

Same problem, different solutions

You are investigating how different think tanks respond to the same social problem.

Your job:

Read the Social Issue Case File and the 4 think tank summaries. For each think tank, identify:

What evidence is being used? (What statistics, findings, observations, or types of research are mentioned?)

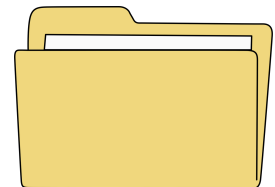
What assumptions or values appear? (What do they seem to believe about young people, crime, families, schools, or society?)

Which political ideology may be shaping this response? (e.g. more punitive/control-based, welfare/support-based, individual responsibility, state intervention)

What policy solution is being proposed?

What might be a criticism of this approach? (What might it ignore, oversimplify, or fail to address?)

Social Issue Case File: Youth Crime in Seaview



Seaview is a coastal town with areas of high deprivation and limited opportunities for young people. Over the last 18 months, local residents and businesses have reported growing concerns about:

- anti-social behaviour in public spaces
- low-level vandalism
- shop theft in the town centre
- fights involving teenagers near the seafront and shopping area
- fear of going out in the evening, especially around transport hubs and parks

The local council is considering a new policy response and has requested evidence from several think tanks.

Background information (fictional evidence summary)

A mixed-methods research review commissioned by the council found:

- Police records show a rise in recorded anti-social behaviour and shop theft involving young people aged 13–18, particularly in the town centre and seafront area.
- School data shows high rates of exclusion, persistent absence and low attainment in two local secondary schools serving the most deprived parts of Seaview.
- Interviews with young people show boredom, lack of safe spaces, poor trust in police, and pressure to gain status among peers.
- Parent interviews show financial stress, insecure and seasonal work, overcrowded housing and limited childcare for younger siblings.
- Youth workers report that local youth clubs and evening provision were reduced after council budget cuts three years ago.
- Residents' survey shows strong support for “more visible action” but mixed views on whether this should focus on policing, youth services, schools or family support.

Think Tanks

Centre for Safe Streets

“Restoring Order in Seaview: A Firm Response to Youth Disorder”

Seaview residents and local businesses are experiencing a clear decline in public order. Police data and repeated complaints from residents indicate that anti-social behaviour has become normalised among some groups of teenagers in key public areas, including the seafront and town centre. The first duty of local and national government is to protect law-abiding citizens and restore confidence in shared public spaces.

Our analysis of local police records, incident maps and repeat complaint locations suggests that weak consequences and inconsistent enforcement allow offending behaviour to escalate. When low-level offences such as vandalism, theft and intimidation are tolerated, they can become stepping stones into more serious criminality.

We recommend:

- increased police patrols in Seaview hotspot areas (especially the seafront, parks and town centre)
- stricter curfews for repeat offenders
- fast-track youth sanctions for vandalism and shop theft
- expanded use of CCTV and dispersal orders
- stronger school discipline partnerships with police

Young people must understand that actions have consequences. A visible enforcement approach will rebuild public confidence in Seaview and reduce offending by creating clear boundaries.

Future Paths Institute

“Prevention Before Punishment in Seaview: Investing in Youth Opportunity”

The Seaview case reflects a failure of prevention rather than simply a failure of discipline. Interview evidence from young people and youth workers points to boredom, lack of trusted adults, and the loss of local youth provision as key drivers of anti-social behaviour and low-level offending. In a town with limited affordable activities and uneven opportunities, young people are often left with few positive spaces to go.

Police and sanction-based responses may provide short-term reassurance, but they do not address why some young people in Seaview become involved in these behaviours in the first place. The council’s own review shows clear links between service cuts, school exclusion, and rising youth problems.

We recommend:

- reopening youth centres and evening clubs in Seaview’s highest-need areas
- funded mentoring schemes for at-risk young people
- detached youth work in seafront and town-centre hotspot areas
- paid sports, arts and training programmes during evenings and school holidays
- early identification of vulnerable young people through community and youth services

This approach treats young people as social actors responding to limited opportunities, not simply as problems to be controlled. Long-term safety in Seaview depends on investment, trust and inclusion.



Think Tanks

Learning and Behaviour Policy Unit

“Schools at the Centre: Tackling Youth Crime in Seaview Through Education Support”

Seaview’s youth crime concerns cannot be understood without looking closely at local school systems. The strongest pattern in the council’s evidence is the overlap between persistent absence, exclusion and later involvement in anti-social behaviour. This suggests that schools in Seaview are a key site for early intervention.

Interviews with young people provide useful context, but policy should focus on measurable risk indicators that schools can monitor consistently. A practical strategy is to identify pupils showing attendance decline, behavioural incidents and disengagement before problems become more serious, particularly in areas where services outside school have been reduced.

We recommend:

- school-based inclusion units in Seaview secondary schools
- attendance intervention teams targeting persistent absence
- behaviour support mentors in schools serving high-need communities
- on-site counselling and referral pathways
- alternatives to exclusion for first-time serious incidents
- data-sharing between schools, council services and youth support teams

Schools are one of the few institutions with regular contact with most young people in Seaview. Strengthening school-based systems offers an efficient and scalable way to reduce risk and improve outcomes.

Family Resilience Foundation

“Supporting Seaview Families, Reducing Youth Harm”

Seaview’s youth crime concerns should be understood in the context of family stress rather than youth behaviour alone. Parent interviews in the council review describe financial insecurity, seasonal and insecure employment, long working hours, overcrowded housing and limited support. Under these conditions, consistent supervision and emotional support become harder to sustain.

Policy discussions in Seaview often focus on policing or schools because they are visible institutions, but this can overlook the home circumstances shaping young people’s behaviour. Families under pressure may need practical support and coordinated services, not blame.

We recommend:

- family support workers for high-need households in Seaview
- parenting support programmes (voluntary and non-punitive)
- emergency hardship grants linked to local services
- expanded mental health support for parents and young people
- childcare support for families with younger children
- coordinated casework across housing, schools and health services

Reducing youth harm in Seaview requires strengthening the social and economic conditions in which families live. Policy should respond to structural pressures as well as individual behaviour.

