



SAFEGUARDING

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ISSUE 5

Welcome to our Parent Safeguarding Newsletter Issue 5

SAFEGUARDING TEAM

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- Understanding sexual harassment.
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With the summer term now up and running, it is appropriate for us to recognise how much adjustment has had to take place over the last 14 months. Whilst most students have adapted incredibly well to the return of college routines for learning, some have found this more challenging. This reflects the national trends in surveys with young people about their wellbeing and mental health and we know that some young people will be dealing with multiple pressures.

A Young Minds survey conducted in January 2021, during the national lockdown, shows that many young people found this most recent lockdown harder to cope with than previous ones. Now the new Childrens Commissioner for England, Dame Rachel de Souza, has begun a major review into barriers that are holding back young people in the 21st Century. It begins with the largest survey of young people in England to gather their views on what the government should prioritise in the recovery from the pandemic.

I would like to take this opportunity to signpost you to the section of the College website on wellbeing. www.catmosecollege.com/mental-well-being/

The page contains a number of resources that are readily available to help and support your child. It is not an exhaustive list and of course we continue to add to it in our tiered approach to mental health support in College.

MINDS'S FIVE WAYS TO WELLBEING

The following steps have been researched and developed by the New Economics Foundation.

1

CONNECT

There is strong evidence to indicate that feeling close to, and valued by, other people is a fundamental human need and one that contributes to functioning well in the world. It's clear that social relationships are critical for promoting wellbeing and for acting as a buffer against mental ill health for people of all ages.

With this in mind, try to do something different today and make a connection.

- Talk to someone instead of sending an email
- Speak to someone new
- Ask how someone's weekend was and really listen when they tell you
- Put five minutes aside to find out how someone really is
- Give a colleague a lift to work or share the journey home with them.

2

BE ACTIVE

Regular physical activity is associated with lower rates of depression and anxiety across all age groups.

Exercise is essential for promoting wellbeing. But it doesn't need to be particularly intense for you to feel good - slower-paced activities, such as walking, can have the benefit of encouraging social interactions as well providing some level of exercise.

TODAY, WHY NOT GET PHYSICAL? HERE ARE A FEW IDEAS:

- Take the stairs not the lift
- Go for a walk at lunchtime
- Walk into work - perhaps with a colleague – so you can ‘connect’ as well
- Get off the bus one stop earlier than usual and walk the final part of your journey to work
- Organise a work sporting activity
- Have a kick-about in a local park
- Do some ‘easy exercise’, like stretching, before you leave for work in the morning
- Walk to someone’s desk instead of calling or emailing.

3 TAKE NOTICE

Reminding yourself to ‘take notice’ can strengthen and broaden awareness.

Studies have shown that being aware of what is taking place in the present directly enhances your well-being and savouring ‘the moment’ can help to reaffirm your life priorities.

Heightened awareness also enhances your self-understanding and allows you to make positive choices based on your own values and motivations.

Take some time to enjoy the moment and the environment around you. Here are a few ideas:

- Get a plant for your workspace
- Have a ‘clear the clutter’ day
- Take notice of how your colleagues are feeling or acting
- Take a different route on your journey to or from work
- Visit a new place for lunch



4 LEARN

Continued learning through life enhances self-esteem and encourages social interaction and a more active life.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the opportunity to engage in work or educational activities particularly helps to lift older people out of depression.

The practice of setting goals, which is related to adult learning in particular, has been strongly associated with higher levels of wellbeing.

Why not learn something new today? Here are a few more ideas:

- Find out something about your colleagues
- Sign up for a class
- Read the news or a book
- Set up a book club
- Do a crossword or Sudoku
- Research something you’ve always wondered about
- Learn a new word.

5 GIVE

Participation in social and community life has attracted a lot of attention in the field of wellbeing research.

Individuals who report a greater interest in helping others are more likely to rate themselves as happy.

Research into actions for promoting happiness has shown that committing an act of kindness once a week over a six-week period is associated with an increase in wellbeing.



BE AWARE

Please be aware that over the last few months incidents involving 'sweets' which contain cannabis or spice (a new psychoactive substance) have become popular nationally.

Before Easter, a Lincolnshire school boy was hospitalised after consuming some of these. He believed they contained cannabis but they actually contained spice which is a synthetic cannabinoid. Spice mimics the effect of cannabis but some experts say it can be up to 100x as potent.

