Stop and Search

Toolkit technical report

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Police stops to reduce crime: technical report

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Summary

This technical report evaluates the effect of police-initiated pedestrian stops, also called police stops or "stop and search", on individual and area level outcomes such as, crime rate, physical and mental health of those targeted, attitudes towards the police, and self-reported offending. This technical report is based on one systematic review – Petersen et al. (2023). This review was the only review identified that met our criteria. It was rated as high quality using our critical appraisal tool.

The concept of police stops refers to incidences where a police officer, who is patrolling a particular neighbourhood or community, stops, searches, and/or questions an individual. In the US, suspicion of having committed a crime, being in the act of committing one, or carrying a dangerous weapon are considered valid reasons for police stops (Petersen et al., 2023, p. 4; Terry v. Ohio, 1968). Reasonable suspicion of weapon-carrying justifies a stop and frisk/search in the US context. However, in the UK and many European countries these suspicions are not a pre-requisite to conduct such stops (Petersen et al., 2023, p. 4). There is a distinction between individual level police stops that are reactive and police stops that are part of larger proactive police interventions. Both types are included in this report. Studies of vehicular stops are not included.

Police stops may reduce crime through deterrence. Several different tactics are adopted to this end. Stops resulting in confiscation of a weapon may prevent crime by cutting off access to the tools involved in a criminal act. The person stopped may be carrying evidence of a crime they had previously committed. Moreover, the increase in police presence in a locality due to police stops can act as a deterrence to crime, which may spread to neighbouring areas.

The review suggested that there was a reduction in crime in the areas in which police stops were implemented or increased, and in neighbouring areas. This finding supports the theory that the presence of police stops has a deterrent effect. However, there are possible adverse effects identified. People subject to stop and search may experience worse mental and physical health. In addition, individuals stopped by the police were noted to have more negative attitudes to the police.

The review suggests that police stops reduce crime by 13% compared to control areas. The review also found stop and search to be associated with a 46% increase in the odds of experiencing a mental health issues, and a 36% increase in the odds of experiencing a physical health issue, for those stopped by the police compared to those that were not stopped and searched. The review also reported a 74% increase in the odds of mental health issues for young people exposed to police stops.

In addition, the review shows a 19% increase in negative attitudes towards the police and a 15% increase in self-reported crimes. Although Petersen et al. (2023) did not consider the specific impact of stop and search on young people as the primary objective of the study, the authors state that many included studies measured the impact of stop and search on samples of young people. The review also provided analyses indicating that young people experienced a more pronounced negative effect on their mental health as opposed to adults.

The evidence rating for the impact on crime is three out of five. This has been marked down for the small number of studies and that the results could not be isolated specifically for impacts on children and young people.

Two studies in the UK suggest that stop and search reduces crime by only 5%. Due to the small number of studies this outcome has an evidence security rating of one.

Evidence from one process evaluation in England suggests that police do not receive regular training on how to appropriately conduct stop and search, police services are not monitored in relation to training provision, and frequently fail to follow proper procedures (HMIC, 2013). No cost data are available in this review of evidence. Cost information for the Toolkit summary is provided by The Police Foundation report on 'How stop and search is used' in England and Wales (Harkin, 2024). This suggests that stop and search is low cost per stop undertaken, but over 550,000 were conducted last year, meaning the scale of the intervention should be considered alongside per intervention costs.

Further research is needed to improve our understanding of the implementation of stop and search and approaches that may reduce adverse effects on attitudes towards the police and mental and physical health.

Objective

This technical report evaluates the effect of police-initiated pedestrian stops, also called police stops or "stop and search", on the involvement of children and young people in crime and violence as measured by individual and area level outcomes.

This technical report is informed by one systematic review (i.e., Petersen et al., 2023). The following inclusion and exclusion criteria were used to inform the selection of systematic reviews for the current report.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Systematic reviews were included for the following reasons:

- Assessed the impact of police-initiated pedestrian stops
- Reported the effectiveness or impact of police-initiated pedestrian stops on several individual- and area- level outcomes.
- Particularly interested in reviews that reported the impact of this approach on the involvement of children and young people in crime and violence.

