Reducing crime in Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland Executive

Our plan for 2026 to 2027



Child friendly version

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About this booklet

We are the Department of Justice. We are a part of the government in Northern Ireland.

We are in charge of protecting people from crime.

We want there to be less crime in Northern Ireland.

We have written a plan to help with this.

This booklet explains what our plan says.



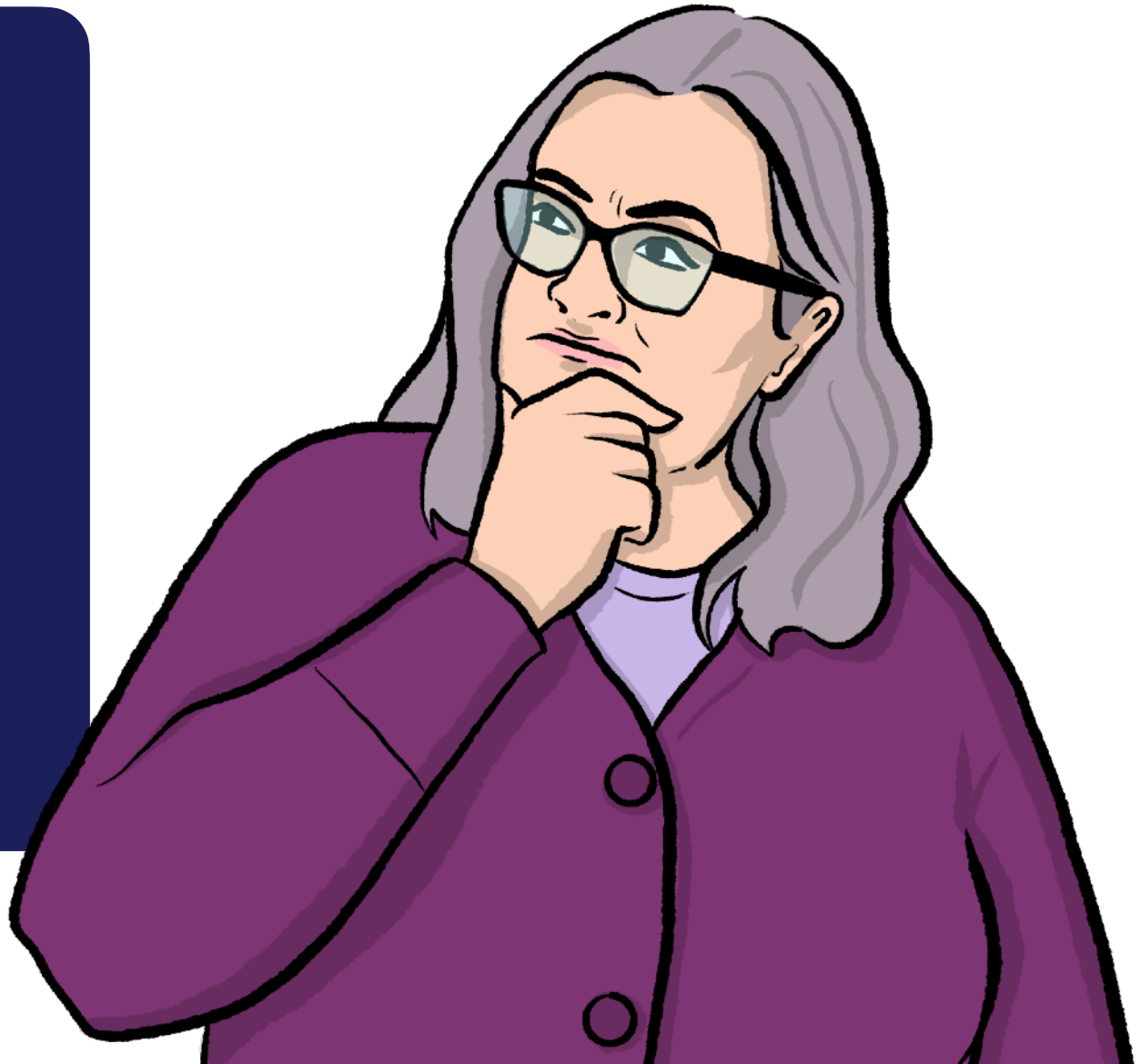
Why crime happens

When someone breaks the law, we say they have **committed a crime**.

To stop people from committing crimes, we need to understand why they do it.

People might get involved in crime because of problems in their lives.

If we can help to stop these problems, then we can help to stop crime from happening.



What we want to achieve

It is important to punish people who commit crimes.

But it is better to stop crime from happening in the first place.

Our **aims** are what we want to achieve. We have 2 aims:

Stop crime from happening in the first place.

Help people who have committed crimes to change.



