

Joaz Williamson: Gun crime speech

(Once the audience is quite, Open with the loud noise of a gunshot and a film clip about gun crime approximately 2 minutes long)

(Begin speech once clip is finished standing tall and addressing audience)

Like the film clip showed, you have choices in life, if you get to those cross roads, where you have to make a decision, make the right one. I have come here today to inform you of dangers of guns, the consequences of picking up a gun and to make sure every single one of you walk out of those doors, knowing you will make the right decision in life (pause 2seconds) the right decision, not to pick up a Gun.

More gun crime is reported in London then in any other part of England, and you're living amongst it, which is why it is key that you are aware of the real dangers of guns and not aware of what some snotty news reporter says. It's easy to become accustom to this commercialised stereotypical view of solutions for gun crime because you hear it in the news and read it in newspapers every day. The Government seem to think they can reduce gun crime buy simply adding in a few new laws in the hope it will scare people out of wanting to pick up a gun. However adding a few new laws won't let you know why it is wrong to pick up a gun or tell you the dangers of picking up a gun or even how to act under peer pressure, which will fundamentally be the main reasons you will not pick up a gun.. what to do if that situation arises where you have to make that choice, and what would happen if you did pick up a gun these are the things that will stop you picking up a gun. Letting you know the facts will prevent gun crime, not the government's scare tactics and their attempts to change laws. People need to know the dangers of picking up a gun, once you do know these dangers I guarantee you in life you will make the right decision.

I have not come here today because I think any of you will pick up a gun, neither have I come here to single any of you out, I have simply come here because you are living amongst gun crime, and I want to make sure you make the right decision if you come across gun crime in the environment you live in and I have come here to make you aware. I'm not accusing any of you of even having a thought in your minds about guns, let alone wanting to pick one up, and that is the worrying matter, what will you do if that situation arises, will you make the wrong decision, or the right one?

I know there are some of you sitting there thinking (sarcastically) of course I would say no to picking up a gun, only someone stupid would, but how would you react under the pressure of 10 of your friends screaming pick up the gun, go on kill him! Or feeling threatened and that gun in your hand being your only choice and your only way out, would you say no then? Or what if that person you look up to, you know the person whose trainers you copy, whose clothes you love, who has that charm with the opposite sex, that person you would love to be, what if that person got a gun (pause) would you do the same. The fact is if a weapon is used in an attack, the likeliness of someone getting hurt doubles and a threatening situation involving a weapon can escalate quickly and become violent. Weapons increase the likelihood of someone being killed, be it the intended victim or the attacker themselves. Even if you pick up a gun with the intents to just threaten and not kill, there's a huge chance you will, and there's a huge chance someone will get hurt, so why do it in the first place?

I myself have been in that position (pause) about 5 years ago a couple of my friends got some money together and got a gun from some guy they knew, all having this glamorous picture of a rich lifestyle in their heads. This may have been because of the type of lifestyle they saw people with guns having, like rap stars and actors in movies. None of them wanted to kill anyone they just loved the feeling they got and they loved the fact that it made others scared of them just because they had a gun, when they held it in their hands they all suddenly felt power you could just see it in their faces.

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I remember them passing it to me and staring into its dark long barrel and just not wanting to move, at that moment I thought to myself I'm holding something in my hand that could take a life away. That night they were all planning to go and rob some off licence. They all wanted to get some quick money as they called it, however I couldn't go that night because I had football and even though I could of easily got out of going, however I was glad to have an excuse.

Being the idiot I was, I said I would go next time knowing I couldn't make football an excuse every single time. None of my friends were killers (pause) they all just loved the fact that with that gun in their hands they could click their fingers and the most powerful person in the world would jump. That night one of my friends died, another become a killer, and the rest went to prison (pause) I was so glad i didn't go and so glad that there was no next time. (pause) it was scary how a situation they felt they had so much control over turned so nasty. This is why I can not emphasis enough, that even if you pick up a gun with no intent to hurt anyone the likeliness of you doing so is huge, so why risk it?

It was a shame that it took something like that for me to realise I was wasting my life and to realise I needed to make the right choices in life.

Sometimes you can't help but get yourself into those positions, but why be in those places and why have those friends that could in theory ruin your life?

I'd like you all to visualise yourselves in my position, would you have gone along with your friends because it was the cool thing to do, or would you of said no and kept your life. Gun crime is like a never ending spiral, once your involved in it you can never escape it and it all starts by making that choice in life to

By picking up a gun your not only endangering yourself you're endangering others around you friends family and loved ones. If you yourself feel you have nothing to lose, think about the guilt you would feel by being responsible for someone else's death, having the fact that you are the reason someone else is dead, when all you did was pick up a gun, could you live with yourself? I couldn't.

You have options in life, chose the right one. Thank you all for listening and as I said before I hope you all walk out of those doors knowing you will take the right path in life, life's to short why cut it even shorter and by picking up a gun its like choosing death itself. (Hand out anti gun grime stickers to everyone as they leave so they remember the speech)