helps young people feel safe when out with their friends" made comments about ***"Being in a big group"***, ***"I can go out all I like and feel fine because I know everyone"***

To help young people feel safer in their community they asked for better street lights, more police, with some specifically saying they would like to see more female officers and would the police to build better relationships with young people.

This year, at the top of the list for what activities young people would like more available for them, they said youth clubs, and for any provision to be affordable

The feedback from this project shows that there have been LESS young people that have experienced violent crime as a victim, a witness or as a perpetrator.

88% of young people in Thurrock **HAVE** seen serious violence on social media. This is the third highest percentage when comparing all the areas that took part. There were some very serious examples of content including someone being shot, young people carrying, promoting and using weapons such as knives, screwdrivers and batons, drug dealing via Snapchat and sexual violence.

56% of those that HAVE seen content said that involved people they KNOW with OVER 50% saying it was fighting.

Instagram was the most frequent response to "On which platform have young people seen serious violence"



98 Young People took part in Southend

The brilliant youth organisations that took part;



Southend YMCA
(Detached work)



South Essex Community Hub
(SEN group)



Southend TEENS Group
(Faith group)



Garon Park Youth Club
(Open access youth club)

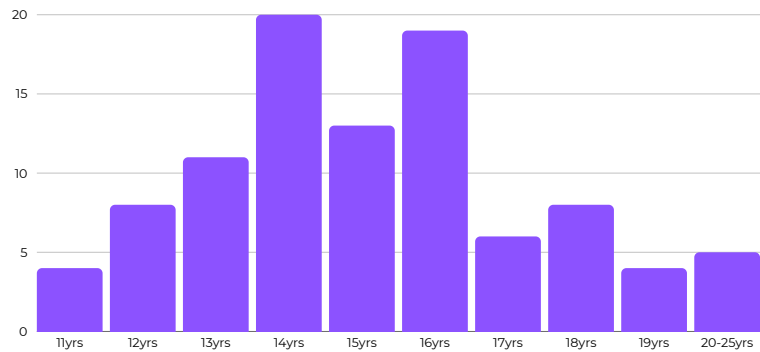


Bouldering Together
IndiRock & Trustlinks
(Open access)



Southend United
(Football club)

Distribution, by age, of young people who took part in Southend in all the questions at their local youth club/group/activity/detached



Gender: Female 32%. Male 66 %. Non-binary 2%.

What is the biggest concern for young people around youth violence in Southend?

Young people's concerns of "Knife crime/being stabbed" has INCREASED by 14% since last year

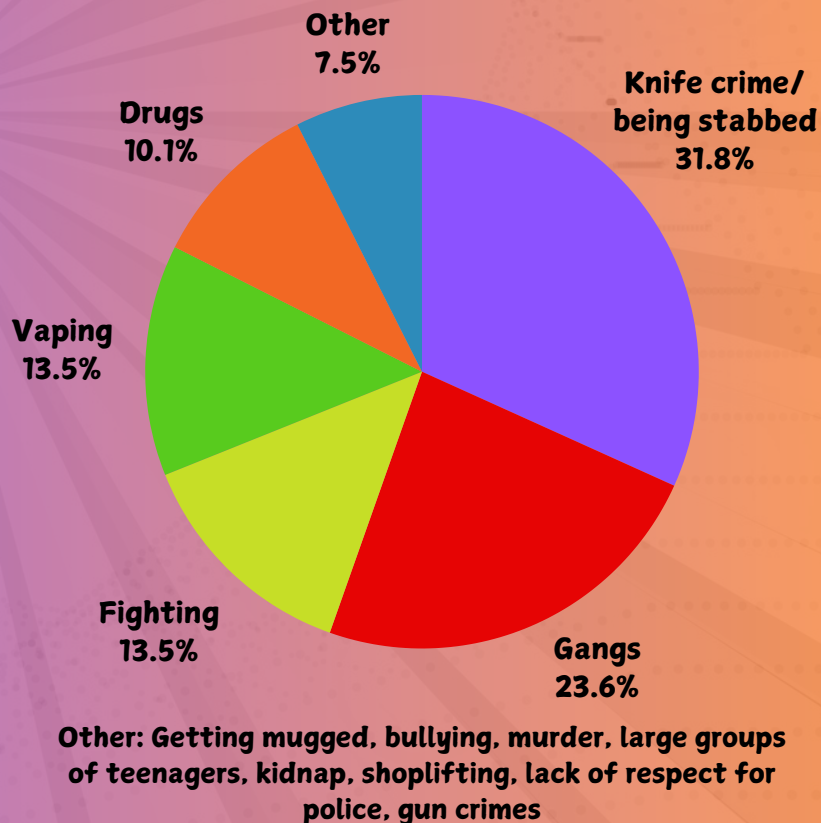
"Our biggest worry is the increase in knife crime"

