The What Works Centre for Crime Reduction, within the College of Policing, was set up in September 2013 to map the crime reduction research evidence and get this evidence used in practice. It is part of a world-leading network of What Works Centres launched by the Cabinet Office to provide robust and comprehensive evidence that guides decision-making on public spending. The What Works Centre for Crime Reduction supports and encourages greater collaboration across organisations with a shared aim of reducing crime.

What is the Crime Reduction Toolkit?
The College and the Economic and Social Research Council have co-funded a consortium led by University College London (UCL) to identify and label all the existing reviews of research evidence on interventions to reduce crime. The Crime Reduction Toolkit allows the results of this work to be viewed in one place online.

The toolkit provides easy access to the crime reduction evidence base - allowing users to weigh up evidence on the impact, cost and implementation of different interventions and use this to help inform their crime reduction efforts. Over 300 systematic reviews, covering 60 different crime reduction interventions, were identified and will be added to the online tool over time. CCTV, street lighting and prison visits to deter young offenders (commonly referred to as ‘scared straight’ programmes) were among the 14 topics included for the initial launch.

whatworks.college.police.uk
Introducing EMMIE
An innovative element of the toolkit is that it summarises the evidence on how and in which circumstances each intervention works, helping practitioners not only understand what does or doesn’t work, but also what makes a particular intervention work in a given operational context. This rating and ranking framework is known as EMMIE and includes the following components:

- **Effect** - the impact on crime
- **Mechanism** - how it works
- **Moderators** - where it works best
- **Implementation** - how to do it
- **Economic assessment** - what it costs

*Developed by UCL*

Users will be able compare interventions across these elements to inform their business decisions. Filters on the toolkit will also allow users to search by strength of evidence, category of crime or focus of the intervention (i.e. offender; victim or location). The toolkit will enable all those involved in crime reduction to have the evidence they need to put ‘what works’ at the heart of their shared efforts to reduce crime.

Summarising the evidence on how and in which circumstances crime reduction interventions work is especially important for understanding programmes like the ‘Scared Straight’ initiative. The evidence shows that young people at risk of future offending are not put off by visiting a prison and in fact may be more likely to offend afterwards, although the reasons why this is the case are unclear.

The toolkit can be found on the What Works Centre’s website and is also available to view on mobile devices for users on the go.

Getting involved
To shape the development of crime reduction initiatives in the future, we are identifying our stakeholders’ top crime reduction priorities and undertaking new evidence review activity to address gaps in the evidence base. As the What Works Centre commissions its own systematic reviews, and encourages researchers to consider all of the EMMIE criteria, the value and depth of available evidence will increase. We are already engaging with a wide variety of stakeholders and if you would like to participate or be kept up to date as interventions are added please contact us.

For further information on the What Works Centre for Crime Reduction contact us at: whatworkscentre@college.pnn.police.uk or visit whatworks.college.police.uk