How we will work

We have 4 main ideas about how we will work:

1. Help people who might commit crimes, so they do not break the law.
2. Make sure all of our services and projects work together.
3. Try new ways to stop crime.
4. Be open and honest about what we are doing.

Feeling healthy and well

We want people to be healthy and well.

When people are healthy and well, they are more likely to live a good life.

People can feel unwell for many different reasons.

If we support them to feel healthy and well, we could help them to stay safe and live good lives.

People might not be healthy or well because of:

- Serious problems in their past.
- Using drugs.
- Not having the same chances in life as other people.

Mental health

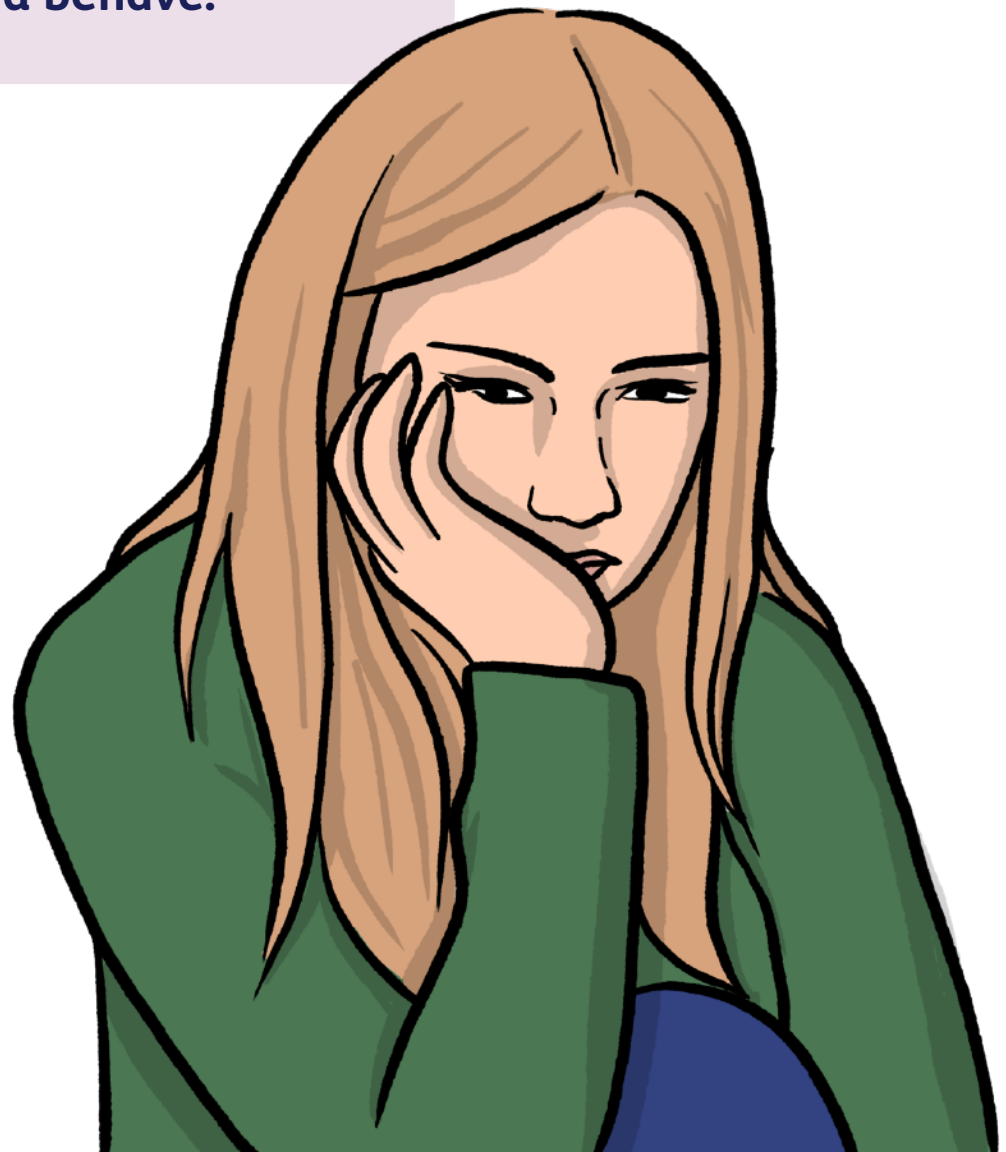
Mental health is how you think, feel and behave.

People may also be unwell because of their **mental health**.

If people do not have good mental health, it can make life harder for them.

If their lives are hard, they could be more likely to think about getting involved in crime.

So if we support people to have good mental health, we can help to stop crimes from happening.



We can also help by:

- Giving people support to stop using drugs.
- Making sure that people get support from people who understand their problems.
- Helping people to change before they commit crimes.

