

Lewisham young victims of crime project

A range of new initiatives are planned in the London Borough of Lewisham as part of an innovative scheme to support young people who have been victims of crime and raise young people's confidence in the criminal justice system (CJS).

The project, which will be coordinated by the London Criminal Justice Board (CJB), will initially be piloted in the borough and is supported by funding from the Office for Criminal Justice Reform.

Research has shown that young people are reluctant to report crime to the authorities, including the police and schools, for fear of reprisals. Many incidents in schools and local communities are never reported yet often they are common knowledge among young people.

With input from a number of partners from the public and voluntary sectors, the Young Victims Project aims to break this trend and includes the London CJB working with schools to install a system called School Help and Advice Reporting Page (SHARP) on their intranets.

SHARP, which was originally developed by Merseyside Police, provides young people with a confidential way of reporting incidents online. This will be rolled out to schools outside of Lewisham. The SHARP system will also allow young people to access crime prevention and personal safety advice via DVD clips and useful weblinks.

Other elements of the Young Victims project include:

- a programme of intensive support to young people who have been victims of serious / violent crime

- improving services and support to young people who have witnessed and crime and are giving evidence in court
- the production of a DVD by Lewisham pupils to raise awareness about how young people can ensure their own safety and well-being
- training teachers how to identify and respond to victimisation thus reducing the risks of violent incidents
- developing a method to identify and assess the needs of young victims of violence and/or who are at risk of future victimisation.

Our partners on this project include the London Borough of Lewisham, the Metropolitan Police Service, Victim Support London, the Youth Justice Board, HM Courts' Service, Crown Prosecution Service and key secondary schools.

Quotes:

Andrew Morley, Chief Executive of the London Criminal Justice Board (CJB), said: "With a wide reaching youth strategy now in place, the London CJB is forging ahead with a range of initiatives that has the needs of young victims firmly at its heart.

"I look forward to seeing real results that can be taken forward throughout London, benefiting all young people."

Jeff Gardner, London Regional Manager, Victim Support, added: "This raft of initiatives being piloted in Lewisham aims to give end to end support to young victims of crime, break the taboo associated with reporting crime and increase their confidence in the CJS.

"This is the real heart of our work, seeing innovative schemes in practice and bringing real benefits to victims and the wider public."

Further information:

[National press release](#)

[London CJB youth strategy](#)

For further information on the issues discussed in this briefing please contact London CJB Communications Manager Christian Taylor by phoning: 0207 796 8532 or by email: Christian.Taylor@cps.gsi.gov.uk