



SAFEGUARDING

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ISSUE 3

Welcome to our Parent Safeguarding Newsletter Issue 3

We are committed to working with all our parents and students, to actively promote the safeguarding and welfare of all our students.

If you have any concerns about your child then please do not hesitate to contact us.

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HATE CRIME

HATE CRIME AND CYBERBULLYING

Hate crime and cyber bullying incidents are an increasing concern amongst young people today. It is important that young people and their parents have an awareness of what these are, what the consequences are and how to find help.

HATE CRIME

There is no legal definition of a hate crime. However, the police and the CPS have an agreed definition of hate crime as: "any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person's race or perceived race; religion or perceived religion; sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation; disability or perceived disability and any crime motivated by hostility or prejudice against a person who is transgender or perceived to be transgender"

There is a distinction between a hate crime and a hate incident.

"A hate incident is any incident which the victim, or anyone else, thinks is based on someone's prejudice towards them because of their race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or because they are transgender"

However, a hate incident does not necessarily break the law. Where a hate incident amounts to a criminal offence, and is based on one of the five protected characteristics, it is known as a hate crime.

The type of conduct which will be considered as a hate incident is wide ranging and includes the following:

- Verbal abuse
- Online abuse
- Harassment
- Displaying or circulating discriminatory literature or posters
- Bullying or intimidation
- Graffiti
- Physical attacks
- Arson
- Threats of violence
- Throwing rubbish in a garden; and malicious complaints
- Hoax calls, abusive phone or text messages, hate mail

CYBERBULLYING & THE LAW

Cyberbullying / cyber-harassment can be understood as the use of information and communication technologies such as email, chat room, discussion group, blogs, websites, social networking sites, virtual learning environments, instant messaging, mobile phones or short message services for repeatedly deliberate and hostile behaviour by an individual or a group with the intention to harm others.

It ranges from continuous e-mail-sending to someone who has said they do not want any further contact with the sender, to threats, sexual remarks, pejorative labels, ganging up on victims by making them the subject of ridicule in forums, posting false statements, and passing on pictures, sound recordings or films via mobile phones.

Cyber harassment is also known as cyber-bullying or cyber-stalking. The motives range from emotional reasons to personal dislike and conflict of interests at work. Other motives can be prejudices on grounds of gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion and belief, disability, age, sexual orientation and body image. Cyber-harassment is furthermore to be considered a psychosocial hazard, as it can deeply affect the personality, dignity and integrity of the victim.

REPORTING AN INCIDENT

If you are concerned that your child is a victim or a perpetrator of a hate crime or a cyberbullying incident you should report it immediately. The physical, social and emotional trauma of these incidents can have a detrimental impact upon a young person and can lead to serious consequences for the perpetrator.

REPORTING A HATE CRIME

To report an incident to the police by phone call 101. Call 999 if you're reporting a crime that's in progress or if someone is in immediate danger.

Go to the Stop Hate UK for more information on hate crime at www.stophateuk.org

REPORTING CYBERBULLYING

Steps to take immediately:

- Don't respond to and don't forward cyberbullying messages.
- Keep evidence of cyberbullying. Record the dates, times, and descriptions of instances when cyberbullying has occurred. Save and print screenshots, emails, and text messages. Use this evidence to report cyberbullying to web and mobile phone service providers.
- Block the person who is cyberbullying.

There are a variety of ways to report cyberbullying:

- Directly to the Online Service Provider.
- Contact the Police.
- You can also report abuse to CEOP (Child Exploitation & Online Protection Centre).

KEEPING SAFE ONLINE

It is really important to chat with your children on an ongoing basis about staying safe online. Not sure where to begin? These conversation starter suggestions can help.

- Ask your children to tell you about the sites they like to visit and what they enjoy doing online.
- Ask them about how they stay safe online. What tips do they have for you, and where did they learn them? What is OK and not OK to share?
- Ask them if they know where to go for help, where to find the safety advice, privacy settings and how to report or block on the services they use.
- Encourage them to help someone! Perhaps they can show you how to do something better online or they might have a friend who would benefit from their help and support.
- Think about how you each use the internet. What more could you do to use the internet together? Are there activities that you could enjoy as a family?

