# Youth crime – Kenny MacAskill – Transcript

***What are the main causes of youth crime?***

**Kenny MacAskill**: The main causes of youth crime: alcohol abuse. It's the main cause for all crime in Scotland. In the main, it's alcohol abuse. If I had a penny for every time I meet people who do, whether it's silly things, sometimes it's just showing off, or whether it's more serious events, then I would be very rich and Scotland would be a lot safer.

So, in the main, I think it's youngsters, for whatever reason, accessing cheap drink - but it's not just youngsters - tonight in Edinburgh, see if people were to drink responsibly, then the police would have a remarkably quiet night. It's why the police say that the policeman's best friend is rain because people tend to stay in and not go out and do things.

I've been in things like Polmont Young Offenders Institute. I've met young guys, slightly older than the lads here. Nice young guys who will say to me, and you look at them and you think 'happy go ... chat around with them, and they'll say: 'Never ran with a gang, never carried a knife. We went to a party one night in a small town, not in a bad area in Scotland, round the West, but a small town in Ayrshire. An argument started, drank too much, was in the kitchen, before he knows it he's picked up a knife.'

His life's changed for a long, long time forever because jobs won't be available to him once he's released. He's not a bad kid. If he had his time back he wouldn't, certainly wouldn't have used a knife. But if he had rolled it back and hadn't drank as much as he did in the manner, so I think that for youth crime as for all offences in Scotland, if we get a more sensible relationship with alcohol, their matters will drop ......

[End of transcript]