The exclusion criteria for reviews were:

- Published prior to 2010 or an older review has now been updated (e.g. Bowling & Phillips, 2007).
- Did not follow systematic searching, coding and reporting (e.g. Bowling & Weber, 2011).
- Meta-analysis was not conducted as part of the review (e.g. Bowling & Phillips, 2007; Bowling & Weber, 2011).

As such, Petersen et al. (2023) was the only eligible systematic review and meta-analysis that met our inclusion criteria. The current technical report also draws on a review of racial disproportionately in police stops (Carvalho et al., 2022).

Outcomes

Petersen et al. (2023) included evaluations that reported the impact of stop and search on at least one of the following outcomes: (1) crime and disorder; (2) violence in police-citizen encounters; (3) officer misbehaviour; (4) fear of crime; (5) attitudes toward, or perceptions of, the police; (6) mental health (defined as 'symptoms or diagnoses related to an established mental health condition'; and (7) physical health (defined as

'Physical health issues concerned any characteristic or condition that could directly impact or have implications for physical functioning, such as self-reported physical health, sleep problems, and/or functional limitations'.

All crime was included in the crime and disorder outcome, for example, violent crime, drug offences, and/or property offences. Crime and disorder was measured using both official (e.g., data on arrests or incidents of crime and/or official crime rates) and unofficial (e.g., self-reported offending measures) outcomes.

Evaluations that reported the impact of police stops on perceptions of police outcomes measured these using questionnaires administered to individuals and communities. Perceptual outcomes included factors like trust, legitimacy and satisfaction. with the police. Included studies that analysed the effects on mental and physical health measured these using self-reported data (from individuals who directly experienced police stops), official data, and other individual/community centred analysis.

Description of Interventions

Among the many crime prevention or reduction techniques that are part of modern policing, police-initiated pedestrian stops or police stops remain one of the most widely used, but controversial, strategies. Also called stop and search, stop and frisk and street stops, the practice refers to incidents where a police officer patrolling a particular neighbourhood or community, stops and questions or searches an individual.

The meaning and use of stop and search procedures can vary across different contexts. In the United States (US), suspicion of having committed a crime, being in the act of committing one, or carrying a dangerous weapon as valid reasons for police stops (Petersen et al., 2023 p. 4). However, these suspicions are not a pre-requisite to conduct such stops. Neighbourhood crime rates may be accepted by the US Supreme Court as sufficient justification for suspicion.

In 1968, the constitutionality of police stops was upheld by a judgement in *Terry v. Ohio* and has become a popular tactic within US policing in the 1990s, and early 2000s (Petersen et al., 2023, p. 4).

Outside the US, police stop and search is practiced in European countries such as the UK, Spain, or Hungary (Petersen et al., 2023, p. 4). In the UK, the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act (1994) allows an officer with an approval from the requisite authority to carry out stops in high-risk areas without a cause for suspicion (Lennon, 2013; 2015). In the UK and Europe, such power also extends to certain authorized areas as part of the country's counter-terrorism strategy (Lennon, 2013). Between April 2022 and March 2023 there were 547,003 stops and searches conducted by the police in England in Wales. These were conducted under two primary pieces of legislation, Section 1 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 and Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994[1].

There is a distinction between individual level police stops that are reactive and police stops that are part of larger proactive police interventions. In England this is the distinction between PACE stops and searches and Section 60 stop and searches, where the former account for the substantial majority of stops. While in some situations police stops are a response to suspicions of criminal behaviour or a tool to investigate a particular crime (i.e., a reactive police stop), in other instances they are employed as a component of proactive policing with the intention of preventing crime. For instance, they have been used to tackle knife crime in the UK, to support larger police interventions such as, crackdowns, hindering illegal gun carrying, hot spots policing and so on in several European countries.

