



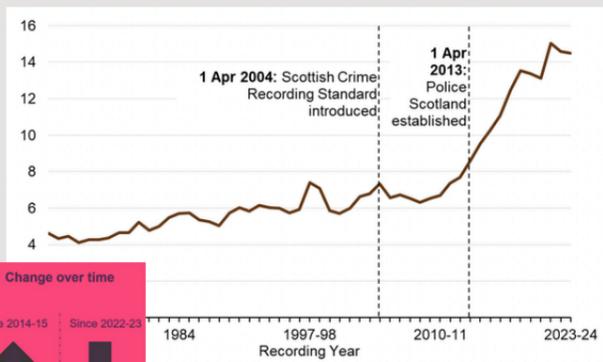
# Violence Prevention



The Missing Link concept. Reduce threats. Get active.

## Self Defence for girls and women

The Missing Link concept of women's and girls' self defence training is being introduced in Scotland, focusing on psychological preparedness and de-escalation rather than purely physical combat techniques. Self assertiveness training can be an important brick to build a wall against sexual violence that has been growing in Scotland over the last decade.



### Building Confidence, Not Fear: Rethinking Self-Defence

Over 70% of sexual assaults are committed by someone the victim knows—not a stranger in the shadows. The key to prevention lies in boundaries. Teaching young people to recognize when something feels wrong, assert their personal limits, and project confidence can prevent situations from escalating. Research shows that more than 80% of attackers stop when they meet resistance or face clear boundaries. Fear-based messaging, like focusing on strangers or dramatic headlines, only feeds anxiety. Instead, we should empower girls to be confident, adventurous, and assertive—qualities that make them less likely to be seen as targets. Self-defence is about more than physical skills; it's about awareness and self-worth. Empowerment begins by shifting the narrative. Let's stop teaching fear and start teaching strength.

The programme is based on a violence prevention concept originally developed by German police forces in Bonn and Bergisch Gladbach. The system was brought to the UK by Heero Miketta, who taught these courses across Germany, and is now being implemented in Scotland under the guidance of Matthew Law, a Glasgow police officer and former close protection specialist.

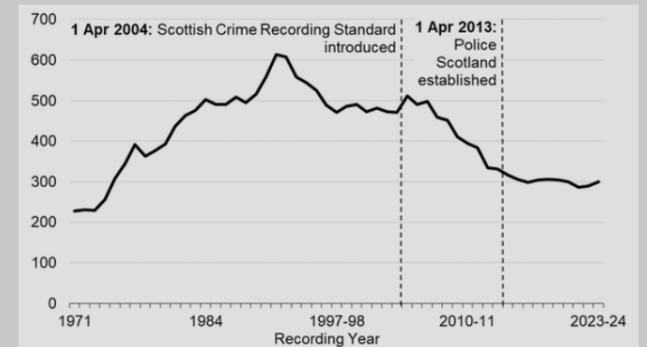
### Comprehensive Training Approach

Unlike traditional martial arts classes, the programme emphasises assertiveness training, risk assessment, and conflict de-escalation as primary tools. Participants learn to recognise potentially dangerous situations and develop strategies to avoid or defuse them before physical intervention becomes necessary.

Research from Germany supports this approach, with criminology studies showing that assertive verbal defence alone succeeds in 68% of assault situations, rising to 83% when combined with strong, confident responses. The training incorporates these psychological elements alongside practical physical techniques designed for real-world application.

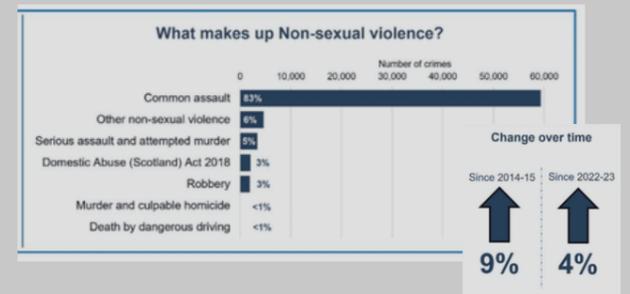
The programme covers understanding violence and its sources, personal boundaries and communication, stress management, body language awareness, and a focused selection of simple but effective physical techniques. Emphasis is placed on practical methods that can be quickly learned and confidently applied.

