



# Violence & Vulnerability Unit Newsletter

Issue 35.

22<sup>nd</sup> February 2022

## Knife bin competition

Essex Police, the VVU, the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex and the Ben Kinsella Trust are teaming up to raise awareness of the dangers of carrying a knife by launching a new competition for Essex secondary school aged children.



There are 15 knife disposal bins across Southend, Essex and Thurrock and they need a revamp. The bins are very effective at collecting thousands of knives each year, they

- Reduce the number of domestic and non-domestic knives in circulation by encouraging their owners to surrender them,
- Provide a legitimate route for members of the public to dispose of any unwanted knives or other weapons,
- Reinforce the message that illegal possession and use of knives is unacceptable and likely to lead to serious consequences for the individuals,
- Contribute to reducing levels of violent crime across the county.

We are inviting young people to design a positive anti-knife poster with three winning designs, one from each authority, chosen to replace the existing knife bin livery and be the new design of the Essex knife bins.

The winning designs will be chosen by Brooke Kinsella from the Ben Kinsella Trust and their celebrity patron EastEnders Actress Louisa Lytton alongside Roger Hirst, PFCC for Essex and Essex Police Chief Constable BJ Harrington.

The knife bin design competition is open to all secondary school aged pupils, and we hope any schools entering the competition will take the opportunity to make use of the resources at [www.benkinsella.org.uk](http://www.benkinsella.org.uk) to run a lesson on knife crime, making the right choices and keeping safe.

Competition entries must be uploaded to the entry form at [www.essexvvu.co.uk/competition](http://www.essexvvu.co.uk/competition) by 5pm Friday 1 April. The three winners will be notified by the end of April.

For full terms and conditions and further information visit [www.essexvvu.co.uk/competition](http://www.essexvvu.co.uk/competition)



## Visiting Youth Services in Basildon

Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex, Roger Hirst and Cllr Louise McKinlay, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Community, Equality, Partnerships and Performance at Essex County Council visited the Basildon Hub of Essex Youth Service on Monday 14 Feb.

Essex Youth Service is an informal education, social and personal development service that supports young people across Essex and as such runs a wide range of activities, groups and opportunities for young people to access and be part of. The Basildon visit was to see some of the specific groups running out of the Hub and meet the young people directly supported by these services.

One of the groups visited was the VVU funded Hospital Youth Service Project (which operates out of Basildon and Thurrock University Hospital) NEXUS group work session. This group has been established by the young people who have benefited from the hospital youth service project to provide peer support and opportunities to take part in a range of activities.

In this session the young people were making wellness candles with scents and colours designed to relax or rejuvenate them. This is just one of many group activities that the young people take part in which are designed to reduce social isolation and build on their confidence, self-esteem and resilience. The young people also make new friends in a safe setting and are also able to have meaningful conversations with the support staff. This support, encouragement and friendship all help contribute to reducing repeat hospital admissions for the individuals.

The visit was a great success, and the young people welcomed the opportunity to share their experiences with both visitors.

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## Still time to share your views on Knife Crime

Thank you to all those who have filled in our survey to help us understand more about the perception of knife crime in Essex.

Through our survey we are hoping to understand if there are enough resources available to support parents and their children around the issues of knife crime, staying safe and staying knife free.

The more we can understand the levels of awareness and understanding, the more we can ensure our activity is supporting and enabling parents, young people and their families to make sensible decisions, have open conversations and avoid life changing mistakes.

You can access the survey here. The results of this survey will help inform our future work and campaign activity. The survey will be live until the end of February.

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/EssexVVU/>



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If you would like to find out more about any of the items in this newsletter please get in touch [katie.canning@essex.gov.uk](mailto:katie.canning@essex.gov.uk) Visit our website [www.essexvvu.co.uk](http://www.essexvvu.co.uk) or follow us on Twitter [@EssexVVU](https://twitter.com/EssexVVU)



Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner for Essex

Victims of crime can access support [here](#)  
Book your free Home Fire Safety Visit [here](#)

