

# Police target juvenile crimes

More patrols to control rise in assaults and sex crimes by youth during summer

- By Siham Al Najami, Staff Reporter
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Dubai: More police patrol units will be deployed during the summer in response to the greater number of crimes committed by juveniles at this time, a senior police officer said.

In the first five months of 2010, 110 crimes were committed by 161 juveniles, said Lieutenant Colonel Jamal Al Jallaf, Deputy Director of the Criminal Investigations Department for Crime Supervision Affairs of Dubai Police.

In the same period last year, a total of 138 crimes were committed by 188 minors.

Most of the juvenile crimes were physical assaults and gang fights, minor robberies, verbal assault, or "immoral" crimes such as homosexuality and consensual sex.

Police patrol units will be intensified during the summer season especially in residential neighbourhoods where minors tend to gather, Al Jallaf said.

Physical assaults increased during the summer as juveniles had long hours of free time. Some assaults involved the use of knives, he said.

A source at a government hospital in Dubai told Gulf News that assaults among minors involving knives had increased this year.

A Dubai Police source said assaults were more common among Emiratis, as a means to settle scores.

Police officers had tightened their monitoring procedures this year by arresting anyone, especially young people, seen carrying sharp objects.

The procedures followed the gruesome killing of 13-year-old Ali Mohammad Hassan by a gang of teenagers.

If any person under the legal age was found with a sharp object such as knife or a blade they and their parents would be forced to sign an undertaking that it would not happen again, he said.

If the incident was repeated, the minor would be referred to court, he said.

Minors driving motor bikes would also have their vehicle confiscated and the minor's parents would be requested to sign an undertaking. While fist-fighting is more common among boys, girls are more commonly reported by their parents to have gone missing from home or school without telling their parents.

In many circumstances, the girl was found with a male, or involved in a relationship or friends who were considered a bad influence.

Individuals running from their homes were usually between 15 and 30 years old, Al Jallaf said.

Al Jallaf said children could be neglected or sometimes physically abused due to the lack of a caring family.

"We discover this is the cause after finding the reported absent person," Al Jallaf said.

"In this case the family is called in to study the entire family environment.

"We have social welfare sections in every police station and a department with the criminal investigation department to assist these families," he said.

Minor robberies were common among juveniles and often due to a lack of supervision and guidance, Lt Col Al Jallaf said.

A recent case by a minor was when a man went into a grocery store while his car's tank was being filled with petrol, and returned to find his vehicle missing. A police patrol unit found the vehicle few miles away driven by a minor, he said.

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