"The machete fights on the seafront"

"So many people carry knives"

"Young people that grow up in poverty areas are more easily influenced to join gangs"

"The gang fights are really scary"



The same as last year, the top two most frequent answers for "What is the biggest concern for young people in Southend around youth violence" is "Knife crime/being stabbed" and "Gangs", but they have changed places. Last year Gangs was at the top with almost 30% and Knife crime was in second place with 17.8% of the young people giving this response.

Concerns around "Drugs" has INCREASED marginally from 9.3% to 10.1% this year.

The same number of young people that said "Fighting" was their biggest concern, mentioned "Vaping" which was NOT given as an answer to this question last year.

Positive to note is that "Bullying" was only stated by one young person compared to 6.5% last year.

Are young people in Southend worried about being exploited by a gang in their local area?



54%

of young people said they ARE worried

In comparison to the 91% LAST YEAR saying they ARE worried about being exploited by a gang in Southend, this is a 37% DROP!

This is still a worry for many young people.

Almost half of those that said they are worried, mentioned peer pressure.

“The gangs are targeting younger people and they are being forced or bullied to join”

“It’s easy for people to be exploited and they often don’t realise. They are offered cool things”

Do young people in Southend feel safe when they are out with their friends in their local area?



70%

of young people said they DO feel safe

This percentage, 70%, has remained the same for this year and the previous two reports.

However, for many of the young people this is dependent on them being out in the day time, who they are with and where they are.

“We don’t go out late, but in the day we feel ok”

“Sometimes I feel safe, just depends on who I’m with and where we are”

“I feel safe in the daytime and Southend isn’t as bad as on social media”

In the last year, have young people from Southend, had experience of violent crime either as a victim, a witness or have they taken part in it?

As a Victim 85% said NO

As a Witness 69% said NO

Someone who took part 98% said NO

ALL of these figures have improved since last year!!!

**In the 2023–24 project:
72% had NOT been a victim
46% had NOT been a witness
88% had NOT taken part**



Where do young people from Southend think the crime hotspots are near them?

- 1) Parks and squares (Cluny Square, Warrior Square & Skate Park, Priory Park, Shobury Park)**
- 2) High Street/town**
- 3) Seafront**
- 4) York Rd/surrounding area**
- 5) Kursaal estate**
- 6) Train station (Southend & Hockley)**
- 7) Hamlet Court Rd**

High Street and Seafront were mentioned more times than any specific Park or Square. Cluny Square and Warrior Square were the park/square areas young people mentioned the most, the other parks listed were only mentioned by 1 or 2 young people.

What helps young people from Southend feel **SAFE** when they are out with their friends in the local area?



More than double the number of young people responded to, “What helps young people feel **SAFE** when out with their friends in Southend?”, with comments around being in large groups compared to the next most frequent answers, which were “*Knowing the area*”.

“Being in a big group of people we know”

“Moving in groups”

Some of the safety management strategies included; “*Having a back up plan*” and “*Knowing where the exits are so we can get away quickly*”

What makes young people from Southend feel **UNSAFE** when they are out with their friends in the local area?



Another area where the most frequent response for “What makes young people feel **UNSAFE** when out with their friends locally”, is about the lack of street lights. Said **MORE** than double the number of times the next most recurrent answer, “*Being alone*” was given.

