

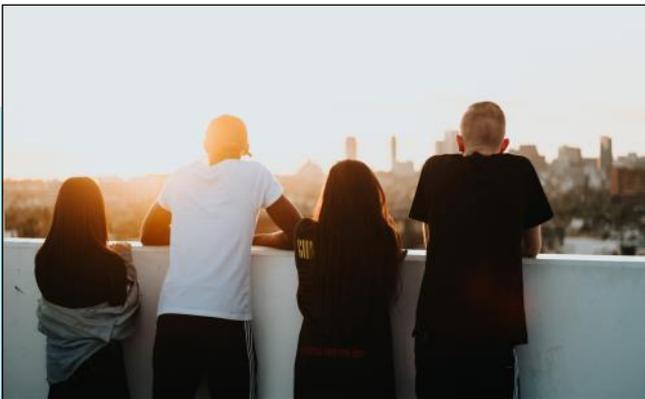
Gangs target youngsters

CRIMESTOPPERS in Essex is highlighting the growing number of children and young people becoming involved with gangs and the violence and abuse they suffer.

Gangs are expanding their networks and actively spot and groom vulnerable young people, from 10 years of age at schools or parties. New gang members can be young men or women who can suffer sexual violence to 'control' them.

Independent charity Crimestoppers wants to raise awareness of the issue and encourage Essex residents to speak up 100% anonymously to help keep young people safe.

Crimestoppers gives people the power to speak up about crime and stay safe by calling our professionally staffed 24-hour UK Contact Centre on **0800 555 111** or by using the untraceable, anonymous online form at **crimestoppers-uk.org**



How gangs recruit

Gangs recruit young people after school, on the internet and where they meet friends. They are told they will earn lots of money, make friends, go to parties and belong to a close 'family' that will care and 'love' them. Providing cigarettes, alcohol and other drugs is a common recruitment method. Gangs also use fear and intimidation.

Gang members can be taken to other parts of the country to deal drugs, often carrying weapons and money, exposing them to violence.

Parents must have a key role in alerting children to the risks. They need to make sure they know what their children are doing, who they are with and look for signs that their children are being groomed or involved in gangs.

Be fearless

The **fearless.org** website is a youth service, guided by Crimestoppers, that develops effective anti-crime resources and advice for young people and their families. The site has resources for professionals about weapons and knives.

Many young people get information about crime from school and friends but are too scared to report it. **Fearless.org** is a safe place to pass information on – **100% anonymously. Always.**

Speak up about crime

If you suspect anyone is committing or involved in drug crime or gang violence, tell our independent charity what you know **100% anonymously.**

We won't ask for your name, or any personal details, we will just listen to what you know and pass information on for you.

Calls or online information can't be tracked or traced. The only person who knows you contacted us with information is you.

No police.

No witness statements.

No courts.

When you hang up the phone after calling **0800 555 111** or clicking 'send' at **crimestoppers-uk.org** you're done.

CrimeStoppers.

0800 555 111

100% anonymous. Always.