

Focused Deterrence in Milton Keynes



Lead Researcher: Tori Olphin, MBE (t.olphin@thamesvalley.police.uk)

Does offering young people who offend with knives social care-led problem solving, to provide immediate support in ways that suit them, alongside a procedurally-just policing deterrence approach, reduce reoffending in the treatment cohort?

The Intervention

Thames Valley Focused Deterrence:

This approach to building a Focused Deterrence intervention applied one-to-one social care led in-depth person-centred problem solving, supported by a procedurally-just police response, **to support young people aged 11-17 and 18-25 years to desist from criminal behaviour and thrive.**

In practice, individuals were allocated one of the two caseworkers (one for each age group), who conducted in-depth problem solving that could incorporate anything that would assist and support a young person, with a procedurally-just policing response only applied where necessary.

Methodology

Trial Methodology:

This intervention was tested using a randomised controlled trial methodology to provide the best evidence of what works.

Cohort Identification:

To identify intervention eligibility, data from Thames Valley Police systems were used to identify a cohort showing a high likelihood to be suspected of further offences:

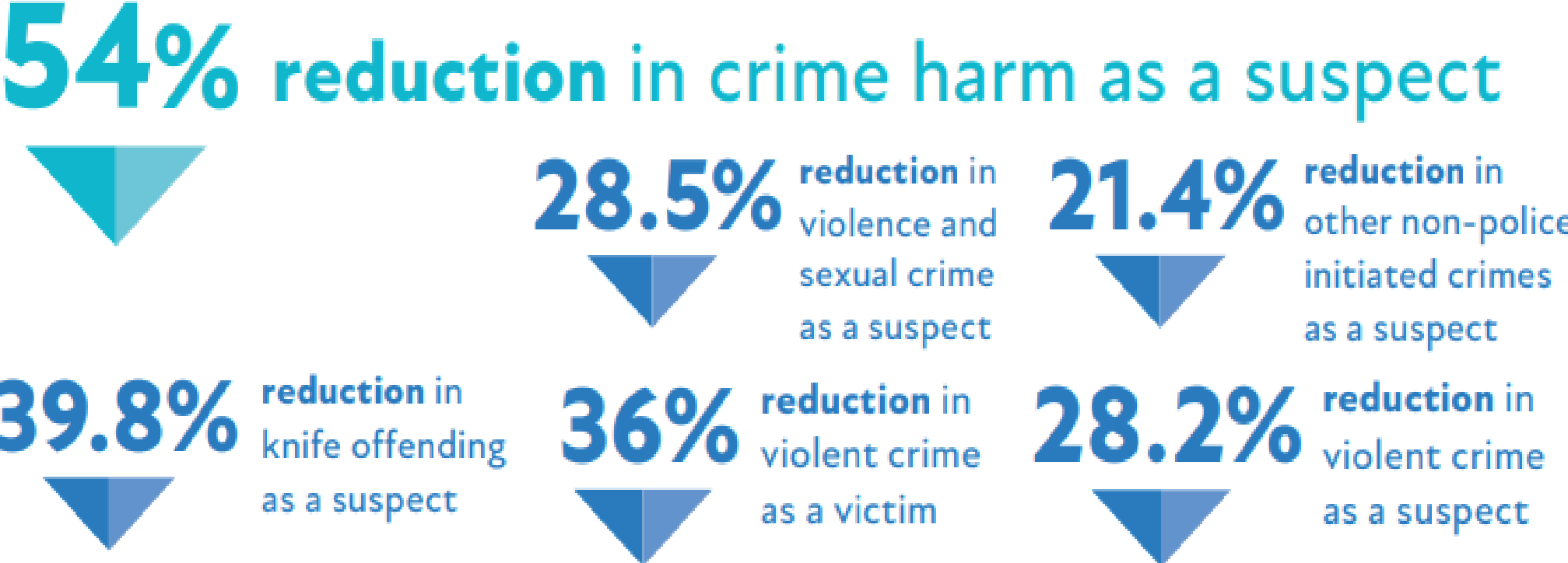
- ▶ Young people (11-25) who have had at least one knife offence as a suspect in the past 12 months and one of another knife offence, a violent offence, or a sexual offence as a suspect in the past 24 months

Research Findings

Engagement:



Overall Experimental Findings – all age groups:



Sub-group Analysis – only those in the 11-17 age group:



Conclusion

Social-care led person-centred problem solving, conducted in a **long-term in-depth** manner where a **trusted relationship** is built with the case worker, supported by a **procedurally-just policing** response, appears to reduce offending and victimisation in the most serious crime types by a large and significant amount.