FAMILY AGREEMENT

A family agreement is a great way to start a conversation with your whole family about how you all use the internet and discuss together how to behave in a positive way when online at home, at school or at a friends house.

The below family agreement advice provides a list of things to consider when creating a family agreement and some examples.

The family agreement template provides a framework that will help families set clear expectations for positive and safe internet use.

www.childnet.com/ufiles/Family-agreement-advice.pdf

www.childnet.com/ufiles/Family-agreement-template.pdf

www.childnet.com/ufiles/Online-safety-agreement.pdf

TOP TIPS FOR GOOD MENTAL HEALTH

CONNECT - Connect with the people around you: your family, friends, colleagues and neighbours. Spend time developing these relationships.

BE ACTIVE - Take a walk, go cycling or play a game of football. Find the activity that you enjoy and make it a part of your life. Join in with extra-curricular activities at school.

KEEP LEARNING - Learning new skills can give you a sense of achievement and confidence.

GIVE TO OTHERS - Even the smallest act can count, whether it's a smile, a thank you or a kind word. Larger acts such as volunteering at your local community centre, can improve your mental wellbeing and help you build new social networks.

BE MINDFUL - Be more aware of the present moment, including your feelings and thoughts, your body and the world around you. Some people call this awareness "mindfulness", and it can positively change the way you feel about life and how you approach challenges.

USEFUL APPS TO SUPPORT MENTAL HEALTH

WORRY TIME

Setting aside your worries for later means you won't get caught up in them, so you can get on with your day. Decide on a time and place to deal with your worries each day. (preferably a time at home with a parent/carer)

When you notice yourself worrying about something, add it to Worry Time and get on with your day. Use your Worry Time to review the worries you've added and ditch the ones that no longer matter to you.

CALM HARM

Calm Harm provides tasks to help you resist or manage the urge to self-harm. You can make it private by setting a password, and personalise the app if you so wish. You will be able to track your progress and notice change.

3 GOOD THINGS

It's been shown that if you write down three good things that happen to you everyday, your happiness and positivity increase. Three Good Things, a happiness journal, enables you to do exactly that with a simple user-interface and gamification to encourage engagement.

SMILING MIND

Smiling Mind "aims to build happier, healthier and more compassionate people. Our mindfulness meditation programs are designed to assist people in dealing with the pressure, stress and challenges of daily life." The app includes the most extensive library of meditations to use with children aged 7-12 years, teens and adults.

SLEEP MEDITATION FOR KIDS

This is a superb high quality children's meditation app by leading yoga teacher and Montessori teacher Christiane Kerr. Created for children of all ages, Christiane skilfully guides children to the creative part of their mind through a number of carefully scripted story meditations. These deeply relaxing recordings can help your child with sleep issues, insomnia, stress, anxiety and with feelings of confidence and well being. Each meditation story has an underlay of subtle sound effects and gentle music which combined with Christiane's calming voice make them irresistible and a deeply relaxing. The recordings will help children to relax and will enhance feelings of contentment.

CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION

Criminal Exploitation is when individuals or gangs target children and force them to carry out criminal activity. Exploiters may force young people to deal drugs, steal, commit violent or sexual acts and traffic them.

Children who are being criminally exploited will usually be subject to physical violence and threats - but exploiters are smart: they'll spend months or years grooming their victims, and parents often aren't even aware it's happening.

If you think your child is being exploited it's important to know that you are not alone and not to blame. You should:

- Report your concerns to Children's Social Care or the NSPCC's helpline on 0808 800 5000. A social worker can help you take steps to protect your child. They will make an assessment based on concern your child is at risk of harm from outside of the family.
- You can also report your concerns to the police using their non-emergency number 101.
- If you feel your child is in immediate danger then call the police on 999.

Don't be worried about contacting the police - you are trying to protect your child.

If you would like more support, go to other professionals who can help: your GP, school, police or a youth worker.