To help with this, we will:

- Support families that are having a lot of problems at home.
- Give care and support to children and young people who have broken the law.
- Run projects to help people who have been hurt by very serious violence.
- These projects can stop them from wanting to hurt others.

Feeling safe and included

People should feel safe and included in their local community.

To feel safe and included, people need:

- A safe place to live.
- Enough money to afford the things they need to live.

If everyone feels safe and included, this can help to stop crimes from happening.

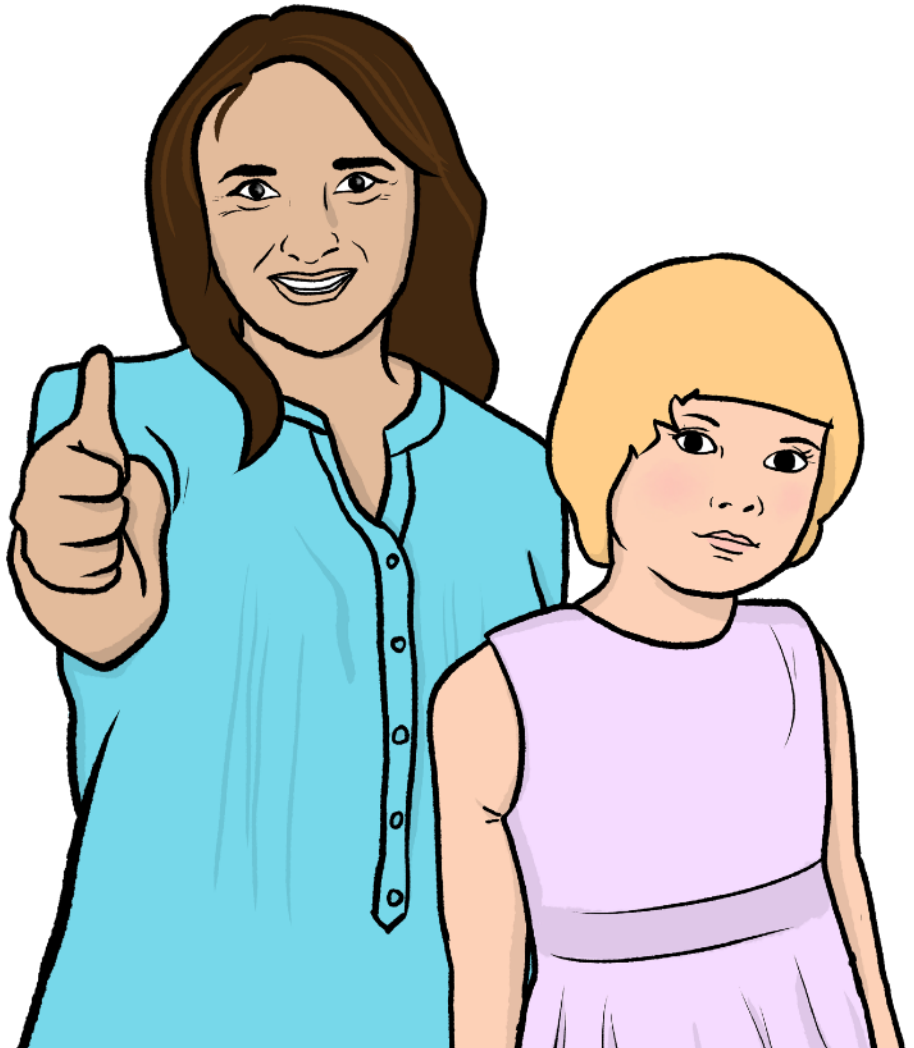


Young people in care live with another family because their own family cannot look after them.

We will give support to **young people in care**.

