Safeguarding Bulletin
Lent Term 2024 ~ Issue 01

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to our newsletter from the Safeguarding Team at Bredon School. Our aim is to provide you with the latest support and advice which could affect you and your children's lives.

Online Safety

The UK Safer Internet Centre has published new research on online safety examining the experiences and opinions of children and their parents/carers. Findings from a survey of 2,008 parents and their children aged 8-17 include: 74% of parents and carers are worried about the fast-changing online world as posing safety risks to their child; 60% of 8-17-year-olds who say they have used generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) believe it has online safety risks; and 48% of 8-17s think changing technology is making it harder for them to control who can access information about them online.

Read the news story: Almost half of children and three quarters of parents and carers are worried about safety risks amidst fast-paced technological developments such as genAI.
Download the report: Safer Internet Day 2024 research

Source: NSPCC and the UK Safer Internet Centre, 2024

StreetSafe is a pilot service for anyone to anonymously tell us about public places where you have felt or feel unsafe, because of environmental issues, e.g., street lighting, abandoned buildings or vandalism and/or because of some behaviours, e.g., being followed or verbally abused.

Click here to visit StreetSafe.

Please note: 'StreetSafe' is not for reporting crime or incidents.

If you aren't comfortable contacting us directly, you can pass on information anonymously to the independent charity, Crimestoppers, by calling 0800 555 111 or by visiting their website: https://crimestoppers-uk.org/

If you ever feel at risk, or a crime is in progress, please always dial 999.

Student Slang – Things we all need to know

Words or emoji's that students commonly use might seem innocuous but be potential safeguarding red flags, says safeguarding lead Thomas Michael (TES magazine, Feb 2024).

Slang is constantly evolving, appearing suddenly and disappearing just as quickly. While it may seem trivial, understanding the slang used by students is crucial for pastoral care and safeguarding. With the prevalence of social media, slang is not confined to spoken language but extends to emoji's and online platforms like TikTok. This presents challenges as teens use slang and emoji's to bypass filters and discuss sensitive topics. Unfortunately, much of today's slang is rooted in misogyny, with an alarming amount of hyper-sexualised content online. Ignoring slang risks missing vital information about students' experiences may perpetuate harmful behaviours like misogyny. It's essential for educators to stay informed and address slang use to create safe and respectful environments.

Emoji's
Here are some examples of emoji's children and young people might be using that have a meaning beyond the obvious:

- *Peach* = bum
- *Splash/droplets* = ejaculation
- *Corn* = porn (can be seen combined with ⭐)
- *Noodles* = "noods" (nudes)
- *Chilli* = "spicy" (risqué) content
- *Taco* = female genitalia
- *Aubergine* = male genitalia
- *Camel* = sex ("humping")
- *Cherries* = breasts
- *Brain* = oral sex

Slang
Slang will, of course, vary depending on location, but here are a few terms that have recently appeared:

- Nyash = bum
- Bunda = bum
- Gyatt = Americanised shortened form of "God damn", commonly used with reference to women with curvy figures.
- Plug = the "connect" - sometimes used to reference someone who provides drugs, weapons, stolen goods and so on.
- Unalive = death. Commonly used with reference to suicide to get around community guidelines.
- Cuck = short for "cuckold" which has been used since the 1200s to refer to a man whose wife is unfaithful. The term has seen a resurgence, largely as a result of its use in Alt-Right circles, where it is commonly used to attack or belittle someone's masculinity.

For further information, please click the link below:

[TES Magazine: Student Slang Teachers Need to Know](#)

What is Doxing? A Guide for Professionals, Parents and Carers

In today's digital world, privacy is a top concern for many of us. While we enjoy sharing moments like holiday pictures and birthday celebrations on social media, there are boundaries we must protect. Unfortunately, a concerning trend called "Doxing" has emerged, causing harm and distress to individuals online.

What is Doxing?

In recent years, the practice of doxing has made considerable headlines within online circles, particularly on social media as well as in gaming communities. In short, it is a practice where individuals or groups expose and publicise private information about a person on the internet without their consent, often for the purposes of causing distress or creating malicious intent.

Personal information can include home addresses, phone numbers, job location, email addresses, and even information about family members or loved ones. Those who commit this act often exploit publicly available information across online platforms such as social media or betray the trust of someone they know; releasing information that was already known prior.

Why Do People Dox?

Due to the varying scenarios that can occur, it is difficult to pinpoint exactly why doxing takes place, but it can be motivated by a number of different factors. Perpetrators may want to target an individual because of a disagreement or a conflict that may have previously occurred. There could be a desire to intimidate or harass someone which can lead to blackmail or other forms of extortion.

