# Getting involved in crime – Transcript

***How did you first become involved in crime?***

**James**: Gang fighting basically, and I got arrested and I got convicted of a serious assault and I got locked up for two years. I went to a secure unit, it’s like a children's prison and I was under what was known at the time as a court order, a 206, where they keep you, it’s different from a panel order if you’re dealt with by the Children’s Panel.

A court order is you’ve been sentenced, like an adult, but you can’t go to an adults’ prison because you’re not an adult, you’re only a boy. And I spent time there.

When I look back on it, I probably had to be there at the time because my life was that chaotic, my behaviour was ridiculous when I look back on it. I had social work; I told them lies as well. And they must have known because my mum would go in and out of women’s refuges.

And I remember being in one particular refuge, I just seemed to be constantly in trouble. This is what happened. I was hungry, really hungry, I was starving and I climbed up on a fridge to try and get cereal and I toppled the full fridge on top of me. And the woman who worked in the women’s refuge, I don’t know who she was, gave me into trouble.

When I think back at that and I look at it, if a kid is climbing on a fridge to try and get something to eat, and I got into bother for trying to survive basically. And I wanted to run away from there. My big brother ran away from there.

And then eventually we ended up going back home and sometimes that would happen; we would go to this women’s refuge and I would come home from school and my mum would say: 'Right, we’re leaving'.

'Where we going?'

She would just whip us all into a women’s refuge. And the thing about that, that’s happening to me in primary school, so if that stuff is happening in primary school, and I’ve not really gone into graphic detail about some of the experiences that happened to me, but if some of that is happening to you as a child, it’s definitely going to hinder your development.

[End of transcript]