Why Crime Stoppers Works

Lesson Ideas Pack

CRIME STOPPERS
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Introduction

We support the view that schooling should develop a sense of community engagement in students by increasing their potential to be informed, responsible, ethical and active participants in society.

Through practical tasks relating to real life experiences, these *free* resources help students develop a positive attitude towards their role in society. They enable teachers to select lesson ideas within a theme in any order, to best suit **curriculum requirements** and the **interest** of students.

We developed these to make the content of the Australian Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS) Civics and Citizenship syllabus for Years 7-10 *more engaging***.**

To make things easy, lesson ideas link directly to the Australian and Victorian Curriculum content codes and key concepts, namely; *Democratic Values*, *The Westminster System*, *Justice*, *Participation*, and *Rights and Responsibilities.*

Year Level Description and Required Content

Year 7
An understanding of the Civics and Citizenship concepts is developed through a focus on Australia's democracy and legal system. The teaching ideas in this resource assist students to gain knowledge and understanding of how citizens can participate in providing justice through their role as witnesses. *Links to curriculum code: ACHCK050 / VCCCL022*

Year 8
An understanding of the Civics and Citizenship concepts is developed through a focus on Australia's laws, the responsibilities and freedoms of citizens and participation in the democratic process. The teaching ideas in this resource assist students to gain knowledge and understanding of how citizens can use direct action to contribute to Australian democracy. *Links to curriculum code: ACHCK062 / VCCCG020*

Year 9
An understanding of the Civics and Citizenship concepts is developed through a focus on how Australia's legal system works to support a democratic and just society. The teaching ideas in this resource assist students to gain knowledge and understanding regarding the factors that can undermine the application of the principles of justice. *Links to curriculum code: ACHCK078 / VCCCL034*

Year 10

An understanding of the Civics and Citizenship concepts is developed through a focus on Australia's global roles and responsibilities and the values and practices that enable a resilient democracy to be sustained. The teaching ideas in this resource assist students to gain knowledge and understanding regarding the safeguards that protect Australia's democratic system and society.
Links to curriculum code: [ACHCK094](#) / [VCCCC036](#)

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Learning Intentions

Resource Focus

Community safety and wellbeing is enhanced when individuals understand how to take action to report crimes.

Students Understand:

- Why people report crimes
- Why people may be reluctant to report crimes
- How Crime Stoppers provides anonymity

Lesson Ideas

Tuning In

There are many reasons why people do not report crimes. Ask students to read [Why People Don't Report,](#) list the reasons they agree with and why. Students then pair and share their findings. As a class, discuss the reasons most likely to prevent people reporting a crime.

Lesson Idea 1: Why People Don't Report

Researchers have discovered two key reasons why crimes go unreported.

i.   If a relatively minor crime, like a burglary, escalates into a major, violent crime like murder, only the more significant crime is recorded for statistical purposes. In this hypothetical example, the murder would be reported, but not the original burglary. This is known by prosecutors as "lesser included crimes." When researchers or policymakers examine burglary statistics in the community where the crime took place, the results would make the neighbourhood seem less prone to burglary than it actually is.

ii. A community's relationship with its local police officers can have a significant effect on whether crimes will be reported. In a community where police officers are respected and welcomed as partners in public safety, crimes are much more likely to be reported and recorded. By contrast, in an area where a combative relationship exists between citizens and police, the community is much less likely to bring crimes to the attention of law enforcement. This makes dysfunctional communities appear safer than they actually are, because the reality of crimes committed is worse than the surface statistics indicate.

As a class, discuss the following questions:
   a) What are the reasons why crime statistics may not be that accurate in determining the safety of any community?
   b) What might the consequences be of inaccurate crime statistics?

Lesson Idea 2: Reporting Crimes to Police

- Why a person reports a crime may depend on their circumstances i.e. are they the victim, a bystander or unseen witness? Discuss with students why each of these circumstances affects people's actions.

- Provide the class with a copy of the [Reasons for reporting a crime](#) handout. Explain the scenario and activity. Students will be placed into groups of 3. Each group is to nominate a victim, bystander and unseen witness. Each role member selects reasons from the list for reporting the crime:

  1. have feelings of social responsibility and clear ideas between right and wrong
  2. want to reduce the impact of crime on local communities
  3. have been directly affected by crime on their lives or property (if things stolen etc.)
  4. believe that it will make a difference
  5. increase their personal safety
  6. help police charge the person and prevent them from committing it again
  7. access help and support services
  8. apply for financial assistance

9. make an insurance claim for damaged or stolen property

Each group discusses their decisions and choosing a spokesperson, reports back to class.

