

Thousands of young Britons hurt in knife crime

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BRITISH YOUTH Children as young as 12 now carry knives, say police.

mit Audiokartei und Übungsmaterial

By MOYA LAVINE

1 THIS CHRISTMAS, a very special angel stands outside Liverpool Cathedral. The 8.2 metre-high figure is made up of 100,000 knives confiscated by police throughout Britain. The "Knife Angel" is a warning against the knife violence that had killed 37 children and teenagers by the end of November, the highest number in 10 years. One senior police officer recently warned that the wave of violence had turned Britain into a "Wild West".

2 Apart from the deaths, there have also been 69,000 woundings of young people aged 10 to 15 this year. Police report that children as young as 12 now carry knives. This knife violence has been increasing for the last five years and is concentrated in disadvantaged areas of cities like London, Birmingham, and Coventry.

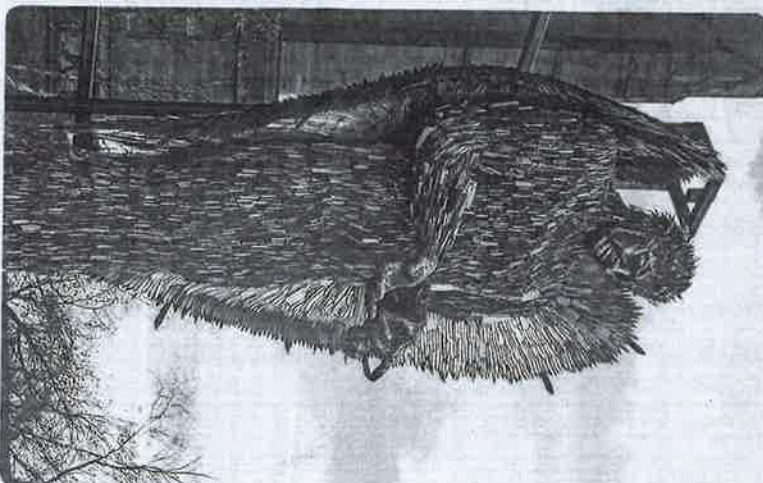
3 There is a lot of debate about the reasons for the rise in knife crime. A government report said that drug dealing and the influence of social media play a key role. Youth charities, however, say that the problem has been caused at least partly by cuts in services for young people, while the police argue that more officers are needed to fight crime.

4 The government report says that smartphones and social media have made it easier for young people to get into arguments that can end fatally. In one recent case in London, a row on Snapchat between two teenage boys over who was the toughest ended in tragedy when one of them stabbed the other to death.

5 Social media is also used for drug dealing, which is connected to gang warfare and knife violence. Young gang members often carry knives because they are afraid of being attacked by members of another gang.

6 Youth organisations say that young people get involved in gangs and drug dealing partly because they have too few legal opportunities in life. Children who do not do well at school, who are excluded from education because of problematic behaviour, or face poverty and other problems at home are more likely to become involved in gangs.

7 Cuts in youth services have also taken away places where young people can meet and take part in constructive activities. The YMCA says that spending on youth services has dropped by more than £750 million since 2010-11. Junior Smart of the youth charity the St Giles Trust told the Independent: "If there's no local youth club providing a safe place to meet, where do they go? They're on street corners, congregating and that's where you get trouble."



The Knife Angel, a statue made from 100,000 confiscated knives, on display in Liverpool. | PHOTO: picture alliance

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8 Cuts in funds for police are often seen as a further cause of knife crime, although the government has denied that there is a connection. However, statistics point to a possible link. In 2010, London had 4.1 officers per 1,000 Londoners, but by 2016-17 there were only 3.3 officers per 1,000, according to figures from City Hall. This period also saw an increase in knife crime: London police say that in the year to March 2018, there were 40,147 cases of knife crime, a seven-year record.

9 Simply carrying a knife in a public place is an offence in Britain. No one can carry any kind of knife, except a folding pocket knife, without a very good reason. The punishment for carrying a knife is tough: offenders can be sent to prison for a maximum of four years.

10 It is quite possible that many young people now walking around with these deadly weapons in their pockets don't even know they are breaking the law. Knives are easy to get, and the doing, just for self-defence."

11 Talking about the figure to journalists, its designer, Alfie Bradley, said: "I've had all sorts of machetes, meat cleavers, swords, even normal kitchen knives, which is really sad because often it is just normal kitchen knives taken from a kitchen, just from a young kid half the time. They don't really know what they are doing, just for self-defence."

1 TO HURT verletzen — knife crime Straftat (tun) Messern — angel (statue) Engel — figure (fig.) Figur — to be made up of bestehen aus — to confiscate (konfiszieren) beschlagnahmen — throughout ... in ganz ... violence (Violenz) Gewalt — senior (senior) ranghoch, leitend — officer Beamter — recently (recently) vor Kurzem — wave Welle — to turn into machten zu — apart from außer — wounding (Wundung) Verletzung — to increase (increase) zunehmen — disadvantaged (disadvantaged) benachteiligt — reason Grund — rise Anstieg — key role Schlüsselrolle — charity (charity) gemeinnützige Organisation — to cause (cause) verursachen — partly zum Teil — cut Streichung — to argue (argue) argumentieren — 4-5 to get into an argument in eine Auseinandersetzung geraten — fatally (fatal) tödlich — case Fall — row (row) Streit — to end in tragedy (tragedy) tragisch enden — to stab s.o. to death jdn. erschlagen — to be connected with in Zusammenhang stehen mit — gang warfare Bandenkriege

6 to get involved in verwickelt werden in — opportunity (opportunity) Gelegenheit — to do well gute Leistungen erbringen — to exclude (exclude) (von der Schule) ausschließen — behaviour (behaviour) Verhalten — to face sich gegenübersehen — poverty (poverty) Armut — 7 to take part in sich beteiligen an — spending Ausgaben — to drop fallen — trust Shifting — to provide bieten — take away (take away) abnehmen — to confront (confront) sich konfrontieren

8 funds Gelder — to deny (deny) abstreiten — to point to hindeuten auf — link Verbindung — according to laut, zufolge — City Hall das Londoner Rathaus — simply einfach, allein — offence (offence) Straftat, offender (offender) Straftäter — except außer — folding zusammenklappbar — punishment (punishment) Strafe — prison (prison) Gefängnis — to break the law gegen das Gesetz verstoßen — reminder Erinnerung — all sorts alle Arten — meat cleaver Fleischhaken — sword (sword) Schwert — self-defence Selbstverteidigung