The review by Petersen et al. (2023) points to two aspects of police stops, the individual level elements and the community level elements. As a tactic, it is designed to target individuals, but the intention is often to bring about area or community level changes. Taking this into account, review authors have considered police stop interventions that are part of larger programmes targeting specific high-crime localities as well as interventions where police stops are used as a general tool to reduce or prevent crime (Petersen et al., 2023). Hence,

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[1] Home Office (2023) *Police powers and procedures: Stop and search and arrests, England and Wales, year ending 31 March 2023.*

Petersen et al. (2023) included all studies that evaluated police stops as applied to individual or places as an intervention (Petersen et al., 2023, p. 7).

Studies dealing exclusively with traffic-related police stops did not fall within the scope of the review by Petersen et al. (2023). Petersen and colleagues focused on police stops that were in line with the concept of "stop, question and frisk" (SQF; Petersen et al., 2023, p. 7). However, the authors acknowledged the difficulty in distinguishing between the nature of traffic and police stops and so, studies that assessed the impact of both police and traffic stops were included. Petersen et al. (2023) included interventions irrespective of whether they were reactive or proactive in nature. The review included police stop interventions irrespective of the crimes they targeted and the type of police tactics they were part of (Petersen et al., 2023, p. 7).

Implementation Setting and Personnel

Stop and search takes place in community settings, and is implemented by police officers, including transport police.

Duration and Scale

The duration of a police stop and the scale of its implementation can vary. Diverse types of police stop programmes were included in the review of Petersen et al. (2023). For example, one study evaluated Kansas City gun experiment where direct patrolling was allocated to a single police beat (Petersen et al, 2023, p. 14). Another intervention, the Philadelphia foot patrol experiment, focused on increased police presence in multiple police beats with high crime rate. Another study analysed Operation BLUNT, police stop programme targeting knife crime in London, by comparing between boroughs that were a central focus of the intervention and those that received less attention (Petersen et al, 2023, p. 14).

Theory of change/presumed causal mechanisms

The review by Petersen et al. (2023, p. 5) suggests that "people who have been personally stopped by the police may alter their behaviour or avoid the area where the stop occurred to mitigate their risk of punishment, while people who become vicariously aware of the pedestrian stop intervention may pre-emptively do the same". The assumption here is that people carry out crimes weighing the costs and benefits of their act. If the costs outweigh the benefits, offenders tend to not engage in the crime. Police stops are intended to raise the cost of committing a crime and, thereby, deter people from breaking the law.

Police stops can have a deterrent effect on crime through different mechanisms. For instance, police stops resulting in confiscation of a weapon may prevent crime by cutting off access to the tools involved in a criminal act. The person stopped may be carrying evidence of a crime they have committed and, the increase in police presence in a locality due to police stops can act as a deterrence to crime (Petersen et al, 2023, p. 5).

There is controversy surrounding the use of police stops by law enforcement, owing to evidence of adverse effects for individuals and communities that are overrepresented amongst those who are stopped by police. These emanate largely from racial disparity in police targeting, and evidence that there is an unjust use of police authority over specific racial or ethnic groups (Casey, 2023; Carvalho et al., 2022; Fagan & Davies, 2000; Gelman et al., 2007; Rosenfeld & Fornango, 2014), especially in the absence of any meaningful difference in crime rates between groups (McCandless et al., 2016; Miller et al., 2008; Tiratelli et al., 2018). There may be several other indirect detrimental consequences of police stops, affecting the individual, community and their relationship with the police. The use of racial profiling can make people feel targeted and helpless, especially in the absence of a concrete reason for being stopped. This can lead to reduced trust, legitimacy and justness associated with the police (Petersen et al, 2023, p. 5).