The packets are sold for around £5 and may look like the photographs below. They are similar looking to Haribo and clearly the producers of these 'sweets' are marketing them towards young people. Lincolnshire Police are also aware that they are being advertised on social media.



If you have any concerns or spot people selling or using these please call 101. Any reports of intelligence will support the police and help protect young people.

Before the Easter holidays there was a lot of talk in the media regarding sexual harassment and abuse.

As a school we take our duty of care, both statutory and morally, very seriously.

While sexual abuse is a difficult subject, a knowledgeable adult can teach children and young people at a young age about the concept and how to reduce the risk factors.

In light of these recent publicised events involving individuals being accused of sexual harassment, many parents are wondering about the following issues. We hope you find the below information helpful.

HOW SHOULD I SPEAK TO MY CHILD ABOUT THIS TOPIC?

What's the best way to teach children about boundaries, power, expectations, safety, and respect?

Being aware and informed can help reduce a child's exposure and the risk factors involved in harassment and sexual abuse.

UNDERSTANDING SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Just like other kinds of bullying, sexual harassment can involve comments, gestures, actions, or attention that is intended to hurt, offend, or intimidate another person.

With sexual harassment, the focus is on things like a person's appearance, body parts, sexual orientation, or sexual activity.

Sexual harassment involves unwelcome or unwanted sexual comments, attention, or physical contact.

Sexual harassment may be verbal (like making comments about someone), but it doesn't have to be spoken. Perpetrators may use technology to harass someone sexually (like sending inappropriate text messages, pictures, or videos). Sometimes sexual harassment can be physical when someone tries to kiss or touch someone that does not want to be touched.

Sexual harassment doesn't just happen to girls. Boys can harass girls, but girls also can harass boys, boys may harass other boys, and girls may harass other girls.

Sexual harassment isn't limited to people of the same age, either. Adults sometimes sexually harass young people and, occasionally, young people may harass adults. But most of the time, when sexual harassment happens to young people, it's being done by people in the same age group.

WHAT IS PEER-ON-PEER ABUSE?

Peer-on-peer abuse is any form of physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse, and coercive control exercised between children, and within children's relationships (both intimate and non-intimate), friendships, and wider peer associations. Peer-on-peer abuse can take various forms, including (but not limited to): serious bullying (including cyberbullying), relationship abuse, domestic violence and abuse, child sexual exploitation, youth and serious youth violence, harmful sexual behaviour and/or prejudice-based violence including, but not limited to, gender-based violence. Online peer-on-peer abuse is any form of peer-on-peer abuse with a digital element, for example, sexting, online abuse, coercion and exploitation, peer-on-peer grooming, threatening language delivered via online means, the distribution of sexualised content, and harassment.

There are many ways in which you can support your child to increase their knowledge and understanding. The Child Mind Institute share their approach to these conversations on how to support your young person.

Visit their website for more information www.childmind.org

HOW DO I SUPPORT MY CHILD?

It depends on how old they are.

But, in general: answer questions, elicit their thoughts, and then share your own thoughts and values.

Find out what they've heard first - from friends, TV, newspapers, social media. At a time when you're catching up and talking about your day, I'd ask them what they've heard in broad terms about, for example, men behaving in insulting ways to women, or older men approaching teenage girls - whatever it is they are likely to be hearing. First, you want to listen, to encourage them to tell you what they've heard and ask any questions they might have.

Then, answer their questions. Your goal is to give them the facts, in an age-appropriate way. Don't be salacious, but don't shirk from details if they ask about them. Avoiding the facts doesn't protect children from painful things. It leaves them vulnerable to fantasies that they use to fill in the blanks when adults aren't forthcoming. What they imagine can be worse than the real thing.

Then, talk about what they think about it.

And finally, use the opportunity to tell them what you think.

Your goal in these discussions is to give them a frame of reference to think about disturbing events. In these situations, it reassures children if you tell them what you think is right and wrong, and it helps them to know that when bad things happen, we do things to make sure they won't happen again.

In the case of the kind of sexual harassment we've been hearing about, it's also an opportunity to talk about appropriate behavior. When is it okay to touch another person? What does it mean to get permission - and to deny permission? How can we respect other people - their bodies, their space, their wishes?

It's also an opportunity to talk about when it's right, or important, to speak up about something that happened to you, especially if it's embarrassing or frightening. Remind them that no matter what happens you always want to hear about their concerns and thoughts.