- If your child isn't where they are supposed to be, report them missing straight away on 101. You do not have to wait 24 hours.
- If your child is picked up in a car, or has train or bus tickets, keep a record of this information to give to the police or social worker.
- There may be other evidence that your child is being exploited, such as interactions on social media, unexplained money or phones, clothing or gifts, change in behaviour; where possible try to keep a record of this.

If you're able to speak to your child, let them know they aren't in trouble and that you're worried about them. Remember that there may be threats made against you or your family by the people exploiting your child. Your child may believe that they are protecting you. Let your child know that you know about this risk and that it is not their responsibility to protect you.

If they don't want to talk to you, let them know that they can always call ChildLine on 0800 1111 or Get Connected on 0808 808 4994 (text 80849).



WHAT PARENTS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT WHATSAPP

AGE RESTRICTION
16+

WhatsApp is one of the most popular messaging apps in the world, with more than 1.5 billion people in more than 180 countries using it to send and receive text, photos, videos and documents, as well as make voice and video calls through an Internet or Wi-Fi connection. The free app offers end-to-end encryption, which means that messages can only be read by the sender and the recipient in one-to-one chats, or all members if it is a group chat. Not even WhatsApp can read them.

AGE LIMIT CHANGE

Since May 2018, the minimum age for using WhatsApp is 16 years old if you live in the European Union, including the UK. Prior to this, the minimum age was 13, which still applies for the rest of the world. WhatsApp has not yet stated whether it will take action against anyone aged between 13 and 16 who already hold accounts under the old terms and conditions, such as closing their account or seeking parental permission.



SCAM MESSAGES

Occasionally on WhatsApp, people receive spam messages from unauthorised third parties or from fraudsters pretending to offer prizes to 'lucky people,' encouraging recipients to click on a link to win a prize. A common scam involves messages warning recipients that their WhatsApp subscription has run out with the hope that people are duped into providing their payment details. Other scam messages include instructions to forward the message in return for a reward or gift from WhatsApp or another person.



FAKE NEWS & HOAXES

WhatsApp has been linked to enabling the spread of dangerous viral rumours. In India, for example, a number of attacks appear to have been sparked by false rumours shared on WhatsApp.



THE 'ONLY ADMIN' FEATURE AND CYBERBULLYING

Cyberbullying is the act of sending threatening or taunting text messages, voice messages, pictures and videos, with the aim to hurt and humiliate the receiver. The group chat and group video call features are great for multiple people to chat simultaneously, but there is the potential for people to hurt others with their comments or jokes. The 'only admin' feature gives the admin of a group chat greater control over who can send messages. Whilst this can be good for one-way announcements, the group admin has the power to block somebody from responding to an offensive message in a chat, which could result in a child being upset and unable to reply.

CONNECTING WITH STRANGERS

To start a chat in WhatsApp, you need to know the mobile number of the contact you want to speak to and they also need to have the app downloaded. WhatsApp can find contacts by accessing the address book of a device and recognising which of those contacts are using WhatsApp. If your child has shared their mobile number with somebody they don't know, they can use it to get in touch via WhatsApp.

LIVE LOCATION SHARING

WhatsApp's 'Live Location' feature enables users to share their current location in real time to their contacts in a chat, allowing friends to show their movements. The feature, which can be found by pressing the 'attach' button, is described by WhatsApp as a "simple and secure way to let people know where you are." Location sharing is already a common feature on other social apps, including Snapchat's Snap Map and Facebook Messenger and can be a useful way for a child to let loved ones know they are safe. However, if your child is in a group chat with people they do not know, they will be exposing their location.



TOP TIPS FOR PARENTS

CREATE A SAFE PROFILE

Even though somebody would need your child's phone number to add them as a contact, as an extra security measure we suggest altering their profile settings to control who can see their profile photo and status. The options to choose from are 'Everyone,' 'My Contacts' and 'Nobody.' We suggest selecting 'My Contacts' or 'Nobody' to ensure their profile is protected.

