

PE1947/H: Address Scotland's culture of youth violence

Minister for Victims and Community Safety written submission, 30 January 2025

Thank you for your letter of 16 December 2024 to request information following my previous response to the Committee dated 2 April 2024.

Please find below information requested by the Committee.

Update on the development of a collaborative plan for harm reduction and violence prevention.

Through the Violence Prevention Framework, we continue to work with partners to reduce harm and prevent violence, which include targeting the effects of social media on violence. This was a specific action we committed to undertake in the Framework's action plan.

On 11 September 2024, I launched the campaign [Quit Fighting For Likes](#) during a visit to Craigmount High School in Edinburgh. The campaign aims to start conversations among young people on attitudes and behaviours around the filming and sharing of violent incidents across social media.

Developed by the Scottish Violence Reduction Unit (SVRU), YouthLink Scotland and Medics Against Violence (MAV), the campaign includes a range of messages to help young people explore why the filming and sharing of violent images is harmful.

A number of resources and training sessions have been developed for practitioners to help support the delivery of the campaign messages to young people. Partners are being encouraged to share the campaign over their own social media over 10th – 14th February, to coincide with Safer Internet Day on 11th February. This will look to raise further awareness of the Quit Fighting for Likes campaign, encouraging more practitioners in and out with schools to run activities using the campaign resources directly with young people.

A [progress report](#) outlining progress achieved over the first year of implementation of the Violence Prevention Framework was published on 11 September 2024. The progress report highlights some of the partnership progress achieved so far. For example:

- Extending the support of the SVRU, to reach more individuals and communities across Scotland, including North and South Lanarkshire, Fife, Highlands, Glasgow and Edinburgh.
- Using the learning from the MAV Hospital Navigator Programme to deliver the service to reach young people at an earlier stage of their lives. This is being delivered in two Children's Hospitals Aberdeen and Glasgow.
- MAV engaging with young people highlighting the consequences of knife carrying and knife injuries in primary schools, youth clubs and secondary schools.

- The SVRU has been working to develop a community of practice for over 100 police School Liaison Officers across Scotland, working directly in schools to engage early with young people.
- YouthLink Scotland has delivered various online and face to face No Knives, Better Lives training sessions to hundreds of practitioners working with young people, whilst also reaching out to deliver No Knives Better Lives messaging directly with young people.

This is in addition to the funding and support we provide through our Cashback programme partners, with up to £20 million to support the current phase (2023-26), awarded to 29 organisations delivering a range of diversionary activities, youth work, family support, enabling positive destinations for young people aged 10 – 25. A [Report](#) into the first year of the programme's three-year funding phase highlights the positive contribution the programme has had on over 15,000 young people.

Information on what action the Scottish Government will take following the summit on youth violence in January 2025, when this information is available.

The First Minister committed to holding a cross-party summit, which took place on 13th January 2025, to hear first-hand from a number of young people and their parents/trusted adults, who have been affected by violence involving other young people. This was an opportunity for those young people to tell us what they feel is needed to address youth violence and required to support those who have been harmed.

A report of the summit is being prepared, which will capture the key issues the participants raised. This report will be published and shared across Scottish Government to help inform policy development and decision making. I would be happy to provide the Committee with a copy of this report when published.

The First Minister has committed to hold a further cross-party meeting with the MSPs who attended the summit and COSLA, to continue the discussion on this important topic. A date for this will be arranged as soon as possible.

Standards of Service for Victims and Witnesses document when reporting a crime.

The Committee was also keen to understand how victims are made aware of the Standards of Service for Victims and Witnesses document when reporting a crime.

Police Scotland has provided the following information in relation to how victims are made aware of the standards of service:

“Officers will give a victim of crime a ‘Your Care Card’. This has been recently updated (formally Victim Care Card). This contains information on rights and also a link and QR code which accesses the service standards. Officers can now also email the care card direct from their hand-held devices.”

I attach a care card for reference, which Police Scotland has provided. Police Scotland would be best placed to answer any further questions the Committee may have about this.

I hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

SIOBHIAN BROWN

Annexe A: Your Care Card

Supporting you

Being affected by a crime can be difficult and upsetting. This is to let you know what support you can get.

You can have someone with you

Just ask a friend, someone from your family or your legal representative to come with you when you give your statement.

How to get support

Victim Support Scotland is an independent charity who are not part of the police or courts. They help anyone affected by crime, no matter who they are or what's happened. Their service is free, confidential and they won't judge you. They will listen to you and offer practical and emotional support.

To get support or more information from Victim Support Scotland, you can;

- Agree for the police to make a referral on your behalf,
- Call them on 0800 160 1985 or
- Fill in the form at www.victimsupport.scot/self-referral

If you need help getting support

Ask anyone in the police or at the courts and they will contact a provider of support services for you. You can do this in person or over the phone.

Your rights

The Victims' Code for Scotland sets out your rights. It also has contacts for our partners and support organisations. Please ask us for a copy or read about them here: www.mygov.scot/victims-code-scotland

Our care standards

We set high standards for the way we care for people who have been affected by crime. Please ask us for a copy or read about them here: www.scotland.police.uk/victimsandwitnesses



About Your Report

Here are the details for your report, in case you need them.

Reference number	Crime reported	Date reported
Police Officer's email	@scotland.police.uk	

Call **101** to speak to the police

Always call **999** in an emergency