Another concern is the impact on mental and physical health of persons exposed to police stops. The process of being targeted for a stop and the ensuing questioning or searching can be traumatic, stress inducing and can worsen pre-existing mental or physical ailments. With increased stops, individual experiences can cumulatively worsen community perceptions of the police force, triggering anti-social behaviour and resistance to policing in the long term. As a result, police stops may lead to an increase in offending at the individual level. Racial

minorities and adolescents may be particularly susceptible to such negative effects of police stops. Thus, the theory suggests police stops may be associated with a reduction in crime, but may also have the opposite effect with significant detrimental impacts for the wider community (Petersen et al., 2023, p. 5-6).

Evidence Base

Descriptive overview

Petersen et al. (2023) undertook systematic searches, returning a total of 1,940 results, the majority of which were from the Global Policing Database (GPD). 40 eligible evaluations were found, representing a total of 90,904 people and 20,876 places. However, these were not statistically independent evaluations. The same four samples were used by 15 of the evaluations and therefore, the results were based on 29 unique evaluations. The inclusion criteria allowed for both randomized controlled trials (RCTs) and quasi-experimental studies. Only one included study was undertaken as an RCT, with the remainder being a combination of 'matched' and 'unmatched' quasi-experimental designs. Table 1 outlines the breakdown of the types of designs included by Petersen et al. (2023).

Table 1

Evaluation designs included by Petersen et al. (2023)

Design	*N*	*%*
Randomised controlled trial (RCT)	1	2.5%
Matched quasi-experimental	10	25%
Unmatched quasi-experimental	29	72.5%

Note. Adapted from Table 1, Petersen et al. (2023).

The majority of the evaluations were from the US (n = 33). Most of the rest were from the UK, with two evaluations from other countries. Individuals, as opposed to geographic areas, were the main unit of analysis (n = 29). Crime and disorder in the intervention area (n = 10), mental health of individuals exposed to police stops (n = 10) and the attitudes and perceptions towards police were the most commonly reported outcomes (n = 9).

Petersen et al. (2023) conducted a series of meta-analyses for six outcomes. Meta-analyses were conducted for crime outcomes (n = 9 evaluations), crime displacement (n = 4), mental health outcomes for individuals who are stopped by police (n = 8), physical health outcomes

for individuals who are stopped by police (n = 4), attitudes towards police outcomes reported by individuals who are stopped by police (n = 9), and self-reported crime and delinquency (n = 4).

Assessment of the Evidence Rating

We have confidence that, at the time of writing, the review by Petersen et al. (2023) provided the best available evidence on the impact of police stops on several individual and area-level outcomes, particularly relating to crime rates, mental and physical health of individuals and attitudes towards police. Our decision rule for determining the evidence rating is summarised in the technical guide.

A modified version of AMSTAR 2 was used for the critically appraisal of the review. The review was subsequently rated 'high'. The appraisal results are detailed in Annex 2.

Petersen et al. (2023) gave an overview of the study population, the intervention, the comparison group and the outcomes. The research questions, objectives and inclusion and exclusion criteria for studies were also clear. Studies that included a treatment group exposed to police stops and a control group not exposed were considered appropriate for the review. Authors placed no restrictions based on language of the study. Included studies had to report on at least one of the six outcomes listed in the review.

The protocol for this review was published in 2021 and the review detailed any deviation from this protocol. Initially, the authors planned to analyse difference in effect size based on race, ethnicity and type of crime committed, but very few studies were able to provide separate effect sizes for any outcome measure based on racial or ethnic categories (Petersen et al, 2023, p. 13).

The review adopted a comprehensive search strategy, anchored around the Global Policing Database (GPD) to gather eligible studies. The GPD has the entirety of published and unpublished evaluation studies of police interventions, not restricted by the type of policing technique, outcome assessed, and language of the study. A well-defined keyword search plan, multiple bibliographic databases and other additional search strategies were also used. Studies that met the inclusion criteria were double coded.

An extensive risk of bias assessment was conducted using the Cochrane randomized and non-randomized risk of bias tools for the included studies. The authors also provided information on the research funding and included declarations of any conflicts of interest.

