Influence Of Peer Pressure On Young Adults

Peer pressure and anti-social behaviour is a serious offence which is commonly used by the younger generation, the majority of those influenced being teenagers. Negative peer pressure influences a larger number of teenagers to take advantage of alcohol abuse and encourages drug taking, smoking and anti-social behaviour. (Raising Children network. (2018) Peer pressure and influence: teenagers). Alcohol is the most common type of drug which is used and abused which is a contributing factor which subsequently leads to carrying out anti-social behaviour. The main explanation for the increase in adolescent crime levels and drug taking is being pressured and influenced by the peers around them. Joining ‘gangs’ to feel a sense of belonging is another reason individual’s perform anti-social behaviour. Every teenager wants to fit in and feel a sense of belonging being a part of a ‘gang’ or the ‘popular group’ however, certain individuals might find it harder to feel as though they are ‘fitting in’. For those people to feel a connection or to be included, they often resort to doing something they wouldn’t normally do. (Marcelina Hardy. B. (2018). Types of peer pressure| Lovetoknow. [online] Lovetoknow). This in turn may lead them down the ‘wrong path’ causing them to make the wrong choice. Due to being pressured and influential factors these individuals may fall into the world of ‘gangs’ who commit crimes. Committing crimes may seem like the only way to feel involved with the people they choose to associate themselves with. Anti-social behaviours will be displayed and acted upon in various ways, one way may be taking advantage of alcohol or hooliganism e.g. During this literature review I will be discussing the negative effect peer pressure has on teenagers and how it affects them physically and mentally and what causes them to carry out anti-social behaviours.

Carrying out further research on the main source of peer pressure and what circumstances follow, I noticed a theme which was persistently occurring. The gathered evidence showed clearly that younger generations ranging from secondary high school students to nineteen-year olds would be more easily influenced and encouraged to do things they wouldn’t normally do, which was stated previously in the introduction. (Webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk. (2018). The majority of the peer pressure which is around today currently will most likely result in anti-social behaviour arising. This is since peer pressure is abroad term and can range from minor offences such as; skipping a lesson at school to then a more serious situation when drugs, alcohol and bullying begins to get involved. Marcelina Hardy. B. (2018). Types of peer pressure| Lovetoknow. [online] Lovetoknow. Another way influential factor maybe due to social and economic factors that contribute towards peer pressure based on geography I.e working class areas which have less money than high class areas which will lead to more anti-social behaviour equalling to increased peer pressure.

Conformity and obedience can also become an issue as young adults will be so used to listening and being persuaded that when this does happen, they might not even think twice about doing something they shouldn’t. Firstly, stating that ‘anti-social behaviour’ fits under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, defining under this act coming from the Police UK website (Police. uk. (2018). Anti-social behaviour - Police.uk.) stating, ‘covers a wide range of unacceptable activity that causes harm to an individual, to their community or to their environment.’ Examples covering this can include from; rowdy behaviour within local areas/streets, inappropriate use of language (swearing), vandalism and street drinking with the

list continuing widely. Anti-social behaviour triggers criminal behaviour alongside the rest, ‘gangs’ have always been an issue across Great Britain with them demonstrating how younger people will do anything to be a part of something and how they may feel obliged to participate with peers in anti-social behaviour. Conformity also fits into this category of ‘gangs’ as a section of young people become a part of gangs leading to anti-social behaviour. In the recent article which was produced on ‘July 4, 2017’ states that “Nearly 50,000 children are now in dangerous gangs” (O'Brien, Z. (2017). BROKEN BRITAIN: Nearly 50,000 children are now in dangerous gangs, says bombshell report. [online] Express.co.uk.) Younger people are more likely to be pressured into joining gangs as some believe that gangs allow individuals to feel a sense of protection and security, being accepted and for a higher status within the local area they live in while also feeling accepted by others. Being pressured to join a gang is clearly in high demand across the UK as so many young individuals are becoming involved, joining gangs may be harder for others as they might not be easily accepted as others so they will become pressured by the ‘gang’ members to perform an act of anti-social behaviour to prove themselves that they belong within the ‘gang’. In a real-life case study documented by (Sky News. (2018). 'Fighting and blood': Ex-gang member describes his life of drugs and violence.) published a story of a young boy named ‘Sephton Henry’ and his troubled younger years being brought up in a deprived upbringing and environment where he himself was pressured by others around him including his own siblings to join a ‘gang’. His journey started at the age of eight where he would deliver drugs for his older brothers with him then being rewarded, the peer pressure of performing anti-social behaviour started here as he would be performing the task of a drug dealer in the streets. As he got older, he was then forced and pressured to take the drugs and became addicted to drug usage. Older boys would degrade Sephton, leaving him feeling vulnerable and rejected, this is when the attraction to a ‘gang’ appealed to Sephton as he felt he had a sense belonging. Violence and anti-social behaviour had always been a huge part of his life so joining a ‘gang’ he felt empowered and protected. However, joining the ‘gang’ anti-social behaviour had engulfed his life as he would be dealing drugs, stealing and robbing from anyone and everything, instigating fights with anyone who tried to step in his way. Sephton was in a vulnerable situation which led to people taking advantage of him and pressured him into doing something which he didn’t want, to performing a common type of anti-social behaviour involving drug usage and fighting which fits under the Crime and disorder act 1998.

Another real-life scenario published by Balloo, S. (2018). This is what it's really like to be a member of a Birmingham ‘gang’. [online] birminghammail. Is focused on how a young boy (not named) resulted being pressured into a gang as he was left so vulnerable from a young age, ‘he was left broken’ and desperate so that he believed the only option was to become a part of a ‘gang’ where he would feel the acceptance, belonging and safety. Like the other story, they both started at young ages looking for a sense of belonging and security and to a part of something. This gang also enforced anti-social behaviour upon the young boy as he was involved in drug usage and drug dealing. The young boy documented stating that “The proof of loyalty is putting your life at risk for your brothers, no matter what”. Suggesting that when joining a gang, you will feel pressured to always look out for each other no matter what the situation, which including anti-social behaviour; by fighting, drug usage and knife crime and doing things which normally would be out of character for you.

After completing my research on this literature review, I have come across and outlined the most common reason individuals of an impressionable nature result in joining a gang. The previous three sections connect with one another all leading to a negative outcome, young

individuals will join ‘gangs’ either because they feel a sense of vulnerability, lack of safety and security or because they feel pressured by others around them to participate in ‘gang’ related activities which wouldn’t normally be in their everyday nature. Both resources which I investigated, both linked and had several similarities of how peer pressure encourages individuals to join a ‘gang’ and then how it leads to anti-social behaviour. Both individuals involved carried out the same life style and gang related actives from a young age showing the link between them feeling vulnerable to join gangs for security. Both pressured to do out of character things such as; drug dealing, carrying weapons on their person for the older members or even taking drugs themselves. They carry out these anti-social behaviours to fit in which is demonstrated by both scenarios above. Being brought into the world of ‘gangs’ and anti-social behaviour at a young age you are more influenced impressionable and pressured to do the bidding of the elder members who take advantage of the younger members vulnerability and use it against them by demanding and forcing them to do things. Being a young ‘gang’ member, you will not react or challenge what is being expected of you and from examples above this is how you will be initiated, by being influenced and pressurised to carry out anti-social behaviour. Each of the previous sections all link to one another and can all escalate the issue of being pressured to perform anti-social behaviour for example; influenced to join a gang, be initiated/in-doctrinated (“brain washed”) in the gang and then as a result carrying out the anti-social behaviours which concludes how all three sections can become a huge part of young teenagers lives to do things they wouldn’t normally do.