

Nando's Youth Talk – A Summary of Points			
Subject:	Crime in the Community, The effectiveness of Operation Trident		
Meeting Date:	Tuesday 26 th August, 6pm – 10.30pm		
Location:	Nando's Restaurant, Kingsland High Road		
Attendees:	Ligali, Various attendees (Information about attendees will remain confidential unless they state otherwise).	No of Attendees:	28
Compiled:	From minutes taken at the talks, written notes from participants during the talks and emails sent after the event with additional comments.		

Subject: Trident Posters

Summary of Comments

The majority of attendees felt that the posters were ineffective, patronising and mostly irrelevant. Observations included the following statements;

'The important information about targeting gun crime and helping the community is very small and placed at the bottom of the posters'.
[This was included the number for Crimestoppers]

'The exclusive use of our community in posters about gun crime immediately sends the message that only our people are involved in and affected by gun crime. This is very dangerous'.

'The use of the T in a circle feels like a threatening device'.

'The poster with the boy and the head phones looks like the Craig David album cover. And the poster with the large T in a circle could easily be the cover of So Solid's latest album'.
[This comment came after a question about the style of the advert and how effectively it related to young people.]

'There was no relevance to the real issue. They are not serious enough'.

'The posters were reactive and not proactive' and 'They are a knee jerk reaction to the problem'.

'The posters provoke the wrong response and remind me of the AIDS campaign'.

'The posters are turning us into informants. The people we are supposed to take out of the community are our family and friends. The issue is not straightforward'.

There were a few positive comments and/or suggestions made. There were as follows;

'I don't think a poster can really stop crime, but it can give people information on what to do about things'.

'The posters need to be personalised. Involve families who have lost people.'

'There needs to be an input from the younger generation, an idea maybe would be for independent bodies like Ligali to commission secondary schools, for example GCSE and A-Level students to come up with poster and other advertising campaigns to combat Gun Crime and make people more aware. This would be a method to integrate the youth and get them to openly think about this issue which is diminishing our community'.

'We need to have people from our community designing the posters. Do not involve the police'.

'Where the posters are concerned ...there needs to be more effective visual strategies which project the severity/ seriousness of the problem, the present posters do nothing to show the reality of Gun Crime'.

'The posters have an effect to an extent because it brings your attention to a particular situation even if only for a second, not that many people look at posters. Something eye catching like the second one always works'.

'The posters need to have different effects e.g. deterrent, showing effects on the families, scaring young people, provocative'.

'If you are going to advertise/ promote something you need to know what you are doing and you need to clearly know your audience'.

[This comment was made amongst several relating to the patronising nature of the posters.]

'In February this year I attended a meeting on Gun Crime and at the opening of the evening they included an extremely powerful piece of film footage which showed a series of young black men who had lost their lives to gun crime. These were images of men who had been shot in broad daylight, in the evening, in their cars, homes etc. Accompanying the pictures of these men was a voice over of an extremely distressed woman on the phone to police reporting that her boyfriend had been shot in front of her and was consequently dying. I remember at the end of watching this most disturbing footage, and thinking that this kind of image is what is required despite it being so distressing it was nothing but the truth and it conveyed the reality and helped me and others to understand just how serious this whole issue is. What I'm trying to say here is that we need to see the reality for it to really hit home, an idea maybe would be for footage like this to be screened on TV'.

Subject: Crime in the Community

Summary of Comments

'Gun crime is both a real and exaggerated threat. The media explode things too much but also young people are ignorant to the things that go on around them'.

'The main motives behind gun crime are street credibility, power, lack of money, poverty, drugs, peer pressure, lack of support from police/ parents/ friends'.

'There use of 'black on black' is maybe due to the sudden rise in shootings between black youth. It's exaggerated and they are often missing the point that white kids or even kids from other ethnicities are violently hurting each other yet they are never mentioned'.

Subject: Police and the relationship with the African British community

Summary of Comments

'There is a 'them' and 'us' mentality about the police'.

'We don't know much about Operation Trident and that says a lot as to how effective it is if we as young people don't know how it operates'.

'You don't' see the police in the community anymore. They are not part of the community. Note the situation with village police services where the police have a relationship with the people'.

'Don't feel that the Police can deal effectively with the problem. This is a community issue. Carnival, for example, was like a football match. The Police presence was overbearing'.

'Need to sort out police first in order to tackle the problem of gun crime in the community'.

'There is still a lot of police corruption. What have the police ever done for us?'

'Years of abuse by the police can not be forgotten with the use of some [Trident] posters'.

'I don't know about the police in my local area because I don't see them about'.

'When you call the police, they don't do anything'.

'In the Caribbean, there is a marked difference between how the police are seen there and how the police are seen in this country. In the Caribbean, the police are respected because they often go into the police to help their fellow people rather than to acquire power or because there are no other jobs'.

There were several comments made about African Britons joining the Police force;

'Maybe we need people from our own community becoming police'.

'We need more black policemen and they need to be moved around the predominant black areas. E.g. one from Hackney would work in Brixton etc. The ethnic police should have the option to police their own communities'.

'There is a conflict between success and maintaining a sense of self [As an African Briton in the police force]. You are forced to conform'.

'[I] know black people who change when they become a policeman. They see themselves as a policeman first and a black person second'.

Subject: Solutions

Summary of Comments

The young people we spoke to came up with a variety of solutions, all of which Ligali support and will endeavour to bring into place.

- To have more focus groups with young people.
- Be transparent as much as possible. Do not be covert in methods otherwise you risk losing the faith of the community.
- Pay young people a small fee to participate in whole day forums for example to focus on initiatives.
- There needs to be more marketing done to get young people involved in discussions and decision making. We need to make it more attractive.
- Remove the MET Police logo from the bottom of posters.
- Posters should show an understanding of the effect of using a gun. Everyone knows that guns are dangerous.
- Use pictures of local victims in the local area on poster campaigns.

- Use of previous offenders to speak to young people.
- Youth Advisory Group. Giving young people a sense of policing themselves.
- Any youth advisory group should have former offenders and those who are not deemed 'acceptable'. Not just the 'good kids'
- There needs to be simultaneous involvement of young people, older young people, parents and elders in decision making.
- More of the same informal forums.
- Need to hold community events, with community people to talk and inspire.