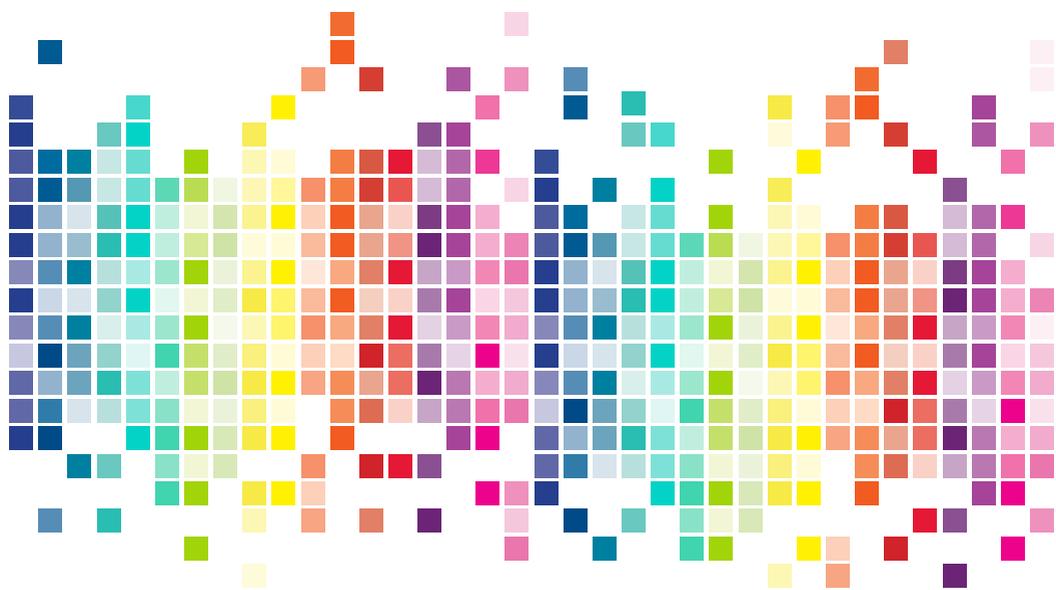


# FAMILY & FRIENDS OF WOODSIDE GROUP

WEAPONS & VIOLENCE

*advice*  
*for parents AND carers*



YOU HAVE A ROLE TO  
PLAY IN HELPING YOUR  
CHILD MAKE THE RIGHT  
CHOICES.



*Whilst the majority of young people in our community lead positive lives, a small number of young people become involved in gangs and serious youth violence. If you are worried about your child being involved in violent crime, or being a victim, there are things you can do and a number of services to support the community.*

## FACTS ABOUT THE LAW

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Carrying a gun or knife could mean being arrested, going to court, going to jail and ending up with a criminal record that will affect the rest of your child's life. Having a criminal record can prevent them getting a job, going to university or college or even travelling abroad.

- ▶ It is illegal to carry any knife in a public place
- ▶ It is illegal to buy a knife if you are under 18
- ▶ It is illegal to possess a prohibited firearm (including a taser or CS gas) or ammunition or imitation firearm
- ▶ It is illegal to hold any offensive weapon
- ▶ It is illegal to use someone to look after, transport or hide a weapon for someone else
- ▶ Police can and will search someone if they have reasonable grounds to believe they are carrying a gun or knife
- ▶ The maximum prison sentence for possession of a knife is up to four years, even if you're carrying it for someone else, inside or outside school
- ▶ The maximum sentence for possession of a prohibited firearm is seven years
- ▶ **JOINT ENTERPRISE:** Joint enterprise is whereby a person may be convicted of the same offence as an offender if they knowingly go with that person and do nothing to stop or prevent the offence happening

*If offenders operate in a group or a gang, this is considered an aggravating factor and may lead to a longer sentence.*

# WHAT IS AN OFFENSIVE WEAPON?

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*An offensive weapon is an object made or adapted for causing injury to a person, or an item being carried with the intent of causing harm to another.*

**Offensive weapons could include**

- ▶ Kitchen knives of all shapes and sizes
- ▶ Craft knives
- ▶ Screwdrivers
- ▶ Hammers
- ▶ Martial arts weapons
- ▶ Dog chains
- ▶ Baseball bats
- ▶ Planks of wood
- ▶ Compasses

*Most of these items can be found in your home. Are you aware when they go missing? Do you store these items safely?*

# WHAT IS A GANG?

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Young people often spend a lot of time with a large group of friends. Sometimes they may give their group a name. In most cases, this is a normal part of growing up and isn't a problem. However, some gangs are linked to criminal activity, and this is where problems start. Many young people join gangs because of peer pressure, bullying and intimidation. Bullying may be gang related in some cases, but not in all. Young people involved in criminal gangs may be forced to commit robbery, assault or drug related crime to prove themselves. They are more likely to carry or use knives and guns or deal drugs. People who carry weapons themselves are more likely to be injured, or even killed, by other people carrying weapons.