- A person's decision whether to report a crime to police may be influenced by a range of factors such as:
    - the characteristics of the victim
    - the nature of the offence
    - attitudes towards police
    - the victim's relationship to the offender.

    Hold a class discussion on why each of these may prevent people from reporting a crime to the police.

- Make comparisons with classroom/playground environment - what systems are in your school for reporting antisocial behaviour or rule breaking. Discuss as a class what works, what doesn't and why?

Lesson Idea 3: Reporting Crimes to Crime Stoppers

Many people may have witnessed criminal or suspicious behaviour, but think twice about reporting it to police because they might know the person and fear possible come-backs or retaliation from friends or associates. They may be uncertain of what else they might have to do such as appear in court to give evidence or identify a potential suspect.

Crime Stoppers removes many of those obstacles by providing an easy, safe and anonymous service for people to act in a socially responsible way by reporting crimes or suspicious behaviour. It provides a vital link to get information from those who have it to those who need it, but without the evidence provider having to give their details. Crime Stoppers is a well-known and trusted organisation with the unique benefit of allowing people to remain anonymous.

When the Crime Stoppers concept was first created in 1976, the idea was to allow people to provide information without having to reveal their identity or contact details. Potential witnesses may be reluctant to contact police, not wanting to have to provide further evidence, appear in court or face any reprisal or retribution from suspects, who may be known to them. This successful Crime Stoppers concept is now used in 30 countries around the world.

When you contact Crime Stoppers you don't have to leave your personal details and the call isn't recorded, traced or identified in any way, so you can have peace of mind that you'll remain anonymous. When completing an online report, you have the option of remaining completely

anonymous or providing contact details, so either Crime Stoppers staff or a police investigator can follow up on any of the information you have provided. The choice is yours.

Provide students with the Types of Crime Reported to Crime Stoppers information sheet and ask them to create a graph form of the information. Once completed, discuss as a class why graphs are a useful way of displaying information.

What happens to the information provided?

Crime Stoppers records anonymous information about a crime or suspicious activity. Information reports are then written from the details provided by members of the public. The reports are added to the Police intelligence database and where possible are checked against other available information to ensure any incorrect or possibly spiteful details aren't included. Information reports contain keywords that can be brought to the attention of police officers who are investigating past crimes or new ones.
Apart from the personal satisfaction of knowing you've done the right thing, it's important to remember that the information you have provided may lead to arrests or charges perhaps weeks or months later even if action isn't taken immediately.

Provide students with the information above. Students complete a formative assessment on one of the following topics:
- o Making a report to Crime Stoppers vs making a report to Police – outline the difference between these processes
- o Using the Crime Stoppers ACT reporting process - explain the term 'anonymity'
- o Explain how the information provided to the Police from Crime Stoppers is used

Success stories
Crime Stoppers, as a registered charity, partners with the community, State Governments and the police. This partnership has led to many successful outcomes for police and community safety. Students pick one of the Crime Stoppers NSW success stories and answer the following questions:
- What category of crime was committed?
- Why do you think that this was a difficult crime to solve?
- How was evidence passed to the police crucial in solving this crime?

Resources

Lesson Idea 1: Why People Don't Report

- [Why People Don't Report](#) – website

Lesson Idea 2: Reporting Crimes to Police

- [Reasons for reporting a crime](#) – handout

Lesson Idea 3: Reporting Crimes to Crime Stoppers

- [Crime Stoppers](#) - website
- [Crime Stoppers Concept](#) - website
- [Types of Crime Reported to Crime Stoppers](#) - information sheet
- [Make a report to Crime Stoppers](#) – website
- [How To Report A Crime to the Police](#) – information sheet
- [Crime Stoppers ACT Reporting Process](#) - website
- [Anonymity Explained](#) – website & video
- [Crime Stoppers NSW Success Stories](#) – website

Assessment

- [Comic Creator app](#) – app
- [Marking Key](#)

Assessment

Choose a [comic creator app](#) to design a cartoon that reflects the following statement:

'Dobbing' is considered un-Australian but being responsible for a safe community means we can all take part in helping the police to remove unwanted criminals from our neighbourhood.

This material can also be [accessed online](#)