This feedback is similar to the previous report but last year “*Being alone*” was the most constant reply and “*Poorly lit areas*” was in second place.

In the 2022-2023 listening report, young people’s feedback showed that “*Poorly lit areas*” was the majorities response to this question.

“Gangs operate here and make us feel unsafe”

“We’re scared of rival gangs”

What do young people from Southend think should be done to help them feel safer in their local area?

1. More/better street lights
2. More free venues/youth clubs/safe places for young people
3. More local police
4. Free/portable phone charging stations
5. Improve police attitude towards people in a group
6. Tougher penalties for carrying knives
7. Restrict under 13's from being out after certain times
8. Free phone booths/boxes to make emergency calls



In line with the responses from the previous question, young people in Southend said that more street lights, especially in alleyways, more FREE safe places, like youth clubs that are open longer, and more police presence would help them feel safer in their local area.

Other answers included:

SOS bus/people that can help if they need it

Give police better weapons

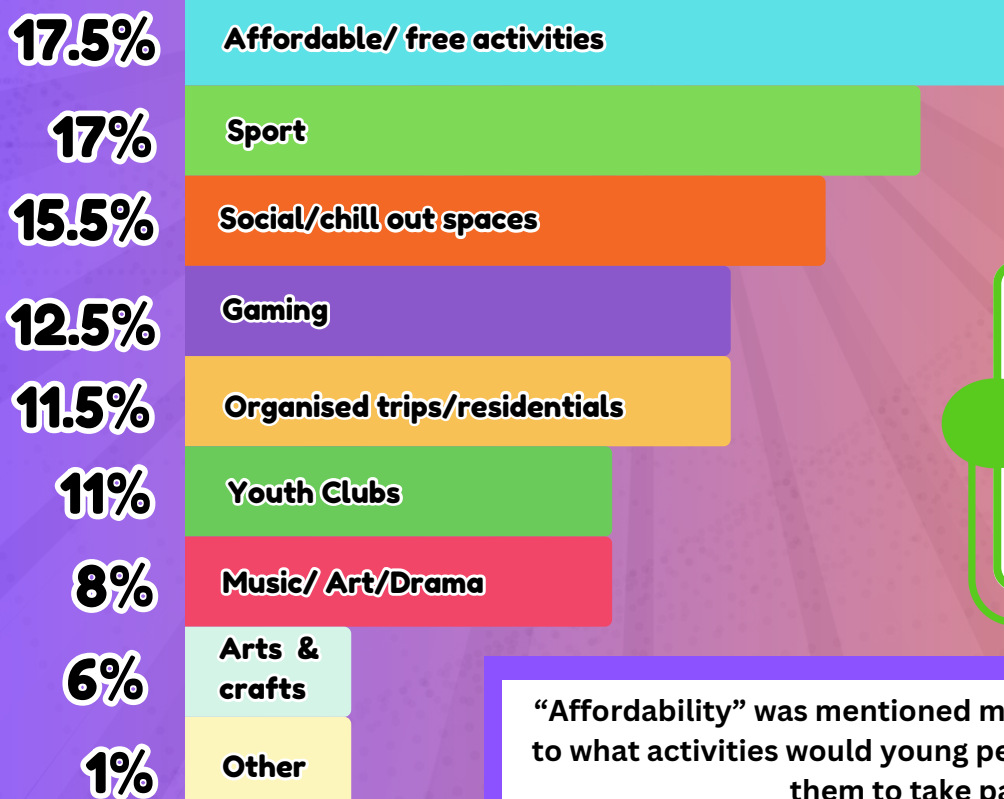
Community safety patrols

Less gangs

Free Wi-Fi



What activities would young people like to see more available for them to take part in?



Affordability is the key factor when providing activities for young people in Southend



“Affordability” was mentioned marginally more times than “Sport” as to what activities would young people like to see more available in for them to take part in, in Southend.

A third of those that said “Sport”, specifically asked for football and multi-sports sessions.

Other recommendations included:

- More libraries young people can access
- Ice-skating
- Under 18's night club

Have young people seen content on social media of serious violence*?



86%

of young people in Southend
said they have seen content
on social media

Fights
Knife Crime
Drugs

Which platform have young people seen the serious violence on?