# WHY DO YOUNG PEOPLE JOIN GANGS?

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You can help stop your child becoming involved in criminal gang activity by following the advice in this guide. If you suspect that your child is already involved, there are people you can contact for help. You can seek support from Haringey's Early Help team ([www.haringey.gov.uk/children-and-families/early-help](http://www.haringey.gov.uk/children-and-families/early-help)) as well as from any member of staff at Woodside High School.

Remember, it's normal for young people to hang out in large groups of friends. This may be to find a sense of belonging, to gain friends and to have fun.

However, there may be other reasons why a young person would join a criminal gang.

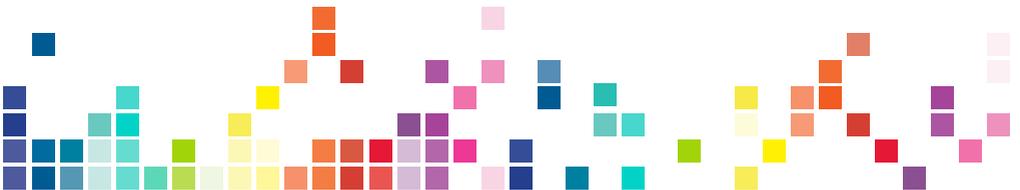
## Examples of these are

- ▶ For protection
- ▶ To have power over other people
- ▶ To get money from crime
- ▶ For settling arguments or having fights
- ▶ Territory
- ▶ To gain respect and be someone

# COULD YOUR CHILD BE INVOLVED?

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*There can be signs that your child is involved in a criminal gang. The following signs do not prove that your child is involved in a gang. If you recognise many or some of these signs, or if you are worried, you can speak to any member of staff at school.*



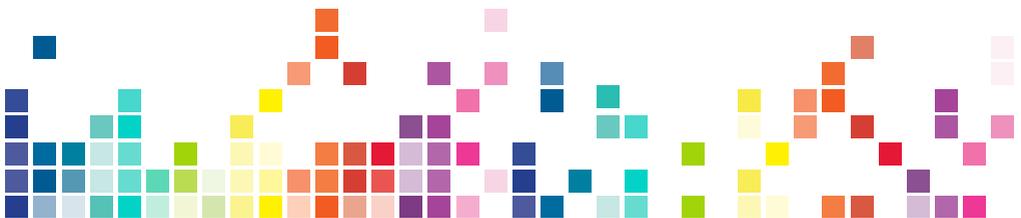
# WHAT SHOULD YOU LOOK FOR?

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## Has your child

- ▶ Withdrawn from the family?
- ▶ Lost interest in school?
- ▶ Got unexplained money or possessions?
- ▶ Started staying out very late without giving any reason?
- ▶ Dropped out of positive activities?
- ▶ Got a new nickname?
- ▶ Been vague about where they have been and who their friends are?
- ▶ Broken off with old friends?
- ▶ Expressed aggressive or intimidating views towards other groups of young people?
- ▶ Made you suspect they are using or dealing of drugs?
- ▶ Started dressing differently, in a particular style or colour?
- ▶ Got unexplained physical injuries?
- ▶ Begun using graffiti or tags on possessions?
- ▶ Got new ways of talking or started using hand signs?

Gangs will often have websites or profiles on networking websites such as Twitter, Snapchat and Instagram. Be aware of what websites your child is looking at. Slang or text speak is common among all young people. Use of this in their conversations could be innocent but it can also be used to cover up what they are saying.



# WHAT CAN YOU DO?

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*Involve yourself in your child's life in a positive way.*

- ▶ Have open conversations with your child as often as possible
- ▶ Praise your child's achievements and effort
- ▶ Help your child understand that success needs effort
- ▶ Encourage your child to take part in positive after school activities
- ▶ Take an interest in your child's school activities
- ▶ Get to know your child's friends and their families
- ▶ Make your child proud of his or her roots

# HELP YOUR CHILD MAKE GOOD CHOICES

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*Be a good role model. Young people learn from what they see and experience.*

- ▶ Encourage them to do their homework
- ▶ Teach them how to cope with peer pressure and how to deal with conflicts without violence.
- ▶ Talk about the dangers and consequences of crime
- ▶ Teach them that rights come with responsibilities

# GUIDANCE, BOUNDARIES & DISCIPLINE

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- ▶ Don't let younger children stay out late or spend a lot of time on the streets unsupervised. But let them stay up later as they get older
- ▶ Stick to your rules. Avoid double standards
- ▶ Set limits and boundaries, and keep applying them
- ▶ Teach your child that actions have consequences
- ▶ Make sure they go to school on time every day

## SUPPORTING & WORKING WITH YOUR CHILD

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*Most young people are not involved in gang activity, but have probably heard about gang members or weapons.*

- ▶ They may have concerns about this and need reassurance
- ▶ Have a chat with your child and see what he or she thinks about gangs

**The following tips may help you to discuss it**

- ▶ Ask questions, rather than making accusations or statements
- ▶ Listen carefully to what they say without interrupting them
- ▶ Stay calm and rational, however upset you are
- ▶ Involve other members of your family
- ▶ Really try to understand the situation from their point of view
- ▶ Ask them what you can do to help
- ▶ Point out the risks and consequences of carrying or using a gun or knife
- ▶ Avoid intimidating or threatening them

