Alcohol – Violence Reduction Unit – Transcript

***Is alcohol the main cause of violent crime?***

**Karyn McCluskey, director of the Violence Reduction Unit:**I think it doesn’t help. It’s a really difficult thing because you could give me drink and I would fall asleep because that’s just what I’m like and I don’t drink very often.

But for other people, if you have a propensity to be violent, so say you don’t have the empathy and the communication skills etcetera, and then you add alcohol into the mix, can I tell you that’s a very dangerous mix.

And we all know people who shouldn’t drink, you know, because they get violent, and when we look at some of the statistics, sometimes 80% of our crime has alcohol involved at some level.

Now they may not be drunk, but they might be disinhibited. You drink a bit and you feel disinhibited. And it’s a really toxic thing.

And when we look at how much people drink, people are lying to themselves because they think they stay within normal limits and a whole range of other things and they don’t; we drink to excess and we drink to get drunk. We have a really interesting relationship with alcohol and I don’t think anyone has particularly explained it very well.

But there is something that we need to teach, I suppose, young people and indeed adults and parents. It is that actually we can live lives with much less alcohol in it and that we have to understand that it has an effect on us and sometimes the effect’s not very good.

[End of transcript]