



Apr 08, 2021 06:00 BST

Hard Calls Save Lives: Mums urge Londoners to call Crimestoppers with information about knife crime

Five brave mothers who lost their sons to knife crime have shared their emotional stories as part of a new campaign supported by the Metropolitan Police Service and the independent charity, Crimestoppers.

At the very heart of the campaign is a series of [short films](#) where each of these mothers reflects on the hardest calls they had to make after their sons were fatally stabbed.

Each mother wanted to take part to encourage others to call Crimestoppers,

anonymously, with information about knife crime to help prevent more deaths.

We know that some people might not feel comfortable contacting the police, so calling Crimestoppers is always another option.

The campaign acknowledges that although doing so may be hard, there are harder calls to make – such as the devastating ones made by these mothers after their sons were tragically murdered.

Today (Thursday, 8 April), the mothers will join Commissioner Cressida Dick at a socially-distanced event at New Scotland Yard where their emotional films will be screened.

These films will be supported by adverts across radio, popular websites, social media and on-demand viewing, running into late April. They will be targeted at people in areas most affected by violent crime and are particularly aimed at inspiring women who may have a close relationship to someone on the periphery of knife crime - mums, sisters, aunties – to report vital information. Whilst we want to speak to the community as a whole, we know that female relatives are influential in communities.

The mothers involved in the campaign said:

Lillian Serunkuma: “I called my auntie to let her know that Quamari had been stabbed. She just screamed. That was the hardest thing about that day. It can be hard to make the call to say someone is involved in knife crime, especially if it’s someone you know or love. But it’s so much harder if you don’t. It’s almost as bad to lose a child or a friend to prison as it is to lose them if they’re killed. Either way, they’re going to suffer as a result of knife crime.”

Yvonne Lawson MBE: “I rang my sister and said I’ve just been told Godwin has died. I just kept repeating ‘died, died, died.’ Godwin was stolen away from us in such a terrible way. My family is broken into pieces, just missing him. We didn’t even get a chance to say goodbye, and he’s never going to be there, he’s never going to be part of us anymore. The least we can do is use his memory to change lives.”

Jean Foster: “They told me Christopher has been murdered. We called nine or

ten times. Slowly, we came to the realisation that he was never going to call back. People may think that keeping quiet keeps you out of their focus, but it empowers them. No one is safe if we keep quiet.”

Pastor Lorraine Jones: “I’d just come back from a busy day when the door rang. It was one of Dwayne’s friends. He said, ‘Dwayne’s been stabbed, come quick!’ It was like I was in another world. I felt lost. I had to call my mum. It was the hardest call - I was out of breath and my stomach was tight. Even when I was making a call my hands were shaking. I tried it three times, I was just so helpless and weak. I had 20 wonderful years with him and really good memories. But I didn’t realise the impact he had until he passed away.”

Becky Beston: “I had to call a complete stranger about getting Archie embalmed. You should never have to use those words with your son’s name. Ever. If somebody would have made that phone call, my Arch would be here now.”

Commissioner Cressida Dick said: “This campaign would not have been possible without the strength and courage of these mothers, who have relived the traumatic calls they had to make in the hope that it will prevent other families suffering, as they have.

“I have no doubt that these tragic accounts will resonate with Londoners, and will hopefully encourage them to pick up the phone and call Crimestoppers, anonymously, with any information they might have.

“We understand this is a difficult thing to ask - but you don’t have to name names and even a small piece of information could be vital. Making that one call could literally save the life of someone’s son or daughter.”

Mick Duthie, Director of Operations at Crimestoppers, said: “Hearing the mums speak in such an honest, frank and heartfelt way about losing a son to knife crime is incredibly humbling. I truly admire their courage and determination to warn others in their own words about the danger of not speaking up.

“Every day our charity hears from people who often feel they have nowhere else to turn. I’d like to add to the Commissioner’s assurance that everyone who contacts Crimestoppers is guaranteed to stay completely anonymous.

We've always kept our promise since we began back in the 1980s. By working together, we can help make our communities safer and reduce the harm, pain and suffering caused by knife crime.”

Find out more about the mothers' stories [here](#).

No piece of information is insignificant or too small, and could be linked to knife crime: Do you know anyone in your area that carries a knife, or where a weapon has been hidden? Have you seen drug deals taking place in the area? Are cars arriving at unusual times of the day and night? Whether the information is something you've heard first-hand or hearsay, your call could help build a picture and form the last piece of the puzzle.

Please contact Crimestoppers, 100 per cent anonymously, on freephone 0800 555 111. No call is wasted. Alternatively, you can also use Crimestoppers' anonymous online form at [Crimestoppers-uk.org](https://www.crimestoppers-uk.org).

Computer IP addresses are never traced and no-one will ever know you contacted Crimestoppers. For telephone calls, there is no caller line display, no 1471 facility and the charity has never traced a call.