## IF YOU THINK YOUR CHILD IS INVOLVED IN A GANG

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*Talk to them about it but don't challenge or accuse.*

- ▶ Try to understand why they have joined
- ▶ Get help. There are local services to help prevent them getting involved or help them leave the gang
- ▶ Work with them to find alternatives

# YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL

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As a school we teach students about a range of important issues relating to safety, conflict resolution, healthy relationships, the dangers of knife crime and gang involvement as part of our PRS curriculum. We also work closely with our Safer Schools Officer and Safer London to deliver assemblies to students across year groups. Staff within our Inclusion Team, as well as students, have taken part in specialist workshops with external organisations such as Impressionable Minds and Growing Against Violence, and our Safeguarding Team work closely with students across the school and offer them specialist support.

Our School Values underpin all that we do at Woodside to ensure that all our students thrive. In addition to our diverse curriculum offer we have an extensive programme of extra-curricular and enrichment opportunities to help support, inspire and broaden students' experiences.

We have a zero-tolerance approach to weapons in school and a clear behaviour and rewards policy.

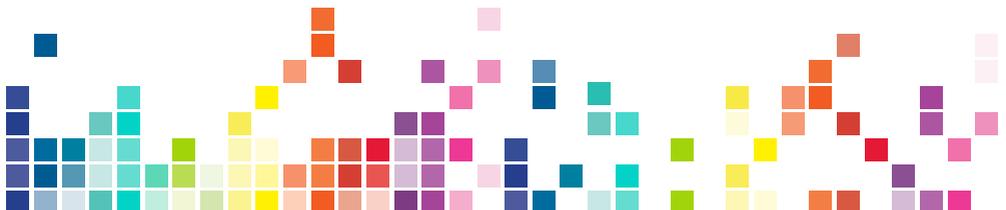
We work closely with parents and carers and seek to work in partnership to ensure the best possible educational experience.

## REMEMBER

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*You're not alone.*

Have a chat to your child's friends' parents/carers. If you're worried they probably are too, and it's always good to talk about these things. You can work with other parents to keep an eye on each other's child. This is another pair of eyes to watch behaviour. Other members of your family could help you talk to your child about this.



# YOUTH ACTIVITIES IN HARINGEY

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## HARINGEY YOUTH SPACE

[www.youthspace.haringey.gov.uk/](http://www.youthspace.haringey.gov.uk/)

## BRUCE GROVE YOUTH SPACE

[www.youthspace.haringey.gov.uk/bruce-grove-youth-space](http://www.youthspace.haringey.gov.uk/bruce-grove-youth-space)

## SKOLARS RUGBY

[www.skolarsrl.com/community/skolars-junior/](http://www.skolarsrl.com/community/skolars-junior/)

## HARINGEY SHED

[www.haringeyshed.org/membership-join-us/](http://www.haringeyshed.org/membership-join-us/)

## POLICE CADETS

[www.met.police.uk/careers-at-the-met/police-volunteer-roles/volunteer-police-cadets/volunteer-police-cadets-find/](http://www.met.police.uk/careers-at-the-met/police-volunteer-roles/volunteer-police-cadets/volunteer-police-cadets-find/)

[www.haringey.gov.uk/sites/haringeygovuk/files/youth\\_in\\_uniform.pdf](http://www.haringey.gov.uk/sites/haringeygovuk/files/youth_in_uniform.pdf)

## SEA CADETS

[www.sea-cadets.org/haringey](http://www.sea-cadets.org/haringey)

## WOODSIDE SHARED VALUES

//////////////////// WE WILL //////////////////////

BELIEVE IN OURSELVES,  
TRY OUR BEST AND HAVE PRIDE IN  
EVERYTHING THAT WE DO

ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT  
EACH OTHER AT ALL TIMES

BE POLITE AND RESPECT PEOPLE FOR  
WHO THEY ARE, EMBRACE DIVERSITY  
AND CELEBRATE OUR DIFFERENCES



# CONTACTS FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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You can also speak to a member of our Safeguarding Team (Ms Prosper, Ms Ikoloh, Ms Skerritt or Ms Tami), our Safer School's Officer or any member of staff at Woodside High School.

## SAFER NEIGHBOURHOODS TEAM

The Safer Neighbourhoods Teams are local Metropolitan Police units that operate in each ward within Haringey.

The officers on each Safer Neighbourhoods Team spend most of their time out on patrol in the local area, meeting the community and identifying and dealing with those crimes and issues that residents and businesses have reported as causing the most concern. Therefore, each team adjusts its shift pattern to address these priority issues.

## CRIMESTOPPERS

A free service for anyone report information about criminal activity anonymously.

Telephone: 0800 555 111

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

## COMMUNITY SAFETY AND ENGAGEMENT TEAM

The eyes and ears of your community

Telephone: 020 8489 1335 or email [safercommunities@haringey.gov.uk](mailto:safercommunities@haringey.gov.uk)

## IN AN EMERGENCY

If a crime is happening now or if you fear for your safety or the safety of your child, always phone the police on 999.