A meta-analysis was conducted and independent effect sizes computed across six independent outcomes. Heterogeneity in effect size measurements between studies was assessed using the Q statistic, I^2 values, and τ^2 values. Moderator analysis was presented to explain the heterogeneity in effect size estimations.

The overall mean effect size for crime outcomes was chosen as the headline impact estimate. Using our decision tree, the evidence rating for this outcome is 3, marked down because the estimate is based on nine studies and it combines results from studies involving adults and children. The review is ranked as high quality using the AMSTAR appraisal tool and there is low heterogeneity (I^2 = 13%). The evidence security rating reflect the security of the findings of the review by Petersen et al. (2023) and as such does not necessarily reflect the quality of primary evaluations. However, Petersen et al. (2023) comment that although the majority of evaluations were labelled as 'unmatched' designs, they argue that the associated negative connotations of this approach is not truly representative of all studies assigned this label. For example, one evaluation by Weisburd et al. (2016) that was labelled as an unmatched quasi-experimental design, did use a methodologically rigorous approach to the evaluation (Petersen et al., 2023).

Whilst the impact estimate does not apply specifically to young people, it should be noted that data from Metropolitan Police show that nearly half of all stops are of young people aged 18-24[2], moreover, 21% of stop and searches were of children aged 10 to 17 years old. The sample characteristics of the included studies in the included review indicate that 14 of the included studies are exclusively focused on young people, under the age of 18 (Petersen et al., 2023, p. 16).

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[2]MPS Stop and Search Monthly Report

Impact

Summary impact measure

Overall, the findings reported by Petersen et al. (2023) suggest that there is a reduction in police recorded crime in the areas in which police stops are implemented and in neighbouring areas. The mean effect sizes relating to official measures of crime are reported in Table 1. In addition to the overall estimate of the impact of stop and search on crime outcomes, based on all evaluations (i.e., global), Petersen et al. (2023) provided a mean effect size based on two evaluations conducted in UK.

Table 1

Mean effect sizes from Petersen et al. (2023)

Outcome (*n* studies)	Effect size (RIRR)	95% CI	Heterogeneity	% change	Evidence rating	Impact rating
Crime (global)** (*n* = 9)	RIRR = 1.15***	1.09, 1.19	I^2 = 13%	-13%	3	Moderate
Crime (UK) (*n* = 2)	RIRR = 1.05	0.96, 1.15	Not provided	-5%	1	Low
Crime in neighbouring areas (*n* = 4)	RIRR = 1.08***	1.04, 1.09	I^2 = 0%	-7%	2	Low

Note. RIRR = relative incident rate ratios; CI = 95% confidence intervals; ** = headline impact rating, *** =$p < 0.001$.

The effect size used in the review of Petersen et al. (2023) is the relative incident rate ratio (RIRR). This effect size is appropriate for interventions for which the outcome is measured as count data at the area level, being defined as the ratio of the incidence of the outcome in the treatment and control areas. Count data cannot be used to calculate an odds ratio, and estimated values for d are sensitive to the period over which the count is made (Wilson, 2022). The percentage change reported in the review was used to estimate the d value and to select impact ratings.

However, there were also adverse effects. The findings in Petersen et al. (2023) show a negative association between experiencing police stops and mental and physical health. In addition, in the communities in which stop and search takes place there was evidence of more negative attitudes to the police (Petersen et al., 2023). These additional outcomes are explained in more detail in the following sections.

Moderators and Mediators

In addition to the impact of stop and search on police recorded crime, Petersen et al. (2023) report results for a number of additional outcomes. Although the review found overall that stop and search was associated with a reduction in crime, Petersen et al. (2023) also found that there was an increase in self-reported crime (g = 0.30), based on four evaluations. The additional outcomes, and the relevant effect sizes, are summarised in Table 3. Overall, the results indicate associations between experience of stop and search and poorer mental and physical health, and more negative attitudes and perceptions of police.

Table 3

Mean effect sizes for additional outcomes reported by Petersen et al. (2023).

