



## **Crime, order and social control**

*Crime and community safety*

### **Roger Bolton**

Welcome to Community and Crime Prevention. In the studio I have Richard Solley, a Community Safety Officer with the local council, and Gordon Hughes, senior lecturer in Criminology and Social Policy, at the Open University. Richard if I could start with you, what is a Community Safety Officer?

### **Richard Solley**

Community Safety Officer, can be many things, but generally they work for local councils as I do. My particular role, is to co-ordinate the Crime and Community Safety Partnership, which is a partnership consisting of police, council workers, health, probation, and other bodies, in order to reduce crime.

### **Roger Bolton**

And Gordon, doing lecturing in criminology and social policy, what's the connection of social policy to criminology?

### **Gordon Hughes**

From where I come from, one of the key connections, is the term Community Safety, for too long I think the, social policy and crime prevention have been separated out from each other, and certainly what community safety has offered I think is, are means of the two talking to each other.

### **Roger Bolton**

You mean they didn't talk before. Two different disciplines?

### **Gordon Hughes**

To a large extent, the assumption was that crime prevention was something that people in the criminal justice system dealt with and, that issues around social policy say housing allocation, educational facilities, health care and such like, that they belonged to something else, which we tended to call the welfare state, and the assumption was that crime, was the preserve of the criminal justice system. I think, community safety has actually, as I say opened up a dialogue.

### **Roger Bolton**

Richard was that your experience, that there were there were separation of those two things?

### **Richard Solley**

Yes I think so. I mean I've got to say, that I'm relatively recent into this particular profession but yes.

### **Roger Bolton**

Okay well perhaps we could begin the debate by talking about what crime prevention is, and who is involved, and to stimulate the discussion, I'd like to begin with a piece recorded at one of the heats of the 2002 Rock Challenge Competition.

### **Karen Hilton**

Today we're in Bridlington, it's a sunny April day, breezy but sunny, and we're here outside the Bridlington Spa. My name is Karen Hilton, I teach drama at Hornsea School, I'm also head of performing arts there, and I'm here today, with a group of students from Hornsea School participating in the rock challenge presentation.

**Zoie Golding**

I'm Zoie Golding, and I'm the Event Manager for the rock challenge. Rock challenge is an anti-drug and crime prevention initiative, in the form of a performing arts competition for secondary schools and colleges, and we involve schools all over the country. Kids ageing from eleven to eighteen. Each school creates an eight minute piece of dance drama on their own chosen theme, and performs in front of their peers, and friends and families.

**Karen Hilton**

Rock challenge was founded initially in Australia about twenty years ago now, and it came to this country six years ago, our schools have been participating since the early stages of the competition. The underlying theme is that, the students that involve themselves, without participating in any use of alcohol, drugs, solvent abuse, or indeed any other form of drug taking.

**Zoie Golding**

It's not just all about the performance itself, there's a lot of stuff that goes into P.S.H.E. about the awareness of drugs, about the awareness of alcohol, and cigarettes themselves, and the damages that they can cause. And we also reinstate the message throughout the day, telling them with recent drugs quizzes that we do, we reinforce the message on stage, the ethos is also taken out throughout the performance in the evening, but we try and advise people not to smoke, and the bars are not open.

**Karen Hilton**

There's been a production meeting this morning for all the liaison staff, and the students today are taking part in a, in a quiz, which is about drug awareness, and also we have been given literature, to disseminate to the students once we go back to school, concerning, educating them and I understand that there's also a helpline card, which can be given to the students if they have any problems at this time.

**Zoie Golding**

It is very effective, you can see that, what we're giving the kids is a drug free high on stage, the adrenaline they get, the excitement they get. The way we wind them up during the day is that, you don't need those substance to get a high, it can be free.

**Amy Rodmill**

I'm Amy Rodmill, and I'm going to Hornsea School. I'm in the Cyclops section doing 70's dancing. I think it's all about being aware of how you can have fun, without using drugs and without smoking and using alcohol and stuff like that, and I think it's a really really good idea.

**Paul Barker**

I'm Paul Barker and I've, doing the set crew today. First of all I did it for a laugh as a dare from one of my mates, and we all went to the audition for a joke, and then, when I got through I actually decided that I would like keep going. I smoke what, maybe forty, forty five a day, and this is a really, really, really, big change for me, because I mean like I come here, and I won't smoke all day. It's made a difference because, you actually see the alternative to what you can be doing, and things like that, and plus it's like given me a career from what, what I want, I didn't know what I wanted to do when I left school and, now I've figured out that I want to do this as a career so I'm alright and it just, it does change your life quite a bit. It's like a milestone for everyone.

**Roger Bolton**

Gordon Hughes it was said in that report, that Rock Challenge was very effective, is there any statistical evidence to support that?

**Gordon Hughes**

We have to say the jury's out. As with many of these innovative schemes, I think the people who are involved in helping to initiate them and run them, obviously want to tell a good news story. As a social scientist, we're rather more systematically sceptical about claims to success, for which there's not clear evidential base.

**Roger Bolton**

Richard Solley it's been tried in your area. Again, have you have any real evidence that it's been successful?

**Richard Solley**

No, we haven't got any direct evidence linking attendance at Rock Challenge events, with reduction in drug intake, but what I would say is that, a lot of young people turn up, as you can hear from the tape, a lot really benefit from it.

**Roger Bolton**

But wouldn't they turn up at the local youth club, or at the local church or, anything like that, they're the sort of people who would turn up to those things. Perhaps, those people you most need to attend to are those who wouldn't go.

**Richard Solley**

I think you need to attend to both and I think that you shouldn't confuse what is happening with Rock Challenge, with other methods of weaning people from the drugs habit.

**Roger Bolton**

And what about confusing as some people might see it, prohibited drugs, like cannabis, with tobacco and alcohol. Some people say it's, probably a bad thing if people smoke, not very healthy, but it's hardly a crime is it?

**Richard Solley**

No, in actual fact, I was a little concerned about the capacity for confusion between those in this particular example. I think that, perhaps a Rock Challenge event would be more effective if it focused on illegal class A, class B drugs, and possibly alcohol as well.