

News story: ACT for Youth

Designed to teach 11-16 year olds how to act in the unlikely event they are caught in a gun or knife attack, the ACT for YOUTH campaign reinvents the successful 'Run, Hide, Tell' public information films for a new generation.

Kids will be taught to RUN if they are able to, HIDE if they are not, and TELL police of the threat only when it is safe to do so. They will also be advised to warn others about an on-going threat, and crucially told NOT to stop and use their mobiles phones until they are safely away from danger.

The three-phase communications and education plan will launch publicly today, Thursday 28 September 2017, and will be supported across policing and government, with the hope that Run, Hide, Tell will eventually make up part of the PSHE, (Personal Social Health Economic), curriculum of formal education at schools and colleges

All previous Counter Terrorism (CT) messaging has been aimed at adults, but following extensive research with children and young people, security experts from the National Counter Terrorism Security Office (NaCTSO) have created age appropriate safety advice to engage and empower a younger audience.

They have also teamed up with key partners such as the NSPCC, Childline and Educate Against Hate, to help and support parents who are understandably anxious about discussing such a topic with their children.

We appreciate that talking to young people about terrorism can be scary, for parents and children alike," said the National Lead for Protective Security, Deputy Assistant Commissioner Lucy D'Orsi.

But the atrocities in London and Manchester have sadly resulted in some of the youngest victims of terror this country has ever seen, and if we are able to teach children to act in a way which could potentially save their lives then it is our responsibility to do so.

We are particularly concerned when we see people – young and old – using their mobiles to film scenes when they should be moving away from the danger. The recent incident in Parsons Green is a good example of this.

Our research showed that many young people think filming would be a good thing to provide evidence for police. We must get them to understand that the priority must be their safety.

John Cameron, head of NSPCC Helplines, said:

Since April, Childline has already received more than 300 contacts

from young people anxious about terrorism, so we know it's a child welfare issue that is impacting on their emotional wellbeing.

Adults can help a child by listening to their worries, reassuring them these events are rare, and teaching them to Run, Hide, and Tell.

Although these conversations might be difficult, the spate of devastating events means that they cannot be brushed under the carpet and we all have a duty to help every child stay safe.

Through a collaboration with News UK, Counter Terrorism Police have enlisted the support of celebrities and commissioned the creation of a 'Run, Hide, Tell emoji' for phase one, with the hope that this ground-breaking communications campaign will reach out across social media platforms, television, radio and news outlets to give young people that life-saving information.

The first of two new Run, Hide, Tell videos features TV personalities Bear Grylls and Ant Middleton, Leicester City footballer Jamie Vardy, England rugby star James Haskell and double Olympic gold medalist Jade Jones, who will tell young people that when caught up in a terror attack: "Real champions run."

This will be followed in October by a second, longer, video, designed to explain the 'Run, Hide, Tell' messaging, and also teach children how to spot and report suspicious behavior or suspicious items.

Later phases of the campaign will then launch this messaging across youth groups such as the Scouts, Guides and Cadets, before finally being made part of the PSHE curriculum of formal education at schools and colleges.