Procedurally-just Policing

This relates to the delivery of policing that would be seen by the person being policed as fair, such as through dialogue that encourages participation in proceedings prior to decision-making, proportionate responses to actions, and a person’s ensured understanding of police response.

Research Implications

The results of this trial are extremely positive, and we encourage all local partnerships to review the learning and consider mechanisms to implement this approach. We equally encourage this research’s replication and expansion, as whilst these findings are strong and resilient, this trial’s small cohort would benefit from larger replications.

Acknowledgements

This research would not have been possible without funding from the UK Home Office, as part of the Violence Reduction Unit Programme. Thanks are extended to the two youth workers and the Milton Keynes Local Policing Area Problem Solving Team for vital contributions to programme delivery, and for support from Milton Keynes Together, Milton Keynes Children’s Social Care and Thames Valley Police.

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Cohort Selection

A cohort was selected that had high reoffending rate, based on analysis, and that professionals could align with.

Young people (11-25) who have had at least one knife offence as a suspect in the past 12 months and one of another knife offence, a violent offence, or a sexual offence as a suspect in the past 24 months

Randomised Controlled Trial

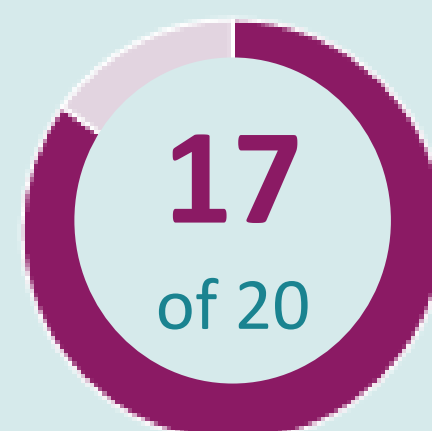
Eligible cohort was identified, and 45 young people were randomised into treatment (20 x 11-17, 25 x 18+) Remaining cohort became the control group

The Intervention

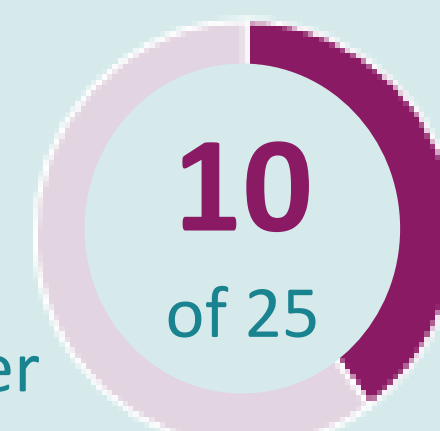
Young people in treatment cohort were allocated a case worker for a year, who provided **one-to-one** social care led **in-depth person-centred problem solving**, supported by a **procedurally-just police response**. Case workers with **low caseload** (20-25) conducted **in-depth problem solving** that could incorporate anything that would **assist and support** the young person. Initially, the young person was visited by both the case worker and police lead officer, to explain the process, the offer of support, and that policing was not the desired outcome. Monthly case management meetings were conducted between police and social care

Research Findings

Engagement:



Young people aged **under 18** engaged with the support offer



Young people aged **over 18** engaged with the support offer

Overall Experimental Findings – all age groups:

54% reduction in crime as a suspect

39.8% reduction in knife offending as a suspect

36.0% reduction in violent crime as a victim

28.5% reduction in violence and sexual crime as a suspect

28.2% reduction in violent crime as a suspect

21.4% reduction in other non-police initiated crimes as a suspect

Sub-group Analysis – only those in the 11-17 age group:

59% reduction knife offending as a suspect

70% reduction in crime harm as a suspect

Key to Findings

- ▶ Statistically significant - Less than 5% likelihood the finding was due to chance
- ▶ Not statistically significant - More than 5% likelihood the finding was due to chance, but collectively they show positive results

What does this mean?

Social-care led person-centred problem solving, conducted in a **long-term in-depth** manner where a **trusted relationship** is built with the case worker, supported by a **procedurally-just policing** response, appears to **reduce offending and victimisation** in the most serious crime types by a **large and significant amount**

If we were able to deliver the same standard of treatment across a larger cohort of children and young people, the **potential to see a reduction in knife offending of over 50% is massive**, and would have a dramatic impact on the safety of young people

The results of this trial are extremely positive, and we encourage all local partnerships to review the learning and consider mechanisms to implement this approach. We equally **encourage replication and expansion**, as whilst these findings are strong and resilient, this trial's small cohort would benefit from larger replications

Acknowledgements

This research would not have been possible without funding from the UK Home Office, as part of the Violence Reduction Unit Programme. Thanks are extended to the case workers and wider team at Milton Keynes Social Care, to the officers from Thames Valley Police who supported this delivery, and specifically to Sarah and Amy, without whom this project would not have been possible

