



# WEEK 2 THE JOURNEY CONTINUES

In film 2, we hear about how Emma was drawn into county lines drug smuggling. We also learn about community resilience and how our individual and corporate response can make a massive difference in protecting vulnerable people from exploitation and noticing those who are already in the grip of slavery.

## WATCH FIRST ENCOUNTERS



### Film questions

- Was Emma the sort of girl you'd expect to get drawn into county lines?
  - What led to her involvement?
  - What were the clues she was getting drawn into county lines?
- How are families secondary victims of modern slavery?
- What do you understand by the term "community resilience?"
- How can communities play a role in protecting vulnerable people from slavery?



### Consider these images:

- What might it look like to show compassion to victims of modern slavery in your community?
- What is the first step?
  - Who can you notice and reach out to in your neighbourhood?





## NEXT STEPS ON YOUR JOURNEY

If “community resilience” is a new concept for you and you would like to find out more, the best thing to do is sign up for The Clewer Initiative’s Breaking County Lines or Hidden Voices course. Both of these courses consider in greater detail how a community can respond to modern slavery.

- Sign up for Breaking County Lines  
<https://theclewerinitiative.org/training-and-events/breaking-county-lines>
- Contact us about running a Hidden Voices course in your community  
[clewerinitiative@churchofengland.org](mailto:clewerinitiative@churchofengland.org)



## FURTHER READING

### WHAT IS COMMUNITY RESILIENCE?

In film 2, we talk about community resilience which can sound a bit technical. According to the dictionary, “community resilience is the sustained ability of communities to withstand, adapt to, and recover from adversity.” The Clewer Initiative is founded on a community resilience approach – we believe that modern slavery can only be eliminated at a community level where relationships are strong and where individuals are looking out for their neighbours' welfare.

Find out more about community resilience on our website -  
<https://theclewerinitiative.org/what-we-do/working-in-communities-1>

### WHAT IS COUNTY LINES?

In film 2, we hear the story of a girl drawn into county lines before her family can intervene. County lines involves the supply of illegal drugs from large urban areas to smaller cities, towns and provincial locations using dedicated mobile phones, known as deal lines, to take orders. Criminal gangs frequently target children and vulnerable adults to facilitate the county lines - manipulating and coercing them into drug trafficking and distribution. Young women are sometimes specifically recruited because they less are likely to attract suspicion from law enforcement.



**One of the tragedies of our time, which allows modern slavery to thrive, is the collapse of neighbourhoods.**

*Bishop Alastair Redfern,  
Chair of The Clewer Initiative*



## VICTIMS OF COUNTY LINES REFERRED INTO THE NATIONAL REFERRAL MECHANISM IN 2021

In 2021, **2,053** county lines referrals were flagged, a **23%** increase from 2020

The majority ( **76%** ) of these referrals were for male victims.

### BREAKING COUNTY LINES

By strengthening relationships within a community, we can help discourage the presence of county lines activity. There are many different things we can do to build community resilience – all of them take time, effort and perseverance. On The Clewer Initiative's Breaking County Lines course, we think in detail about county lines and practical steps communities can take to grow in resilience.

### SUPPORTING FAMILIES

In film 2, we saw how modern slavery affects a whole family. Sometimes parents, grandparents, foster carers and teachers can be unaware that county lines' gangs are targeting children in their midst. For this reason, we have developed a range of county lines' seminars for different groups. <https://theclewerinitiative.org/training-and-events/breaking-county-lines>

“ As human beings, we tend to form cliques and love to be in the “in crowd.” We often don't look across what can be quite a wide chasm. Sadly, human beings have always had the capacity to penetrate and exploit these gaps. If we are to tackle modern slavery in our communities, we must build bridges across these gaps and prevent them getting wider. Community resilience can sound slightly jargony. In essence, it means creating communities that are aware and feel safe and include all their members.

*Hilary Lines, Executive Team Coach and volunteer with The Clewer Initiative*



## ROB'S JOURNEY

**Rob has been working for The Clewer Initiative for the last year as a part-time trainer and facilitator. He has developed some of our county lines resources and was recently asked to use them in a totally new and challenging setting.**

The senior management team at a local primary school knew of Rob's modern slavery work and asked him for help when they became concerned about four young boys who were involved in county lines.

Rob explains: "When I'm not working for The Clewer Initiative, I am a creative education specialist using art to get alongside vulnerable children. The staff at one of the schools I work in was worried about four boys who were at extreme risk of expulsion. The staff, social services and police believed that keeping the children in school was the best place for them because if they were expelled or sent to a Pupil Referral Unit, it would only lead them further into the criminal world they were already a part of. As I knew the children through the art work I had been doing in the school, I was asked to adapt The Clewer Initiative's existing county lines material and use it to educate the boys about the dangers of county lines and begin the long work of showing them they have choices.

"I am spending time with each boy, one -to-one, thinking about how you know who to trust; how county lines drug gangs operate; how the senior gang members are benefitting from their involvement and where it might lead in the long run.

"The children face huge pressure to work for the gang, delivering drugs, and it is hard for them to imagine any other life. I am hoping that by working together over an extended period, the children may begin to see that there are other options and know who to turn to and trust if they want to talk.

"As I work with these children, I am convinced more and more that early intervention is key. Once children are embedded in a county lines gang, it is extremely hard for them to leave. It is so important we give children the tools to resist county lines before they get groomed and manipulated. The Clewer Initiative has such brilliant resources for primary and secondary aged children and it is critical we get them into the hands of teachers, carers and social workers to help them in the vital work of caring for, supporting and equipping vulnerable children to avoid county lines."