Police recorded crime in Scotland is currently at one of its lowest levels since 1974. That might sound good, yet some of the most dangerous threats have seen concerning increases.



Overall violent crime recorded during 2023/24 was higher than in recent years, primarily due to elevated levels of common assault, which accounted for 91.6% of all violent crime that year. Non-sexual crimes of violence have risen significantly:

- 11,323 crimes recorded in 2023/24
- 9.7% higher than the previous year
- 21.3% higher than the five-year average



What is even more concerning is the rise of sexual offences. Reports from Rape Crisis Scotland and the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) show alarming trends. Sexual crimes have increased by 18% over the five-year average (see article on the left).

A growing number of students and parents in schools ask for self defence and assertiveness training for girls, an approach that now also the First Minister supports.



### Young offenders

Young people are disproportionately represented in crime statistics. Data shows a concerning spike in offending behaviour immediately after children transition from primary to secondary education. An important topic to look into (see page 2).

Tailored programs to integrate violence prevention into school culture: Targeted violence prevention programs for primary and secondary schools. - **Primary Schools:** Quick, foundational Self Security sessions with teacher prep. - **Secondary Schools:** Specialized Girls Self Defence and mixed sessions for practical empowerment. - **Long-Term Integration:** Network training to embed prevention school-wide.

# Violence Prevention in schools. Targeted training concepts.

## Primary Schools: Building Foundation Skills

For primary levels, we offer Self Security training—an engaging two-hour session (optionally delivered in two separate modules) for students. Essential to our approach, we meet with teaching staff beforehand to understand the class situation and adapt materials to students' needs, ensuring maximum relevance and effect.

## Secondary Schools: Realistic and Empowering

For older students, the offer broadens:

- **Girls' Self Defence:** A holistic, scenario-based course exclusively designed and led by a female instructor, underpinned by the proven German police model. The programme begins with understanding real-life risks, societal myths, and assertiveness, followed by practical self-defence training. Male instructors—serving as role-players—help deliver realistic physical scenarios, fostering effective responses. Sessions are flexible to fit individual school requirements, and include a teacher pre-meeting and a thorough debrief.
- **Self Security Mixed Sessions:** Gender-mixed options are also available, focusing on risk assessment, assertiveness, and conflict de-escalation. These programs create space for all students to gain vital personal safety and communication strategies.



## For schools ready for the Next Step: Whole School Training

We offer a structured Violence Prevention Network Training for schools seeking deep, sustainable impact:

- It starts with a two-hour teacher training, introducing the philosophy behind effective violence prevention and hands-on classroom strategies.
- Working collaboratively, we help schools develop curriculum-wide tools for conflict management—integrating these methods into diverse subjects like arts, social science, English, and history.
- Our team guides each school in building an action plan: embedding prevention into the School Handbook and School Improvement Plan, ensuring a consistent, visible structure for student safety and wellbeing.



**Self Security**

Feel safe in your city.  
Know dangers and solutions.  
Course concepts for individuals  
and organizations

- Understanding and recognising urban violence and its sources**
- Victim – and offender – profiles
  - Personal limits and boundaries
  - Awareness and clear communication

- Definition of violence**
- Understanding
  - Prevention & de-escalation

- Personal experiences**
- Success stories
  - Exchange of experiences
  - Warning signs

- Fear and stress**
- Physiological functions
  - Mental effects
  - Methods to cope

- Assertiveness face to face**
- Typical conflict scenarios
  - Simple rhetoric for de-escalation
  - Body language

- Physical self defence**
- A small set of simple techniques
  - Straightforward and pragmatic
  - High realism
  - Weapons yes or no?



**Practical Violence Prevention for Everyone:** Our Self Security courses offer a comprehensive approach to personal safety, combining psychological preparation with practical, easily-applicable methods.

### Flexible Format

We offer various course formats to suit different needs:

- 2-hour impulse workshops for basic awareness
- Weekend intensives (3 hours per day)
- Multi-day comprehensive programs
- Regular follow-up sessions

The training is designed for small to medium-sized groups, making it ideal for:

- Corporate environments
- Educational institutions
- Community organizations
- Healthcare facilities
- Public service agencies

Rather than focusing on complex martial arts techniques, we emphasize practical solutions that work under stress. Our scenario-based training ensures participants can apply what they've learned in realistic situations, building both competence and confidence.

