



Former Liverpool FC footballer Robbie Fowler talks to Chief Inspector Andy Creer about knife crime

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Former LFC star lends his support to Operation Target campaign to tackle serious and violent crime on Merseyside

Former Liverpool star FC Robbie Fowler has lent his voice to our campaign to tackle serious and violent crime on Merseyside.

The ex-Red, who was brought up in Toxteth, and whose family still live on Merseyside, said he wanted people to be as proud of Liverpool as he was and that he believes the city remains a fantastic and safe place to visit.

Last month we launched Operation Target which aims to target and prevent criminal activity on Merseyside, including knife and gun crime through continuous disruption, education and partnership working.

As part of our campaign Robbie spent time with Chief Inspector Andy Creer to discuss the issue of knife crime, what we are doing to tackle it and what he believes are the possible solutions to the problem. We also took him back to his roots on the streets of Toxteth to discuss what life was like growing up as a teenager in Liverpool.

Robbie said: "It is no different [here] than anywhere else in the country for knife crime. I was very lucky in my upbringing because I played football and I was focused and I was driven but I know a lot of kids and adults are not as fortunate as me.

"When I was a kid we had probably everything we ever needed, the footballs and such and that's all we had. The last thing on our minds was carrying any kind of weapon."

He continued: "As a parent myself I have four children and I read and see stories all the time about young kids getting involved in gangs and carrying knives. We need to educate parents because a lot of it will come down to parents educating their kids. As much as we need the youth clubs and the police do the campaigns we need the parents.

"To stop it needs to be a bigger deterrent. We need to educate people, maybe youth clubs or schools and parents – telling them that carrying a knife is extremely bad. We know the repercussions of why it is bad. People's lives can be ended and we don't want to see that. Carry a knife is ridiculous there is no need to do it and sentences need to be harsher.

"I'm Liverpool born and bred. I travel all over the world and I read lots of stories about what it is like as a place. We all know it is a magnificent place. When you travel abroad and in the UK and you read about knife crime incidents in Liverpool there is a little bit of embarrassment.

"My message is go out and enjoy yourselves but leave the knives at home. Enjoy yourselves in the right way and be safe. I'm proud of Liverpool. Let's make everyone else who is not from Liverpool enjoy coming to this lovely

place.”

Chief Inspector Andy Creer said: “Robbie has travelled all over the world and as a homegrown LFC player is a fantastic ambassador for our city.

“He was keen to get on board with our campaign and learn more about the issues facing Merseyside from knife crime and what we are doing to tackle it.

“As a parent himself he knows himself how it feels to be worried about young people and the possible dangers they face in this day and age but he is also realistic about the work that is being done and still needs to be done to tackle the problem.

“I think he came away from this experience with a new opinion of the challenges facing the police, parents, teachers and guardians today from issues such as knife crime and I hope that his message resonates with both young and old alike.

“If only one person watches this video and chooses not to carry a knife then it has been successful.”

To watch the video in full go to: <https://youtu.be/8wB-i-cyqFg>

If you have any information about a particular appeal, or want to report crime or antisocial behaviour in your area please contact Merseyside Police on Twitter @MerPolCC or call 101. You can also contact @CrimestoppersUK.

Any information no matter how small, will be treated with the utmost confidence and could assist with our investigations.

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