In some cases, doxing is associated with online vigilantism, where individuals take matters into their own hands to expose individuals for a perceived crime or a social injustice. If there is malicious intent, a perpetrator may encourage other online users to harass or abuse the individual with the information provided. In some situations, this can lead to real world harm such as stalking, violence and in severe cases, a danger to life. Exposure of personal information can also lead to long-term emotional distress for the victim as well as potential reputational damage. If doxing occurs due to an 'accusation of abuse' then this would usually be classed as a criminal matter and the police would need to be involved.

Is Doxing Illegal?

While doxing is not illegal in the UK, it can lead to consequences for the perpetrator if there is malicious intent that leads to harassment of an individual.

Protecting Against Doxing

As a lot of personal information is readily available online, it's important to take steps to protect yourself from information falling into the wrong hands. This includes regularly reviewing privacy and visibility settings on social media platforms and critically thinking about the amount of personal information we choose to share publicly. We must remember that it is very easy to let information slip, so vigilance and caution is required.

You may also consider using online tools such as Reputation Alerts if you feel information has been shared but you're not sure where or by who.

What If My Information Has Been Shared?

If you are concerned that someone has shared your information online without consent, you can report the individual to the online platform and flag it as a privacy violation. Community guidelines will vary across this area so it's important to see what different platforms will be able to support with. Information on this can be found on Report Harmful Content. If you feel you are in any danger, always phone the police on 999. It's important to collect as much evidence as you can so they will be able to understand the situation as best as they can.

Doxing unfortunately represents a side of the internet where individuals can be unnecessarily targeted and harassed. User awareness is becoming increasingly crucial around how to keep our information secure as well as steps we need to take if we fall victim to a doxing attack. By understanding the mechanics of doxing and actively working towards its prevention, individuals can contribute to a safer online landscape.

National Online Safety
NOS
#WakeUpWednesday

14 WAYS TO BE KIND ONLINE

Showing kindness online can mean so much to someone else. It is a choice we can all make that helps others, puts people's needs before our own and which can generate feelings of empathy and compassion. Small gestures can have a large impact and often one act of kindness can lead to more, making the world a happier and more positive place. That's why we've created this guide to suggest a few simple 'acts of kindness online' that can benefit people's mental health, support their wellbeing and encourage a more positive approach to engaging online.

1. BE POSITIVE

Post about things that make you happy and that you're thankful for. It could brighten up someone else's day.

2. OFFER TO HELP

Sometimes a friend or family member might post a question online or ask for help with something they can't do themselves. If you know the answer or are able to offer help, provide support and send a response. Something that may be easy for you might be difficult for someone else.

3. SHOW APPRECIATION TO OTHERS

If somebody you know has done something good or shown kindness themselves, thank them for it. It costs nothing and showing them that you appreciate it means so much.

4. SHARE FUNNY VIDEOS OR IMAGES WITH FRIENDS & FAMILY

We often come across funny videos or images online that make us laugh and then we move on. If you found it funny, your friends and family might too. It could help someone smile who may be having a bad day.

5. LIKE, LOVE & CELEBRATE

If somebody posts something that you like on social media, like it, love it or celebrate it! It's a small gesture but could mean a lot.

6. VIDEO CALL YOUR FRIENDS & FAMILY

It can be easy to be consumed by daily routine. Using apps like Zoom, FaceTime or WhatsApp are great for connecting with others far away and shows you're thinking of them even though you can't physically meet them in person.

7. TELL SOMEONE YOU'RE THINKING OF THEM

We can't always tell how people are feeling online and just dropping somebody a message to ask if they're ok or that you're thinking of them could literally make their day.

8. SHARE POSITIVE POSTS

If you see something online that inspires you, share it with people you know. An inspirational quote, a beautiful photo or a motivational video can lift spirits, improve self-esteem and help make people feel better about themselves.

9. HOST AN ONLINE QUIZ

Video conferencing apps are a great way to get friends and family together. If you know someone who is feeling lonely, host an online quiz and invite them to join in. It could really cheer them up.

10. THINK BEFORE YOU COMMENT

Sometimes thinking before you act can be just as significant as acting in the first place. Showing thought before you comment could stop you posting something hurtful, offensive or negative. It's always better to post positively or post nothing at all.

11. BE COMPASSIONATE & UNDERSTANDING

Being empathetic towards others and their situation is often an act of kindness and selflessness that gets overlooked. If you notice someone who is upset, drop them a message and offer to listen.

12. CONNECT FRIENDS & FAMILY WITH SIMILAR INTERESTS

You may know two people amongst your friends and family who you trust and know well who have similar interests and likes. Introducing them can be a great way for them to make new friends but remember to always ask their permission first.

13. RECOMMEND SOMETHING YOU ENJOY DOING TO OTHERS

If you enjoy doing something online, such as playing a game, or if you've found a great learning resource, share it with others. Even if you've watched a good film, letting others know can be an act of generosity that brings them excitement or pleasure at a time when they might need it the most.