# 300 Euro Strafe für Überfall auf Studentin

Karateschülerin (20) vertrieb Sextäter

Die Polizei rät zur Vorsicht: „Wehren kann auch bedeuten, um Hilfe zu schreien.“

VON TIM STINAUER

Ein dunkler Weg in einem Wohngebiet in Merheim, Donnerstagabend, kurz vor 23 Uhr. Daphnie S. ist auf dem Heimweg, die Jurastudentin wohnt bei ihren Eltern. In der Innenstadt hat sie einen lustigen Abend mit Freunden in einer Kneipe verbracht, anschließend ist sie mit der Straßenbahnlinie 1 bis zur Haltestelle Merheim gefahren und dort ausgestiegen. „Nach ein paar Schritten bemerkte ich, dass jemand hinter mir war“, erinnert sich die 20-Jährige. Sie lässt den Fremden überholen. Ein unheimliches Gefühl überkommt die junge Frau. Am Ende der Straße dreht sich der Unbekannte um, tritt auf sie zu und stammelt: „Entschuldigung.“ Dann zückt er ein Messer, hält es Daphnie S. an den Hals und versucht, sie in eine dunkle Ecke zu drängen.

„Ich hatte gar keine Zeit, groß nachzudenken, was ich tun soll“, berichtet die 20-Jährige. Reflexartig hob sie ihren Arm, drückte dem Angreifer die Kehle zu. Das wirkte: Der Täter ließ die Klinge sinken, befreite sich aus dem Griff und rannte davon.

Als sie heimkam, rief ihr Vater die Polizei. Streifenbeamte nahmen den Tatverdächtigen noch in der Nähe des Tatorts fest. Er war betrunken, vorbestraft, stand in Köln schon we-

gen Körperverletzung vor Gericht. Dass ihre Gegenattacke auch schlimme Folgen hätte haben können, „darüber habe ich in dem Moment nicht nachgedacht“, berichtet die 20-Jährige.

Den Griff an die Kehle hatte sie zahllose Male geübt – beim Karate-Training, das sie seit zehn Jahren besucht. „Sie ist geschult im Umgang mit körperlichen Angriffen. Im Training geht es eben nicht nur um Kampfkunst und Sport, sondern auch um Selbstverteidigung“, sagt Daphnies Lehrer Heero Miketta. Dennoch gibt Heike Afflerbach von der Kölner Polizei zu bedenken: „Sie war zum Glück geübt. Andernfalls hätte das auch nach hinten losgehen können.“ Afflerbach rät daher: „Wehren ja, aber wie, das kommt auf die Situation an, auch ob der Täter kräftig ist oder bewaffnet.“

Wehren kann ebenso bedeuten, laut um Hilfe zu schreien.“ Einer Studie der Polizei Bielefeld zufolge brechen weit mehr als die Hälfte aller Sexualtäter, die ihrem Opfer zum ersten Mal begegnen, ihren Angriff bei Gegenwehr ab. Daphnie S. ist ihrem Peiniger kürzlich noch einmal begegnet – im Gerichtssaal.

„Er hat mich kein einziges Mal angesehen und behauptet, sich nicht an den Vorfall erinnern zu können“, berichtet sie. Vom Urteil – 300 Euro Geldstrafe – ist die 20-Jährige enttäuscht. „Zu wenig“, findet die Jurastudentin. „Eine Haftstrafe auf Bewährung hätte ich angemessen gefunden.“

Bei Gegenwehr ergreifen neun von zehn Tätern die Flucht

In ihrer Studie „Sexuelle Gewalt gegen Frauen“ haben Experten der Bielefelder Polizei Sexualstraftaten ausgewertet, die zwischen 1997 und 2002 im Bereich der Bezirksregierung Detmold verübt wurden. In zwei von drei Fällen kannten sich Täter und Opfer vor der Tat, zumindest flüchtig. Die Hälfte aller Übergriffe auf Frauen geschah an Wochenenden, meistens abends und nachts.

Zwei Drittel aller Vergewaltigungen wurden in der Wohnung des Täters oder des Opfers verübt. Zu sexueller Nötigung dagegen kam es vor allem auf der Straße, in Parks oder auf Parkplätzen.

