

Take care! awareness-raising concert 2021. Information from the police in support of dialogue.

Hello!

We hope teachers will discuss lessons learned from the concert with the class. The concert will surely arouse many kinds of thoughts in young people, so we have prepared a summary of matter the teacher could review with the class.

Criminal liability begins at the age of 15. A person of that age or older can be sentenced to a fine, community service or imprisonment (a conditional or unconditional sentence (= prison)).

All crimes always have consequences, even for people under 15 years of age. Even their criminal acts can be investigated by the police. However, they are always reported to child welfare authorities and to the parents as well.

Even a child seven years of age may have to pay **compensation for damage**. If you deliberately destroy another person's property, you are personally responsible for compensating it. Parents do not have to pay for a child's foolish acts, although they are allowed to compensate for a product that has been broken. Typical forms of criminal damage include glasses broken at a bus stop and paint scrawls, or "tags".

If a young person must pay compensation for damage, he or she can pay it only as an adult when already at work. In such a case, however, the amount of damages has accumulated interest and the sum can have grown to a considerable amount.

A young person who commits a serious offence or has symptoms manifested through crimes for a long time can be forced/allowed to be placed or be cared for at an institution. We at the police have seen several cases in which a placement and periods of special care and attention have convinced young people to stop using intoxicants and committing crimes.

Anchor work is a form of cooperation where matters are resolved with the police by social authorities, psychiatric nurses and often workers from youth services also. Even children who are in primary school are talked to by an Anchor team about petty thefts, assaults and other crimes in which they have taken part. Many cities and towns also have mediators who can process different criminal and bullying cases.

Crimes related to bullying

The example in the video of a girl who moved to another town and became the victim of bullying is reality for many youths. The girl was mistreated but she was also the victim of many crimes. When the group of girls made offensive TikTok videos, they were probably guilty of **defamation** and possibly also of **dissemination of information violating personal privacy**.

"Insulting someone as a joke" or offensive pictures made through photo editing usually involve defamation. Defamation is a complainant offence, so the injured party, not the offender, decides whether the case is a crime or not. An offender's explanation of "just as a joke" do not help here. If defamation has caused the injured more distress or sleeplessness, for instance, it is a crime that is usually punishable by a fine.

When someone is threatened with "beefing", assault or killing, the case involves **menace** if the injured party takes it seriously and fears for their health. For instance, a bully may threaten to beat up or kill a person being bullied if the person tells someone about it. In the worst case, menace can result in up to two years of imprisonment. This gives the police the opportunity to use coercive measures, such as apprehend a person to threatens another person's life.

Dissemination of information violating personal privacy can lead to fines. This is why everyone should be careful about what they share of themselves and especially of other people on the Web.

A person who is 15 years of age and commits **assault** by causing another person pain and possibly injuries is sentenced to at least a fine and at maximum to two years of imprisonment. Even an **inciter** is responsible for the act and can be sentenced in the same way as the offender. People standing around a fight and encouraging the parties are also regarded as inciters or otherwise complicit in assault.

Fobba talks a lot about **edged weapons** that the police find extremely dangerous. The police learn about aggravated assaults committed by very young persons. An **aggravated assault** (such as a cut or stab made with an edged weapon, or an assault that has led to serious injuries) leads to a sentence of imprisonment.

The criminal process

When the police learn about an assault, a police report is recorded. Questioning of a minor, or a person under 18 years of age, is attended by at least one parent and preferably by an employee from social services. During questioning, the police determine the injured party's information about the incident and the offender's account. The police hear witnesses and people who took part in the assault. Any videos and recordings from surveillance tapes are documented.

When all matters related to the assault have been determined, the police draw up a record that is sent to the prosecutor. The prosecutor brings charges and takes the case to court. Then a judge at the district court imposes a sentence, in the case of young people usually a fine and compensation for damage.

Compensation for damage often includes at least medical expenses and the breakdown of a mobile phone, for instance.

When an offender is sentenced to imprisonment for an offence, this is recorded in the **criminal record**. It can affect a person's ability to have a place of study at the desired school. Many employers also make security clearances and do not hire a person who has a record of violent offences, for example.

Narcotics offences

The police are worried about the use of narcotics by young people in particular. When you possess a small quantity of a narcotic substance for personal use, it is **unlawful use of narcotics** for which a fine is imposed. In Helsinki for instance, people under the age of 18 are only given a talking-to after the first time, and after the second time the matter is referred to the prosecutor.

When you give or sell another person even a small quantity of a narcotic substance, you are guilty of a **narcotics offence**. The same thing happens if you possess a larger quantity of a narcotic substance for personal use. A narcotics offence can lead to a maximum of two years of imprisonment.

Help is available!

Young persons can obtain help with difficult matters from several parties: staff members at school, child welfare, the police, and other actors mentioned on the video! Do not hesitate to make contact!