



Young People's Safety Group

Evaluation Report

26 May 2011

Barking & Dagenham
Safeguarding
Children Board

1) Introduction



The London Borough of Barking and Dagenham held its Young People's Safety Group meeting on Thursday 26 May 2011. The event was hosted at The Vibe, 195 – 211 Becontree Avenue, Dagenham, RM8 2UT. The forum's purpose is to provide regular opportunities for young people aged between 11-19 to give their views and opinions on safety and safeguarding issues in the borough.

The forum was well supported with young people attending, representing the following institutions;

- Dagenham Park CoE
- Eastbrook
- Sydney Russell

Each school was invited to send between 6-8 pupils from their school council, so there would be a direct feedback mechanism to the whole school and school council's.

This meeting's theme 'Snitching' was a follow on from the previous meeting that was themed on gangs. Whereby young people stated that they were intimidated and fearful of reporting crimes to the Police. The aim of this meeting was to share with the young people the many mechanisms that exist to give information in an anonymous way. Fearless, the young people's branch of Crimestoppers were invited to have a discussion with the young people around 'snitching' and to discuss what it means and how the giving of information is important.

2) Fearless – Jhnique Gardiner - Youth Projects Assistant Coordinator

Jhnique spoke to the young people about who Fearless are, what they do, who Fearless are for, what anonymous meant, Are young people safe using the service, when young people should use the service and what 'snitching' meant.

Fearless is part of the UK charity, Crimestoppers. Crimestoppers runs the 0800 555 111 telephone number, which you can call to give information about crime anonymously.

The Fearless Team run this website www.fearless.org, which also allows you to give information about crime online, and workshops about crime that affects you.

They are not the police or government, they are an independent charity.

Who is it for?

Crimestoppers is for everyone in the UK but Fearless is aimed at young people. Fearless know you're at risk of crime as well as adults and want to give you clear information about crimes that affect you as well as the chance to give information anonymously if you don't want to go to the police.

For people working with young people they can access free resources, quizzes and posters from the 'Not a young person?' section of the site.

When should you contact Fearless?

Jhunique informed the young people that if they have information about crime but don't want to go to the police, young people can tell Fearless instead. That they're available 24/7, 365 days a year.

Jhunique told the young people that it is important to know that Fearless are not an emergency service. Fearless cannot respond to emergency situations, if you think a crime is happening in front of you or someone is injured please call 999.

Call Fearless if you know any information about a crime that has happened or is being planned.

Young people were told that they can give information about crime in 3 ways.

Fearless will pass it to the police and you don't have to give your name, a statement or go to court.

How does it work?

The young people were told that there are three main ways in which they can report a crime.

1. Use a secure online form

If you use their secure online form, put as much information as you can because they can't ask you for any more. They can't trace your computer or IP address. If you're worried someone else will find out delete the page from your history.

2. Call 0800 555 111

When you call Fearless, someone will tell you you're through to Crimestoppers. They won't ask for your name, where you live, or any personal details. They'll only ask for information about the crime you're calling about.

They can't trace your call and it won't be recorded.

3. Text about knife crime

If you 'know someone with a knife?' you can text them completely anonymously. Text us their; Name/Nickname, School, Year and Endz or Area to 88551. Make sure you delete the sent text from your phone. They cannot trace your number and they will **not** text you back.

What does anonymous mean?

Jhunique asked the young people if they knew what anonymous meant and the majority of young people knew what it meant. Jhunique confirmed that anonymous means you don't have to give your name, where you live or any personal details.

- Calls aren't recorded or traced.
- We can't track where online forms are from.
- You won't have to give a statement.
- You don't have to go to court.

What is snitching?

A great deal of time was spent discussing this slang term 'Snitching'. The young people were asked to say all the terminologies they knew for 'Snitching'. Words they said were 'Snake', 'Rat', "Fake", "Grass", 'Gasman', 'Pagan' and 'Tell tale'. Young people had a discussion around whether they had 'Snitched' or been 'Snitched' on and discussed whether it was warranted at the time and if they would do it again. Majority of young people said that they would give information if they had knowledge of a crime.

The definition of 'snitching' is to act as an informer. The discussion concluded that to use the word 'Snitching' is immature and what in fact you are doing is 'giving vital information' that could save a life or help resolve a crime.

Fearless are just asking you to give information about crime in your community to protect you, your family and your friends. No one will know you have contacted us.

Is it safe?

Yes, it's totally safe because it's 100% anonymous.

Crimestoppers has never revealed anyone's ID in over 22 years. They don't know who you are so no one else can find out and you aren't at risk.

No calls, texts or forms are traced or recorded, no one will ask why you're making contact and you won't have to give a statement or appear in court.

3) DI Brew and DCI Howarth

The DI and DCI kindly gave up their time to attend the Young People Safety Group, and they spent the morning listening to the young people's concerns around the giving of information and what would prohibit them from giving vital information. The DI and DCI alleviated the young people's fears by answering the questions and responding to the concerns that the young people had.

The young people were asked if they could think of any other methods they could think of that people could use to give the Police information. One young person suggested a mobile phone app, but no other suggestions were made. This suggests that there are enough methods to report to the police and young people need to be made to feel safe to use them.

They said that if people don't give information; then it makes their job harder when resolving crimes and in the majority of cases, young people would not have to attend court and there are ways to protect people. The young people were told that witnesses can give evidence via video links.

4) Mobile Phone Registration

A question was raised during the session regarding mobile phones and what can be done to protect them from being stolen. Mobile phones can be registered on the immobilise website and this helps the Police return stolen property to the rightful owners for more info visit <http://www.immobilise.com/index.php>

For more information regarding the Young People Safety Group

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