Neun von zehn Frauen wehrten sich gegen die Übergriffe im öffentlichen Raum. In acht von zehn Fällen ergriffen die Männer daraufhin die Flucht. (ts)



Daphnie S. BILD: KNEIPS

A real-world success story: Daphnie, a former student of Heero Miketta in Germany, used her training to fend off an attempted sexual assault, as reported in the “Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger”. The English translation:

## 300 Euro Fine for Assault on Student A 20-year-old karate student chased away a sexual offender.

The police advise caution: "Self-defense can also mean screaming for help."

By Tim Stinauer

A dark path in a residential area in Merheim, Thursday evening, shortly before 11 pm. Daphnie S. is on her way home; the law student lives with her parents. She had spent a fun evening with friends at a pub in the city center and then took tram line 1 to the Merheim stop. After a few steps, she noticed someone behind her. "I noticed someone was behind me," recalls the 20-year-old. She let the stranger pass. An unsettling feeling overcame the young woman. At the end of the street, the stranger turned around, approached her, and stammered, "Excuse me." Then he pulled out a knife, held it to Daphnie S.'s throat, and tried to force her into a dark corner.

"I didn't have time to think about what to do," reports the 20-year-old. Instinctively, she raised her arm and grabbed the attacker's throat. It worked: The attacker dropped the blade, freed himself from her grip, and ran away. When she got home, her father called the police. Patrol officers apprehended the suspect nearby. He was drunk, had a criminal record, and had been known to police in Cologne before. He was charged with assault causing bodily harm. The fact that her counterattack could have had serious consequences didn't occur to her at the moment, she reports.

She had practiced the throat hold countless times in her karate training, which she's been doing for ten years. "She is trained in dealing with physical attacks. Training isn't just about martial arts and sports, but also about self-defense," says Daphnie's instructor, Heero Miketta. Nevertheless, Heike Afflerbach from the Cologne police cautions: "She was luckily trained. Otherwise, it could have gone badly for her." Afflerbach therefore advises: "Self-defense, yes, but how? It depends on the situation, and whether the attacker is strong or armed. Self-defense can also mean screaming loudly for help." According to a study by Bielefeld police, more than half of all sexual offenders who encounter their victim for the first time abandon their attack if the victim resists. Daphnie S. recently encountered her assailant again – in the courtroom.

"He didn't look at me once and claimed not to remember the incident," she says. The 20-year-old is disappointed with the verdict—a 300 euro fine. "Too little," finds the law student. "A suspended sentence would have been more appropriate."

## When meeting resistance, nine out of ten offenders flee

In their study, "Sexual Violence Against Women," experts from the Bielefeld police evaluated sexual offenses. In two out of three cases, the perpetrator and victim knew each other, at least fleetingly. Half of all attacks on women occurred on weekends, mostly in the evenings and at night. Two-thirds of all rapes occurred in the perpetrator's or victim's apartment. Sexual coercion, however, most often occurred on the street, in parks, or in parking lots. Nine out of ten women resisted attacks in public places. In eight out of ten cases, the men fled. (ts)

## Health concepts.

Creating resilience, awareness, and inner strength are the foundation for personal safety and overall wellbeing. We develop bespoke concepts that integrate martial arts principles with modern fitness and teamwork methodologies.

Qi Gong is one of our key offerings in this holistic approach. This ancient Chinese practice combines physical exercises with meditative movement, creating "meditation in motion." The practice simultaneously strengthens the body while calming the mind, offering participants a powerful tool for stress management, improved focus, and enhanced physical health.

Our instructors bring proven expertise from corporate environments, having delivered wellness and team development programs for organizations including Volkswagen, Allianz, and Reebok. Whether you're an individual seeking personal development, a team looking to strengthen collaboration, or a business wanting to invest in employee wellbeing, we create tailored concepts that address your specific needs.

Our violence prevention initiative are driven by our core team and our partners, Violence Prevention Scotland SCIO and Empowering Scotland CIC.



