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## Teenage killings in London on track to be worst in decades, says Met

**Andrew Muir**

Daily news reporter in City A.M.'s London newsroom



Getty images (Getty Images)

**London is “on track” to suffer the worst year for teenage killings in over a decade if current rates of youth violence continue, the Metropolitan Police has warned. So far, 17 teenagers have been killed in London this year.**

Knife and gun violence could lead to the highest number of homicides among young people since 2008, when 28 young people were killed.

12 young people had been killed by May this year, compared to 14 in the whole of 2020. In June, three teenagers lost their lives in a single week as a result of knife and gun violence.

The Met said that while “every single murder is a tragedy”, they are “not spread evenly either geographically or by age and ethnicity”. Of the 17 murders this year, 15 victims were killed with a knife and 12 were black.

Suspects have been charged in 13 of the 17 investigations.

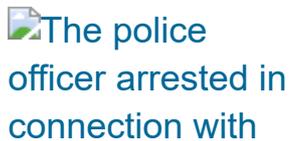
Taylor Cox, 19, was shot in the head in Islington on 8 June. Two days later, Denardo Samuels-Brooks, 17, was chased and stabbed to death in Streatham.

Jalan Woods-Bell, 15, was stabbed on his way to school in Hayes last Friday.

The Met said it planned to increase police presence this summer. This will include “surge activity” in areas “known for serious violence and gang activity” and an operation targeting suspects using e-scooters and mopeds to commit robberies.

The force has urged people in affected communities to come forward with information to help prevent violence.

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The police officer arrested in connection with

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Yvonne Lawson, who lost her 17-year-old son Godwin to knife crime in 2010, said:

**“It has been 11 years since I sadly lost Godwin. Eleven years on, mothers are still losing their babies to knife crime in our capital.**

“We should never get desensitised or complacent to youth violence. My dream 11 years ago was to prevent another mother from reliving my pain.”

Pastor Lorraine Jones, who lost her son Dwayne Simpson, 20, when he was stabbed in Brixton last year, said:

**“As a mother who has lost her son through the senseless killings caused by youth violence, I plead with all communities, families, local authorities, social services, schools and faith groups to step up and engage more with our troubled youth before it results in violence.”**

Commander Alex Murray, lead for violence, said that part of the problem is that people may not be willing to cooperate with the police.

He added:

**“Detectives investigating serious violence often meet silence from people we know have information that could help prevent violence. We**