14. PRAISE OTHERS FOR THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS

Sometimes your friends or family might post something online that they're proud to have done. It might be an exam they've passed, learning a new skill or just completing a task. Either way, it's always kind to recognise hard work and effort through praise and celebration.

Meet our expert

This guide has been written by Anna Bateman. Anna is passionate about placing prevention at the heart of every school, integrating mental wellbeing within the curriculum, school culture and systems. She is also a member of the advisory group for the Department for Education, advising them on their mental health green paper.

Managing Stress

Stress is an uncomfortable experience of pressure or worry caused by problems in your life. Stress can cause many different symptoms and may affect how we feel physically, mentally, how we behave and make choices. It is not always easy to recognise when stress is the reason you are feeling or acting differently.

This guide will give you some top tips so that you can take action to reduce the symptoms of stress in your life.

1. WARNING SIGNS, PART 1

Warning signs of stress include emotional symptoms such as anxiety, fear or loss of confidence and cognitive symptoms such as poor concentration, poor memory or repetitive thoughts.

2. WARNING SIGNS, PART 2

Warning signs also include physical symptoms such as excessive sweating, racing heart rate, headaches and muscle tension. Behavioural symptoms might include, poor sleep, irritability, drinking excessive amounts of coffee or alcohol or losing your temper.

3. UNDERSTAND YOUR TRIGGERS

Take time to reflect on situations which may be causing stress. Once you know what they are, you can begin to reduce your exposure to the stressors and/or manage the causes.

4. TAKE CONTROL

Often stress symptoms are caused by feeling out of control. Not doing anything about the stress triggers or symptoms will make things worse, so start by understanding what you can and what you can't control.

5. MAKE HEALTHY CHOICES

Plan regular, healthy activities which will reduce stress symptoms. These will be a non-negotiable part of your week and a regular antidote to stress.

6. INDUCE CALM

Activities known to help induce calm range from deep breathing, meditation and mindfulness to walking, outdoor exercise or gardening.

7. USE YOUR SOCIAL NETWORK

Plan opportunities for fun and enjoyment with people you care about and who care about you. This could be sharing a new experience or an activity you enjoy doing together. Share and talk about your feelings too, sometimes that is all that is needed to cope.

8. CHANGE YOUR PERSPECTIVE

Amend your thinking and expectations of what is possible or doable. Reduce the pressure on yourself by reframing the problem or accepting that not everything will be finished or perfect. Most of the time, good enough is ok.

9. MANAGE YOUR TIME

Prioritising tasks, including emails and wellbeing activities, will be a crucial first step to change and taking control. Get someone to help you to keep on track with the change.

10. PRIORITISE WELLBEING

As a way of preventing stress, you should prioritise your wellbeing and be consistent about it. A one-off activity will have some impact, but it won't help you manage stress or maintain wellbeing in the long term.

Meet the Expert: Anna Bateman

Anna Bateman, subject matter expert on mental health & wellbeing and school improvement adviser

Harmful Sexual Behaviour

The Lucy Faithfull Foundation has launched a survey as part of an evaluation of its Shore service. The service offers information, advice and confidential support for teenagers concerned about their own or someone else's sexual thoughts and behaviour. The survey will gather professionals' opinions and experiences of using the Shore website.

For further information, please click the link below:

Shore

Source: NSPCC and Shore, 2024

Recipe for Being a Good Friend

During PSHCE sessions in the Lent Term, year 7 students were asked to create a recipe for being a good friend. Below is what Raphy P eloquently produced:

Much like a recipe for a cake, you need to create a recipe for being a good friend.

Ingredients I have given you an example:
A cup of kindness
A bucket of laughter
A plate happiness
A bowl of smiles
A glass of greatness
A pint of dreams
A box of beauty

Method:
Mix in the laughter
Sieve in the kindness
Pour in the smiles
Empty the box of beauty
Whisk in the greatness

And finally stir in the dreams!

LGBT+

As part of LGBT+ history month in February. Our students attended an assembly on how far the UK has come in the last 50 years. They looked at the use of derogatory comments in everyday life, how these affect mental health and both old and new laws around the world.

At the end of our assembly the students took a pledge shown below. As a result, the students signed a piece of paper with their name and stuck it to the pledge. This is now displayed in the main building, near the sports hall, serving as a daily reminder of our commitment.

OUR PLEDGE
- We agree everyone has the right to feel safe.
- We understand that all people, regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity, should be treated with dignity and respect.
- We work on eliminating homophobia from our own words and actions
- We do not tolerate anti-LGBT language and behaviour.
- We support each other and know we can seek appropriate help throughout our school community.

Recognising the struggle that the LGBT+ community has endured to secure the rights they currently possess, it is important to acknowledge that many LGBT+ individuals worldwide still face adversity. This is precisely why we commemorate LGBT+ History Month.

Best wishes,

Charmain Eaton
Deputy Head (Pastoral and Safeguarding) & CCF Contingent Commander