EXPLAIN HOW TO BLOCK PEOPLE

If your child has received spam or offensive messages, calls or attachments from a contact, they should block them. Messages and status updates sent by a blocked contact will not show up on the phone and will stay undelivered. Blocking someone will not remove this contact from the contact list – they will need to be removed from the phone's address book. To block a contact, your child needs to open the person's chat stream and tap on the settings. 

SOURCES:

- www.theguardian.com/comment-isfree/2018/apr/26/whatsapp-plans-to-ban-under-16s-the-mystery-is-how, <https://whatsappbrand.com/>
- www.independent.co.uk/life-style/gadgets-and-tech/news/whatsapp-update-latest-india-hoaxes-forward-messages-app-download-08456011.html
- www.nationalonlinesafety.com

REPORT SCAM MESSAGES

Advise your child not to tap, share or forward any message that looks suspicious or sounds too good to be true. When your child receives a message from an unknown number for the first time, they will be given the option to report the number as spam directly inside the chat. They can also report a contact or a group as spam using the following steps:

- 1 - Open the chat.
- 2 - Tap on the contact or group name to open their profile information. 
- 3 - Scroll to the bottom and tap 'Report Spam.'

LEAVE A GROUP

If your child is part of a group chat that makes them feel uncomfortable or has been added to a group they don't want to be part of, use the group's settings to show them how to leave. If someone exits a group, the admin can add them back in once. If they leave again, they cannot be added again.

USE LIVE LOCATION SAFELY

If your child needs to use the 'Live Location' feature to share with you or a friend, advise them to only share it for the amount of time they need to. WhatsApp gives the options of either 15 minutes, one hour or eight hours. However, your child can choose to stop sharing at any time.

DELETE ACCIDENTAL MESSAGES

If your child has sent a message to the wrong chat or if a message they sent has contained a mistake, they can delete it. To do this, simply tap and hold on the message, choose 'Delete' and then 'Delete for everyone.' The app allows seven minutes to delete the message after it has been sent, but it is important to remember that recipients may have seen and screenshot a message before it was deleted.

SET TIME LIMITS

A 2017 study found that by the age of 14 the average child will have sent more than 35,000 texts, 30,000 WhatsApp messages and racked up more than three solid weeks of video chat. Although it is inevitable that your child will use technology, you can still set boundaries. This is not easy, especially since teens use their devices for both schoolwork and free time, often simultaneously.





WHAT PARENTS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT TIKTOK

AGE RESTRICTION
12+

If under 18, supervision of a parent or legal guardian required.

TikTok is a video-sharing social media app available on iOS and Android which lets users create, share, and view user created videos much in a similar manner to Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat. It's main draw, however, is that users can record and upload bite-sized looping videos of themselves lip-syncing and dancing to popular music or soundbites, often for comedic effect, which can then be further enhanced with filters, emojis and stickers. TikTok has been designed with the young user in mind and has a very addictive appeal. At the beginning of 2019 it skyrocketed in popularity to become the iOS store's most downloaded app with over 33 million downloads. Estimates suggest that it now has anything between 500 million and over 1 billion monthly active users worldwide.

MATURE CONTENT

On the iOS store, TikTok is listed as 12+. On the Google Play Store it is rated as 'Parental guidance recommended'. When signing up for the app, it's possible to lie about your age without any form of verification. As children scroll through their feed, most of the videos they're likely to come across are lighthearted or funny takes on dance routines which are designed to make people laugh. However there has been a slew of videos which have been reported for featuring drug and alcohol abuse, self-harm and sexual content, including young teens dressing overtly sexually and behaving suggestively. Given the deluge of material uploaded to TikTok every day, it's impossible to moderate everything and it can be quite common to come across explicit content on the 'for you' feed when logging into the platform.

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MODERATE SCREEN TIME

As entertaining as TikTok is, you can help your child moderate their time on the app by making use of the digital wellbeing section. Under the screen time management option, you can limit the daily allotted time allowed on the app in increments ranging from 40 to 120 minutes. You can also lock this preference behind a PIN number which has to be inputted in order to then exceed the daily time limit. This way your child can get their daily dose of memes without wasting away the day.