Outcome (n studies)	Effect Size (Hedge's g)	95% CI	Heterogeneity	% difference
Negative attitudes to police (n = 9)	g = 0.38***	0.17, 0.59	I^2 = 98%	+19%
Self-reported crime: (n = 4)	g = -0.30***	0.12, 0.48	I^2 = 73%	+15%

Note. ES = weighted mean effect size; OR = odds ratio; 95% CI = 95% confidence intervals; *d* = Cohen's *d; g* = Hedge's *g;* ***p < 0.001.

The results present a 19% increase in negative attitudes to the police, and a 15% increase in self-reported crime. The mean effect sizes for negative attitudes to police show similar results for children and young people (g = 0.38; 95% CI= 0.04, 0.72; n = 4) and adults (g = 0.38; 95% CI = 0.08, 0.67; n = 5; Petersen et al., 2023, p. 29).

The review also reported a 74% increase in the odds of mental health issues for young people exposed to police stops (OR = 0.57; 95% CI= 0.46, 0.72; n = 2 studies), compared to 32% for adults (OR = 0.76; 95% CI= 0.65, 0.88; n = 6).

Petersen et al. (2023) also reported the results for US-based studies (RIRR = 1.16; 95% CI = 1.14, 1.19; n = 7), which suggest that stop and search is associated with larger decrease in crime and disorder compared to UK studies (RIRR = 1.04; 95% CI = 0.96, 1.15). Whilst the overall mean effect size for crime outcomes in UK studies was not statistically significant, the difference in effect sizes for US studies and UK studies was (Q = 4.67, p = .03; Petersen et al., 2023). In addition, Petersen et al. (2023) found that there was a larger adverse effect on mental health outcomes in the European studies (OR = 0.66; 95% CI= 0.49, 0.89; n = 2) than in the US (OR = 0.70; 95% CI = 0.56, 0.88; n = 6). However, the difference between the two mean effect sizes was not statistically significant (Q = 0.11, p = .74; Petersen et al., 2023). The review also found that there was a statistically significant difference (Q = 5.92, p = .02) in the mean effect sizes for negative effects on attitudes toward the police between European (g = 0.65; 95% CI = 0.38, 0.92; n = 3) and US (g = 0.23; 95% CI= 0.03, 0.43; n = 6; Petersen et al., 2023) studies. Overall, the impact was larger in European studies.

The effect sizes were similar for different study designs and different geographical areas covered by the intervention. Unmatched designs showed a 10% decrease in crimes for intervention areas (RIRR = 1.11; 95% CI = 1.01, 1.09; n = 4), whereas evidence from matched designs indicated a 19% decrease in crime for intervention areas (RIRR = 1.23; 95% CI = 1.09, 1.41; n = 5).

With regards to mental health outcomes, unmatched designs showed 49% increase in the odds of mental health issues among the intervention group (OR = 0.67; 95% CI = 0.53, 0.86; n = 5), whereas matched designs revealed 43% increase in the odds (OR = 0.69; CI = 0.54, 0.91; n = 3; Petersen et al., 2023). Comparing between different geographic areas such as, police beats, police districts and entire cities, an increase in the area targeted by the intervention resulted in 3-4% decrease in crime rate in the area (i.e, larger the area, smaller the reduction in crime rate). However, this effect remains statistically insignificant (Petersen et al., 2023).

Implementation evidence

An HMIC inspection of use of police stops in England and Wales (HMIC, 2013) revealed that most of the public were well-informed of the powers of police to conduct stop and search, with a majority believing that stops were necessary to prevent or deter crime in their neighbourhoods.

The effectiveness of police stops is tied to strong police leadership that could oversee and guide the use of such police powers, especially in avoiding the misuse of such powers. However, police stop powers of officers seemed to be the least monitored among police practices. The report noted a general lack of supervision and monitoring of officers' stop and search powers by the higher authorities (HMIC, 2013 p. 5-6).