- **Heero Miketta:** As the founder of Missing Link Martial Arts and a published author, Heero brings 40 years of experience in martial arts. He has served as an expert in self-defence and violence prevention for the German police, as well as supporting various organisations on related topics.
- **Matthew Law:** Our Chief Instructor for Scotland, Matthew has over 20 years of international teaching experience. His background in close protection and threat analysis, combined with his role as an active Police Officer, provides invaluable real-world insight.
- **Qurat Williams:** As a secondary school teacher with experience across multiple councils, she supports young people from diverse backgrounds. Trained in mental health first aid, youth resilience, and mentoring, she brings experience of CBT and CFT into her work. Qurat supports schools and the wider community with a trauma-informed, respectful, and emotionally intelligent approach.

This core team is supported by a wider network of experienced instructors and specialists, allowing us to deliver comprehensive and tailored programs for communities and institutions across Scotland.

# The heart of prevention: Respectful connections.

When we think of violence, the image that often comes to mind is of a physical fight. But this picture is incomplete. What about the daily conflicts and pressures that don't leave visible bruises but still cause real harm? To truly prevent violence, we must broaden our understanding and focus not just on actions, but on their effects.

A more effective, victim-centered approach defines violence as anything that causes mental or physical harm. This means that when someone feels hurt, ignored, disrespected, or pressured, violence has occurred. This perspective looks beyond narrow legal definitions to the lived experience of those affected, recognizing that emotional scars can take far longer to heal than physical ones.

## Respect: The Core of Violence Prevention

This understanding leads to the core of our approach: violence prevention means creating respectful connections between individuals and within communities. Respect is the most vital word in the language of violence prevention. Constructive relationships are built on mutual respect for both physical and emotional boundaries. It is in communities that actively foster these connections that individuals can truly flourish.

Prevention is a two-way street that empowers everyone:

- **Fostering Resilience:** Potential victims can be empowered by building resilience, self-confidence, and assertiveness. This helps individuals develop a strong sense of personal agency and the ability to navigate conflict without escalation. It involves fostering the strength to not be hurt by minor challenges, while also developing a keen awareness of personal limits and the ability to clearly defend them.
- **Encouraging Empathy:** Potential perpetrators must learn to see, understand, and respect the boundaries of others. This requires developing empathy and a conscience that makes one feel accountable for hurting other people.

## The Modern Challenge of "Debodification"

A significant challenge to building respectful connections in our modern world is a phenomenon called "de-bodification" — a growing disconnect between our minds and our bodies. With our lives increasingly lived through screens, many experiences have become virtual.

While not inherently negative, this lifestyle reduces direct physical and emotional engagement with the world, creating a disconnect that makes it harder to sense our own boundaries and recognise when we are crossing someone else's.

By neglecting our physical and emotional cues, boundaries become blurry. This makes assertiveness and resilience more difficult to cultivate. This erosion of boundary awareness is a primary reason for the lack of respectful connections. To counter this, creating physical and holistic experiences is a vital part of violence prevention. Practices like martial arts, movement, and even simple breathwork can reconnect the mind and body, fostering the self-awareness and emotional intelligence that are the cornerstones of managing conflict constructively.

## Responsibility in a World of Conflict

We must also acknowledge that some forms of structural and psychological violence are a part of life in organised societies. School grades, penalties, and even critical feedback from a manager can feel like a personal attack to the person on the receiving end.

While we cannot eliminate conflict or accountability, their existence places a profound responsibility on anyone in a position of power, including parents, teachers, and managers. Their duty is to handle these necessary pressures with the greatest possible respect. The goal should always be to offer a path toward improvement, not simply to punish and create a "loser-position". Ultimately, violence prevention requires a cultural shift. It extends beyond reactive measures and into the daily work of building communities where respect, responsibility, and mutual understanding thrive. By treating boundaries not as threats, but as bridges to deeper understanding, we lay the groundwork for safer, stronger, and more cohesive communities for all.

## Empowerment through Awareness and Resilience

Equip individuals and teams in your community with the confidence to assess risks, assert personal boundaries, and de-escalate conflicts effectively, fostering safety, respect, and preparedness in workplaces and daily life.

**Self Assertiveness for Organisations:** Specialised courses for hospitals, GP surgeries, community centres, transport workers, youth groups, and key worker teams. Learn de-escalation, boundary setting, and conflict management tailored to your workplace environment. **Knife Awareness:** Essential awareness and response training for high-risk situations. Practical techniques for recognition, avoidance, and safe response strategies.