IN-APP PURCHASES

Aside from the content, there's also the option to purchase in-app extras called 'TikTok coins'. Prices range from £0.99 for 100 coins to an eye-watering £93.99 for 10,000 coins. TikTok coins are used to purchase different emojis to reward content creators that a user finds funny or entertaining. In the iOS version of the app you can disable the option to buy TikTok coins but this sadly doesn't seem to be a feature in the Android version.

TIKTOK FAME

TikTok is very image focused and there is a notable preoccupation with appearing cool and attractive. Many teenagers now attempt to go viral and become what's known in-app as 'TikTok famous'. TikTok (and its predecessor musical.ly) has spawned its own celebrities - social media stars Loren Gray and Jacob Sartorius have been catapulted to fame through their initial exposure on the app. Obviously, most budding influencers looking to become the next big thing will be disappointed, but this may have the knock-on effect of making them go to more and more drastic lengths to get noticed.



ONLINE PREDATORS

As a social network, TikTok makes it easy to connect with other users. This includes the ability to comment on and react to other user's videos, follow their profile and download their content. Be aware that by default, any user can comment on your child's video if their account is set to public. Most interactions are harmless enough but as an app, TikTok is prone to predators because of the abundance of younger users.

SAFETY TIPS FOR PARENTS

TALK ABOUT ONLINE DANGERS

Assuming your child is above the age limit to use the app, make sure you also take the time to talk to them about what they are seeing on the app. Have a dialogue, get them to give you their opinion on what is appropriate and model the correct behaviour for them. Go over why they shouldn't give out private information or identifiable photos and be positive and understanding of them. In the long run, getting them to think critically about what they're seeing goes a long way to keeping them social media savvy.

EXPLORE AND LEARN YOURSELF

Understanding and learning the app yourself is a great way to get to grips with TikTok. You could then even use the app with your child and watch some videos with them. If you are the parent of a teen, even if it does not make you popular, keep a close eye on what they're viewing and sharing. That said, it's a brilliant chance to turn it into a bonding opportunity with your child. You could even unleash your inner performer and make videos with them while (more importantly) keeping them safe online.

USE PRIVACY SETTINGS

Undoubtedly, the easiest way to safeguard your child on TikTok is to make sure their account is set to private. This means only those users your child approves can view, like, and follow their content.

Setting the account to private may clash with your child's goal of social media superstardom, but it will keep their account secure from strangers. This setting can be enabled under the privacy and safety menu by pressing the ellipsis in the 'me' tab of the app. To be extra safe, there are additional controls available to toggle such as who can send comments and messages, among other options.

LEARN HOW TO REPORT AND BLOCK INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

With the proper privacy settings in place, TikTok can be a safe space for your child to express themselves.

However, just in case something does manage to slip through, make sure your child knows how to recognise and report content that isn't appropriate and get them to come to you about what they have seen. TikTok allows users to report offenders and comments within the app. You can also block individual users by going on their profile.

ENABLE RESTRICTED MODE

In the digital wellbeing section there's the ability to turn on restricted mode using a PIN. Restricted mode filters out content that is not age appropriate although it should be noted that this isn't always 100% fool proof. When enabling restricted mode, parents should still be vigilant to what their child is watching and take note that the algorithm moderating content is not infallible.

INAPPROPRIATE MUSIC

TikTok revolves around creating music videos through lip-syncing and dancing. Inevitably, some of the music featured by users will contain explicit or suggestive lyrics. Given the undeniably young user base, there is a risk that children may look to imitate the explicit language they hear or the suggestive actions they see when viewing others user's videos on the app.

ADDICTIVE NATURE

Social media is designed to be addictive and TikTok is no different. It can be fun and hugely entertaining. However, it is also because of this that it can be hard to put down. In addition to the short, punchy nature of the looping video format, the app's ability to keep you guessing what will come on screen next makes it easy to turn a five-minute visit into 45-minute visit.