Poor recording of searches conducted, officers deviating from the code of practice and not providing those subjected to police stops with the required information, unfairly treating those targeted and absence of legitimate grounds to conduct search were some of the important finding of the evaluation of police stop and search (HMIC, 2013).

Most officers had received little to no training in conducting stops since they joined the police force, indicating the absence of a structured training program or manual. Instead, they primarily relied on watching and listening to those around to develop their own practice of stop and search. This could have detrimental effects on how officers use their powers and their relationship with the general population.

In its final assessment, the HMIC report concludes that the police force had no real workable evidence suggesting stop and search powers could reduce crime. Limited data on what works, poor incorporation of technology, lack of awareness and understanding within frontline officers and inadequate supervision did not help in building the knowledge base necessary to effectively make use of their stop and search powers.

Cost

No cost data are available in the review. Cost information for the Toolkit summary is provided by The Police Foundation report on 'How stop and search is used' in England and Wales (Harkin, 2024). Two studies suggest that, on average, it takes about 15 minutes to conduct a stop and search (Quinton, et al. 2017; Hutcheon, 2014). A stop and search may be undertaken by a single officer or by two officers. The average cost across the two studies, increasing for inflation, is £20 - £30 per stop and search encounter that involves two officers. From this we can reasonably estimate that around £10-16 million was spent on stop and search in England and Wales last year.

What do we need to know? What don't we know?

Police stops are associated with a decrease in police-recorded crime in exposed and neighbouring areas. Separate data for the effects on young people are not available. But these benefits were accompanied by potential adverse effects. Those who experienced police stops were more likely to experience mental and physical health issues, and this was more pronounced for young people. There was also a deterioration in attitudes towards police and higher rates of self-reported crimes amongst those exposed to police stops.

Considering police stops reduce police recorded crime but may negatively impact mental and physical health issues, it is difficult to present police stops as a better alternative to other policing interventions. Police stops also had an adverse effect on attitudes to the police.

Evidence from one process evaluation (HMIC, 2013) in England suggests that police are not regularly trained or monitored on how to conduct stop and search, and frequently fail to follow proper procedures.

The overall quality of evidence in this review is low. A contributing factor to this was the timing of gathering data on the outcomes, especially those on health and attitudes towards police. Studies mostly collected information on these outcomes during the same time period as the individual's experience of police stops, and hence, were unable to provide a proper account of when exactly these negative outcomes developed and whether they were related solely to police stops.

Most of the evidence is from the US. Further studies conducted in the UK could contribute insights about the impact of regular, high-quality training and monitoring of stop and search practice. Any research in this area needs to consider the potential adverse effects of stop and search on mental and physical health outcomes.

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Annex 1 AMSTAR Quality Rating

	Modified AMSTAR item	Scoring guide	Petersen et al., (2023)
1	Did the research questions and inclusion criteria for the review include the components of the PICOS?	To score 'Yes' appraisers should be confident that the 5 elements of PICO are described somewhere in the report.	Yes
2	Did the review authors use a comprehensive literature search strategy?	At least two bibliographic databases should be searched (partial yes) plus at least one of website searches or snowballing (yes).	Yes
3	Did the review authors perform study selection in duplicate?	Score yes if double screening or single screening with independent check on at least 5-10%	Yes
4	Did the review authors perform data extraction in duplicate?	Score yes if double coding	Yes
5	Did the review authors describe the included studies in adequate detail?	Score yes if a tabular or narrative summary of included studies is provided.	Yes
6	Did the review authors use a satisfactory technique for assessing the risk of bias (RoB) in individual studies that were included in the review?	Score yes if there is any discussion of any source of bias such as attrition, and including publication bias.	Yes
7	Did the review authors provide a satisfactory explanation for, and discussion of, any heterogeneity observed in the results of the review?	Yes if the authors report heterogeneity statistic. Partial yes if there is some discussion of heterogeneity.	Yes
8	Did the review authors report any potential sources of conflict of interest, including any funding they received for conducting the review?	Yes if authors report funding and mention any conflict of interest.	Yes
	Overall		**High**