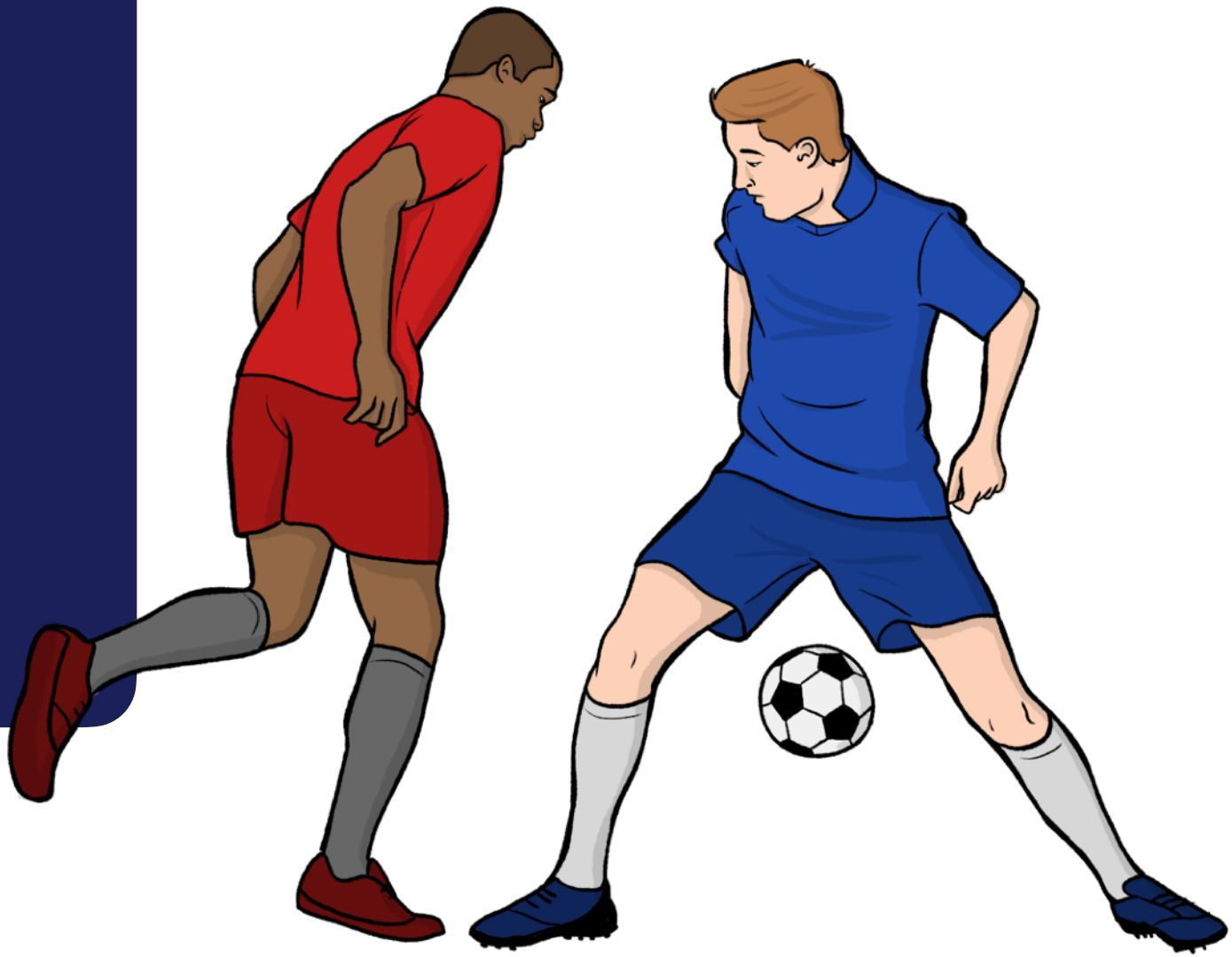
Young people in care can be less likely to stay safe from crime.

If they get support and a place to live, this can make it less likely that they get involved in crime.



We will also:

- Run sports activities for young people who are in danger of becoming involved in crime. These activities can help them to feel safe and included.
- Support young people who have caused problems in their local community. This support can help them to change how they behave.
- Do more to support people who do not have a home.



Learning and jobs

We want to help people go to school, learn skills and get a job.

This can help people to stay out of trouble and have a good life.

Some people do not do well at school.

They can find it hard to get a good job and earn money.

So we should try to support them.



Over the next year, we will try to get more young people and adults to learn skills and get a job.

We will do this by:

- Setting up groups to support children to keep working hard at school.
- Giving schools and families different ways of getting information.
- This will include useful information about staying safe at school.
- Train teachers and other adults to help children who are having serious trouble at home.
- Work to stop men and boys from behaving badly towards women and girls.
- Help people in prison find out how to get a job when they leave.
- This can help to stop them from getting into trouble again.



After crime has happened

We want to:

- Help the people who are hurt by crime.
- Help people who commit crimes to change how they behave.
- Keep the public safe.

But we do not just want to put lots of people in prison.

Some things can make it more likely that people get involved in crime.

If we give people the right support, they might be less likely to commit crime again.



We will:

- Help young people who have been in trouble with the police. We will support them so they do not commit more serious crimes.
- Run projects to help young people who are in gangs to stop them from being violent.
- Run projects that help young men to live better lives.
- Work with young people who have been arrested. We will try to stop them from getting involved in serious crime.
- Run projects that help women who have been in prison to live safer lives.



Some crimes mean that people go to prison.

But for some other crimes, we can safely deal with people without sending them to prison.

This can help them to stop being involved in crime in the future.



Find out more



You can look at our website here:
www.justice-ni.gov.uk

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