

{YOUR FULL ADDRESS}
{YOUR POSTCODE}

{DATE}

Dear **{MP NAME}**,

My name is **{YOUR NAME}** and I am a constituent of **{YOUR CONSTITUENCY}**. I am writing to you today because I am concerned about the increase in violence that impacts young people in our area.

{IF APPLICABLE} I appreciate the work you are already doing on this, such as raising the issue in Parliament.

This issue is something that is particularly important to me because **{EXPLAIN KEY REASONS AND ANY PERSONAL EXPERIENCES THAT HAVE INFORMED THIS}**.

Knife crime in England and Wales has reached a record high. Offences involving a knife or sharp instrument rose by 7 per cent in the year to September 2019¹. It is well known that the school holidays and the period immediately after the school day are particularly dangerous times for young people. There is growing evidence that investment in early intervention, including youth work, provides better outcomes² but sadly spending on youth services by local authorities has reduced dramatically in recent years. Charities such as 'Power the Fight' are advocating for greater access to culturally competent therapeutic services as part of a public health approach to youth violence³.

In light of this, I am calling for an urgent review of the youth violence strategy in our constituency.

Will you join me in asking our local authority to provide the following:

- An assessment of the youth provision currently available and whether it is meeting the needs of local children and young people in our constituency.
- A review of the mechanisms for community consultation and engagement, such as if there is an Independent Advisory Group (IAG), Stop and Search Group, Safer Neighbourhood Board or equivalent for our area and how these groups feed into any local youth violence strategy.
- A review of school exclusion policies and any strategies in place to disrupt the 'School to Pupil Referral Unit to Prison' pipeline.

In addition, I would ask that you call on the Government to adequately fund local authorities to invest in sustainable long-term youth work and adequate levels of community policing. Would you support a debate in Parliament about this important issue?

With young people's wellbeing and mental health seriously impacted by Covid-19, it has never been more important for us, as a society, to respond to this issue. As such, I hope you

¹ ONS, 2019. Crime in England and Wales: year ending September 2019 Available online at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/crimeinenglandandwales/yearendingseptember2019#knife-orsharp-instrument-offences>

² APPG on Knife Crime and Violence Reduction report Securing a brighter future: The role of youth services in tackling knife crime. Available online at: <http://www.preventknifecrime.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Securing-a-brighter-future-the-role-of-youth-services-in-tackling-knife-crime-v.2.pdf>

³ Power the Fight report Therapeutic Interventions for Peace. Available online at: <https://www.powerthefight.org.uk/tip-report/>

will treat this matter as one of urgency. I would be very happy to meet with you to discuss my concerns further.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

{YOUR NAME}