

StreetDoctors Press Release 12th Feb 2020

Many local authority areas across England at high risk of youth violence

Local authority areas outside of the largest metropolitan cities are more at risk of youth violence than previously thought and must not be left behind, says violence education and prevention charity StreetDoctors. StreetDoctors have released new research, previewed as an ITV News at Ten exclusive (12/2/20), showing which local authorities in England are most at risk of high levels of youth violence. The top 5 areas are Blackpool, Salford, Kingston upon Hull, Liverpool and Southampton.

The report measured risk-factors to find where a large increase in youth violence is most likely. High levels of adult violence, a high percentage of young people Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) and recorded violent crime are all factors that could see these areas have large increases in youth violence in the future, the report says. It is well known that major metropolitan areas such as London and Birmingham have high levels of knife injuries (1), however this report shows smaller cities and towns are also at risk and lack support and funding to deal with the issue.

For meaningful preventative approaches to be taken in smaller towns and cities StreetDoctors are calling for solid and long-term investment to prevent violence by tackling its many causes. Investment needs to include long term funding for the Government's Violence Reduction Units. We also need more resources for local authorities to invest in preventative approaches including comprehensive youth services, educational support and employment opportunities. These approaches will help to prevent more young people, families and communities falling victim to youth violence. The charity, which teaches lifesaving skills to young people at risk of youth violence, take a preventative approach themselves by educating young people about the dangers and consequences of knife violence. As a result of this new research, StreetDoctors has set up new volunteer-run delivery teams to reach young people in Hull and Blackpool and have expanded the capacity of existing teams. They are now reaching 23 of the 30 local authorities at highest risk of youth violence in the UK.

Released to compliment this research their new online campaign, #ApplyPressure, empowers young people to become lifesavers in their own communities by showing them how to take action if they see someone bleeding after being stabbed. StreetDoctors teach around 5,000 young people annually in cities and towns across the UK, and this campaign is a call to action to young people everywhere.

Lucie Russell, StreetDoctors CEO said;

'When we think of youth violence we think of it taking place in just our large metropolitan cities. This research forces us to take on the fact that violence is an England-wide problem, devastating the lives of victims, families, friends and the wider communities they come from. We therefore need solid investment in preventing violence through tackling its causes and utilizing a plethora of interventions that start with the understanding that children involved in youth violence are vulnerable and need protecting. Young people themselves and their families must also be put at the centre of creating and delivering solutions.'

Chantal Rees, research author, StreetDoctors expansion lead and training volunteer said;

'Due to the complexity of variables related to violence, predicting the risk of youth violence in particular areas is difficult, but it is important to emphasise that this is not just a narrative in our major cities. Other independent risk factors which may contribute to youth violence, such as high

levels of social and structural inequality including child poverty also support our main findings in places such as Blackpool and Hull. To tackle these, we need a collaborative effort from all sectors with a comprehensive focus on replacing barriers with stepping stones. This will enable young people to thrive and not simply survive in their communities.

As a StreetDoctors volunteer trainer, I have seen the undeniable impact that a StreetDoctors session can have first-hand: empowering young people to believe that they are capable of saving a life. I am delighted that StreetDoctors has been able to expand to some of the areas highlighted in the research that so vitally need supportive interventions like ours.'

Notes to editors:

- i. For full report please go <https://bit.ly/37jrtTW>
- ii. To watch #ApplyPressure Campaign video go to <https://streetdoctors.org/applypressure>
- iii. StreetDoctors teach emergency first aid to young people at risk of youth violence, so they know what to do if someone is bleeding or unconscious. We do this through our movement of young healthcare volunteers who train 11-25 year olds to understand the true medical consequences of violence and empower them to become lifesavers in their communities. Our training is delivered in partnership with criminal justice services, schools, pupil referral units, sports and community groups. Young people leave StreetDoctors sessions equipped with the knowledge to make informed decisions about how to keep themselves and others safe.
- iv. Interviews available on request please contact Frances Breeveld, tel: 07749398614, email: frances@streetdoctors.org
- v. Methodology: this study was conducted with a mixed-methods approach. Analysis of quantitative data (accessed via the Office for National Statistics, NHS digital, Public Health Outcomes Framework, the Local Government Association and the UK government's official websites) ranked local authorities and regional areas from the highest to lowest rate of violence. In order to understand the capacity and productivity of the current StreetDoctors' teams in the identified high-risk regions, qualitative semi-structured interviews were also conducted.
- vi. Data Collection: A review of appropriate UK data was conducted by searching for keywords such as 'knife crime', 'youth violence', 'X99 hospital admissions' (NHS code for external violent wounds) and 'violence against the person' in the Office of National Statistics, NHS digital, Public Health Outcomes Framework and the UK government's official (gov.uk) websites. Data sources were excluded if they had a lot of missing data or would not be able to provide an accurate and up to date representation of the level of violence in the UK. As a result, the final variables assessed were: Youth Offending Teams (YOT's) rates of violence against the person per 10,000, 2018; Public Health Outcomes Framework of violent crime (including sexual violence) - hospital admissions for violence, 16/17-18/19 value per 100,000; Public Health Outcomes Framework of violent crime (including sexual violence) value per 1,000, 2018/19; and Public Health Outcomes Framework percentage of 16-17-year olds not in education, employment or training (NEET), 2018. Data from Blackpool, Blackburn with Darwen and Lancashire, in regard to violent crime 2018/19 was missing from the Public Health Outcomes Framework (POF) database. This was substituted with updated data from the Ministry of Justice- 'Police recorded crime and outcomes open data tables' as of 23/01/2020, (POF's original source) (4). However, it is important to note that the data published is a snapshot of police recorded crime at a specific time point. Counts of offences

can be added and deducted retrospectively, meaning that data for these areas is not a truly accurate comparison between other local authorities in this source. In light of this, is it unlikely that Blackpool's ranking would be altered but Blackburn and Darwin and Lancashire may appear higher.

- vii. Due to the large amount of missing data for Wales regarding hospital admissions due to violence and violent crime, only data in England was analysed. However, it is important to highlight that Cardiff (where a StreetDoctors team is already present), was consistently recorded to display the highest rate of violence within Wales. The Isles of Scilly and Dorset YOS were excluded in the local authority analysis due to missing data that could not be substituted from alternate sources.
- viii. Data regarding the delivery of StreetDoctors sessions was obtained from Lamplight (the StreetDoctors evaluation database). Information was extracted from 5th February 2019 to 5th February 2020, that concerned the StreetDoctors team, delivery partner (name and address), type of delivery centre and the frequency of sessions taught. The region and local authority were later added in order to compare the delivery in relation to geographic data obtained.

REFERENCES

1. Crime in England and Wales: Police Force Area data tables. January 2020 [Available from: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/policeforceareadatatables>]