# Teenagers in Dudley, West Midlands, Express Safety Concerns and Lack of Recreational Activities, Reveals Report



A new report reveals that teenagers in Dudley, West Midlands, are experiencing significant concerns regarding safety and available recreational activities. Commissioned by Dudley Council and compiled by research firms Frame and Yellobrick, the "Growing Up in Dudley" report highlights the anxieties of local youths related to crime and limited entertainment options.

The report indicates that while younger children cherish the green spaces, libraries, and leisure facilities, many teenagers feel disillusioned with their living environment. Statements from individuals such as 16-year-old Josh, who remarked that "Dudley is a place you want to pass through, not live in," underscore this sentiment. Similarly, 14-year-old Ben noted, "The best thing about Dudley is its vape shops."

Safety concerns, specifically linked to gangs and knife crime, are particularly acute among adolescents. Marley, aged 14, pointed out that local parks are largely off-limits due to gang presence, stating, "There are gangs in the parks, so we can’t go." Other teenagers, including Zane, 15, and Emmanuel, 17, also expressed their fears about public spaces like bus stations and markets, citing frequent fights and a general sense of insecurity.

This environment forces many young people to resort to smoking, vaping, and spending money at fast-food restaurants due to a lack of affordable and appealing activities. Maisie, 15, commented on this, saying, "There’s nothing else to do, so you just go out with your friends to a fast-food restaurant."

In response, Dr. Mayada Abuaffan, Dudley's Director of Public Health and Wellbeing, emphasized the importance of the insights gained from the report and expressed a commitment to further improving services to meet the needs of the community. The findings are intended to serve as a foundation for future initiatives aimed at enhancing the welfare of Dudley’s young residents.