1) **TikTok** 53%



2) **X/Twitter** 26%



3) **WhatsApp** 8%



4) **Snapchat** 6%



5) **Reddit** 2.5%



6) **Instagram** 2.5%



7) **Facebook** 1%



8) **YouTube** 1%

Of those young people who have seen violence on social media:

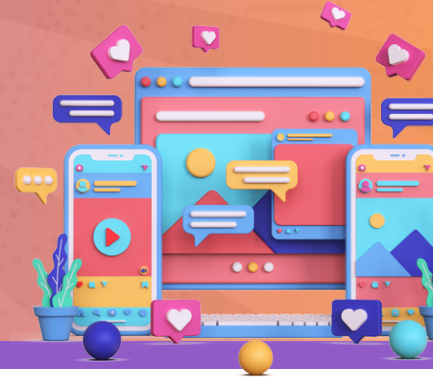
16%

have seen content of
people they know -
friends, friends of friends
or people they know from
their local area?

89%

have seen content of
people they don't know

When asked if they had seen content
of people they know, 10% of those
who said they'd seen content chose
not to vote or said they didn't know



Comments and Observations

With Southend having the **fourth HIGHEST percentage** of young people saying that they HAVE seen serious violence on social media, 27% of these young people said it involved fighting.

"There's always fights in the local high street"

"Southend seafront is known for fighting"

"Fights are planned/organised over TikTok"

This feedback shows that 50% of content is viewed by young people on TikTok.

23% of the young people that HAVE seen serious violence online said that it involved drugs.

"Young people promoting illegal drugs"

"Kids taking drugs on TikTok and Snapchat"

Southend has the **LOWEST percentage** of young people that said they have seen violent content that involved people **THEY KNOW**, in comparison to all the other areas.



KEY OBSERVATIONS, COMPARISONS AND COMMENTS FOR SOUTHEND

Almost 32% of young people in Southend said that ***“Knife crime/being stabbed”*** is their biggest concern around youth violence. This has **INCREASED** from 17.8% since last year.

Concerns around ***“Gangs”*** has **DECREASED** from 30% to 23.6% in this report, however, it is **STILL** the second most frequent response.

This year sees a small **RISE** in the percentage of young people expressing their concerns around ***“Drugs”***, from 9.3% last year to 10.1% this year.

Feedback from this report shows that ***“Vaping”*** was mentioned by the same number of young people as ***“Fighting”*** and it was not given as a response last year.

37% LESS young people said that they **ARE** worried about being exploited by a gang locally compared to last year’s figures.

This question evoked some interesting feedback with some young people saying ***“We need to raise awareness about how poverty and lack of opportunities contributes to young people being vulnerable to exploitation and crime”***

This is the third consecutive year that 70% of young people in Southend said that they **DO** feel **SAFE** when out with their friends locally.

The majority of these young people did say that this is dependent on who they are with, where they are and if it is daylight.

Being in large groups of people they know, and knowing the area were the top two answers for “What helps young people feel safe?”. Young people also mentioned ***“Being in safe venues like halls or football pitches”, “Street lights”*** and ***“Police presence”*** contribute to a sense of safety in their community.

These responses were reinforced by young people saying the same things for ***“What can be done to help young people feel safer”***.

“Affordability” was the main factor when young people were asked “What activities would they like to see more available in their area”

This was also reiterated when young people said ***“A lack of FREE safe places to go” makes them feel UNSAFE.***



All the figures around young people’s experience of violent crime **HAVE IMPROVED** since the last report.

13% LESS have been a victim

23% LESS have witnessed violent crime

10% LESS said they took part.

Out of those that took part in the listening project in Southend, 86% of young people said they **HAVE** seen serious violence on social media with TikTok being the most frequent platform this content is viewed on.

Out of those that **HAVE** seen content online, 27% said that this involved fighting, including fights organised over TikTok, and 23% said it involved the promotion and use of illegal drugs.

Southend feedback did have the **LOWEST** percentage of young people saying that the violent content they had seen involved people **THEY KNOW.**

