

Unit 8: Staying safe and making choices



Lesson 1: Paramilitary groups in communities

This lesson relates to young people and their experience of paramilitaries. It invites them to consider why young people might think about joining a paramilitary group. They also look at the potential consequences, both for those who join and for others in the community.

Planning	
Prior Learning	<p>Pupils should have gained prior knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what justice is; • what lawfulness is; • what their rights are; and • what democracy is.
Learning Outcomes	<p>Pupils will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consider risks and consequences of their actions; • play a role and discuss their ideas and opinions with others; and • explore different perspectives on paramilitary-style attacks.
Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities Focus	<p>Pupils will have opportunities to develop the following:</p> <p>Working with Others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect the views and opinions of others and reach agreements using negotiation and compromise • Give and respond positively to feedback • Take personal responsibility for work with others and evaluate their own contribution to the group <p>Thinking Skills, Problem Solving and Decision Making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make and justify decisions • Offer solutions and weigh up options • Examine options and weigh up pros and cons <p>Being Creative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn from and value other people's ideas.
Attitudes and Dispositions	<p>Pupils will be encouraged to develop the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect • Concern for others • Personal Responsibility.

Unit 8: Staying safe and making choices



Active Citizenship

Resources

Animation: *Staying Safe and Making Choices*

Unit 8: Lesson 1 Resource A – Questionnaire

Unit 8: Lesson 1 Resource B – Scenario

Suggested teaching and learning strategies

Launch

Lead a class discussion, using prompt questions and effective questioning techniques:

1. **What does it mean to be safe?**
2. **What is a risk?**
3. **What is a consequence?**

You may now wish to show the animation *Staying Safe and Making Choices*.

Possible answers and discussion points:

1. *To be protected; to be able to walk in your area without feeling worried; not to be at immediate risk of harm*
2. *Doing something even though there may be a negative consequence; stepping outside your comfort zone*
3. *The impact of your decisions; what you face if you do not follow the rules*

Activities

Activity 1: Individual questions

- Hand out a copy of **Resource A** to each individual pupil. It is vital to make it clear to the class that they should complete the questionnaire independently and anonymously, without discussion, due to the sensitive nature of some questions. You may also wish to adapt or include additional questions that are relevant to your pupils.
- Allow some time for the pupils to answer the questions.
- Collect the questionnaires back in and collate the results, for example using a tally chart.
- Discuss the results together.

Activity 2: Why would a young person join a paramilitary group?

- Pose the question: 'Why would a young person join a paramilitary group?'
- Working in groups of 3–4, give the pupils five minutes to write down their answers.
- Ask them to feed back their ideas to the class.

Unit 8: Staying safe and making choices



Activity 3: Scenario cards

- Use the scenario in **Resource B** to encourage pupils to consider the impact that paramilitary-style attacks have on different members of the public, as well as thinking about perspectives other than their own.
- Split the class into groups of six and show the scenario.
- Give each pupil one of the six role cards. Ask them each, in their role, to say how they feel about the situation and argue their point on what should happen to the 16-year-old boy.

Possible answers and discussion points:

– **16-year-old joyrider**

I have already been charged by the police.

I'm not scared of the paramilitaries; who do the paramilitaries think they are to enforce punishment on me?

I'm scared of the paramilitaries and haven't slept for weeks.

I'm only 16; they should pick on someone their own size.

– **Paramilitary member**

He's been joyriding before, so a beating is the only way to teach him.

We have been asked by the community to deal with him.

He needs to learn some respect – we will teach him.

– **Parent of 16-year-old boy**

He's only 16; he doesn't know any better.

He's in with a bad crowd – deal with them, not him.

– **Police**

He has been charged through the democratic system of the courts.

Punishment attacks are never okay.

We will charge anyone involved in these attacks.

– **Elderly resident**

The youths of today have no respect.

The court systems aren't working.

The threat of an attack will put the fear into him and stop him joyriding.

This used to be such a safe neighbourhood; I don't feel safe going out anymore. Something needs to be done.

Unit 8: Staying safe and making choices



– **Youth worker**

Let us work with the young lad; we could try and get him on college courses and encourage him away from this lifestyle.

Punishment beatings are not the answer. They just mess up our young people.

Debrief

Invite the pupils to write down individually what they think should happen to the 16-year-old and explain why they have made their decision.

The purpose of this is for the pupils to consider the different viewpoints they have heard and to challenge their preconceptions.

Give the pupils the opportunity to volunteer their views in a group discussion at the end if they feel comfortable to do so. Ask them to consider whether their scenario role changed their perspective on what they personally thought should happen to the boy.

Unit 8: Staying safe and making choices



Unit 8: Lesson 1 Resource A Questionnaire

Questions

Yes

No

1. Have you ever felt unsafe in your own community?

2. Are you aware of paramilitary activity in your community?

3. Do you know anyone who has ever been approached to join a paramilitary group?

4. Have you ever felt intimidated by paramilitary activity?

5. Would you feel comfortable going to the police if you felt unsafe or intimidated?

6. Do you know anyone who has suffered a paramilitary-style attack?

7. Have you ever witnessed paramilitary activity in your community?

8. Do you think the majority of people in your community support paramilitary activity?

9. Do you know any young people who are involved in paramilitary activities?

Unit 8: Staying safe and making choices

Active Citizenship

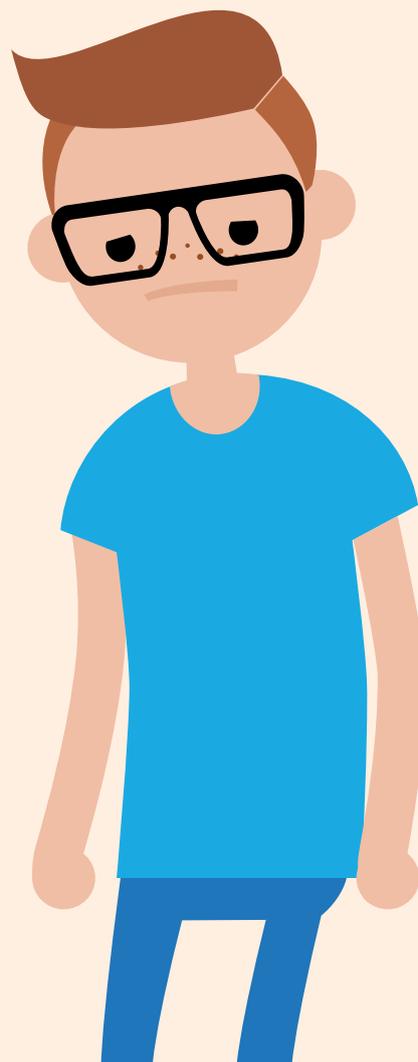


Unit 8: Lesson 1 Resource B

Scenario

Scenario card

A 16-year-old boy receives a warning from the paramilitaries that his behaviour is anti-social and he is close to receiving a paramilitary attack. The 16-year-old has already been charged by the police and is currently going through youth courts awaiting his sentence.



16-year-old joyrider

Paramilitary member

Parent of 16-year-old boy

Police

Elderly resident

Youth worker

