New survey shows virtual reality programme deters knife-carrying among young people

Tuesday 11 November, 2025

Press Release | November 2025

Following focus groups with young people aged 14–18, new findings from Cornerstone VR reveal that immersive virtual reality (VR) experiences can be a transformative tool in safeguarding education - with ***eight in ten participants*** deterred from carrying knives after watching VR films.

After experiencing Cornerstone VR's films:

- **83% of young people said they were deterred from carrying a knife in the future.**
- **75% said their perspective on knife carrying had changed.**
- **83% gained a better understanding of the risks and consequences of knife carrying.**
- **All participants (100%) said they would actively dissuade a friend from carrying a knife.**
- **92% said they felt more motivated to make safe choices for themselves.**
- **Every participant (100%) said the VR experience should be shown to more young people.**
- **All participants (100%) rated the VR as more engaging than traditional learning methods.**

Cornerstone VR, an award-winning provider of immersive virtual reality learning and intervention tools, has released new survey findings demonstrating the powerful impact of its *Knife Crime and Serious Youth Violence Film Series* on young people's understanding, attitudes, and decision-making around knife carrying.

Following focus groups conducted with young people aged 14–18, findings revealed that immersive VR experiences can act as a transformative tool in safeguarding education.

One participant described the VR films as *"a very educational piece,"* another said it *"gave me a better idea of what it could be like getting stabbed,"* while a third reflected that it *"influenced me not to carry a knife."*

Prior to the intervention, 83% of respondents said they knew someone who had carried a knife, while 75% expressed concern about knife crime in their communities. Protection and self-defence were cited as the most common motivations for knife carrying, followed by peer pressure, status, and fear.

In partnership with Thurrock Council, Enfield Council, as well as insights from a range of professionals across the UK, including police officers, councils, schools, youth justice services, and young people themselves, the film series presents scenarios ranging from a knife-point robbery to the devastating aftermath of a stabbing.

The *Knife Crime and Serious Youth Violence Film Series* is part of Cornerstone VR's library of over 60 immersive experiences covering critical safeguarding and wellbeing issues including abuse, neglect, exploitation, youth violence, and the influence of social media.

Sessions can be delivered to professionals for trauma-informed training or directly to young people in schools and community settings. By highlighting the emotional, social, and legal consequences of knife carrying in a safe and interactive way, the programme helps build empathy, encourages open communication, and strengthens trauma-informed practice among safeguarding teams.

"*Knife crime continues to devastate families and communities across the UK. Our findings show that immersive VR can change perspectives, challenge harmful narratives, and empower young people to make safer choices*," said Serena Hadi, Head of Operations and Practice at Cornerstone VR. "*We are proud to provide educators and practitioners with a tool that not only informs but also inspires behavioural change.*"

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Safeguarding teams can arrange a free demo of the programme here:
www.cornerstonevr.co.uk/arrange-demo

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About Cornerstone VR
Cornerstone VR is an award-winning, virtual reality-based learning and intervention platform that helps professionals and young people better understand, prevent, and respond to real-world challenges.

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