

SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER

June 2023

Welcome to the June edition of the safeguarding newsletter. It has been lovely to welcome the children back to school for final half-term before summer.

June is proving to be a hot month, so there is some information on how to keep safe in this weather included in this newsletter. It is also Pride month, which we are enjoying celebrating in school. Additionally, there is some information about the support that Early Help can provide to families, which we hope will be helpful.

Kind regards,

Ms Jones and the Keep Kids Safe team.

KEY NUMBERS

Anyone can contact the services below directly, regardless of whether you are a child, parent, carer or a member of staff. If you have a safeguarding concern, please ensure you pass it on: safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

<p>01925 443322 (Option one, followed by option one)</p> <p>Warrington Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)</p> <p>For urgent safeguarding concerns about a child</p>	<p>01925 443322 (Option two)</p> <p>Out of Office Emergency Duty Team</p> <p>For urgent safeguarding concerns about a child outside of office hours</p>	<p>0808 800 5000</p> <p>NSPCC</p> <p>For adults who are worried about a child</p>
<p>0800 1111</p> <p>Childline</p> <p>For children who are worried about their own safety or need some advice</p>	<p>101</p> <p>Police Non-Emergency</p> <p>For reporting any crimes or concerns</p>	<p>999</p> <p>Emergency Services</p> <p>For anyone in immediate danger (including if you are worried about the immediate risk to a child)</p>

Early Help

What is Early Help?

As a school, we use the Early Help team at Warrington Borough Council to support families who may need in a variety of different situations. We are often asked what Early Help actually is, and it is often confused with social care.

Early Help means taking action to support a child, young person and their family early on when a situation emerges. It can be required at any stage in a child's life from pre-birth through to adulthood and applies to any situation or need that the family cannot deal with or meet on its own. Early Help is a strength-based approach enabling families to develop the skills to prevent issues from getting worse by offering the right support at the right time.

Any professional working with a family, such as those based in schools, health services, or in voluntary sector organisations, can offer Early Help services by responding to identified needs in order to offer advice, support and intervention. Early Help is provided to prevent or reduce the need for statutory or social care interventions wherever possible.

We want the services supporting children and families to work much more closely together, forging lasting and meaningful relationships that improve the lives of the children of Warrington in the short, medium and long term, whilst enabling families to develop skills to be independent and feel empowered. For a signposting list to their services, please see [here](#).

Pride Month

Warrington Early Help
LGBTQ+ Youth Support Service






TAGS stands for **Teenagers and Gender & Sexuality**

... but it means a whole lot more!

It is a safe place where young people aged 11 - 24 who identify as LGBTQ+ can come and find peer support, advice and acceptance.

Contact

Warrington Borough Council
Early Help Youth Support Service 01925 442440

 Warrington Youth Service
 @WarringtonYS
 @warringtonyouthservice

WARRINGTON
Borough Council

June is Pride month, which we are enjoying celebrating in school. Each week, we are looking at significant figures in LGBTQ+ history and learning about their achievements.

Students will also be having assemblies about why Pride is important, and reminding that everyone should be able to feel comfortable in school and society, no matter how they identify.

For students who are interested in LGBTQ+ issues, we have a CAS club every Tuesday called Safe Space, which is led by Miss Pritchard.

Anyone is welcome to attend!

Early Help also run a service called TAGS, which is a support group for LGBTQ+ students where they can access advice, support, and make friends.

Uniform Donations

As we approach the end of the academic year, we are appealing to any parents of year 11 students who no longer require their uniform and would be in a position to donate it to the school so that we can provide it to students who may need it next academic year. Alternatively, if you child is not in year 11 but has grown out of their uniform and no longer has a use for it, we would gratefully receive any donations. If you have anything to donate, please leave the items in reception for the attention of Ms McKittrick. We greatly appreciate your support in this matter.

Hot Weather & Water Safety

In these hot weeks, it is important to be aware of how to keep safe in this weather, and the additional risks that it can bring. Each year, there are often reports of children swimming in open water, which can be extremely dangerous and a risk to life. When out in the community, children should avoid swimming in open water which has not been designated for swimming.

The [Cheshire Fire & Rescue website](#) has some very useful guidance and advice on how to keep safe in water. Below are some of the key guidelines from the website:

Dangers - open water

- The water may look calm on the surface, but there can be strong undercurrents that could pull even a strong swimmer under the water.
- The water may feel warm on the surface, but just a few feet below the surface it can be icy cold. The cold water can affect stamina and strength of swimmers.

What to do if someone falls into deep water

If you spot someone in trouble in the water:

- Call 999 to inform Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service. If you don't have a phone shout for help - but do not enter the water.
- Encourage the person in the water to try and float on their back - and if there is rescue equipment nearby throw it to them.
- Never ever enter the water to try and save someone. This usually ends up adding to the problem. If you go into the water, you are likely to suffer from cold water shock which will leave you unable to help even if you are a strong swimmer.

What to do if YOU fall into deep water – FLOAT

- If you fall into deep water, you should lie on your back and FLOAT.
- Fight the instinct to panic or swim - it's better to just FLOAT.
- Lie back and keep your airways clear, push your stomach up and extend your limbs moving hands and feet to help you FLOAT.
- Try to take and control the effects of cold water shock such as the gasping reflex. Once your breathing is controlled call for help and if possible try making your way towards safety

In addition, with regards to the hot water, it is important that children stay hydrated. Children should bring a water bottle to school and fill it up throughout the day. We also recommend applying sunscreen before school to protect them throughout the day.

Device Anxiety

On the following page is a graphic with advice for parents/carers regarding how to help children manage stress around their electronic devices, which is a common, yet challenging problem. Children can often push back when parents try to implement boundaries around their devices. Hopefully the advice below is helpful.

We hope you have found this newsletter useful. For further safeguarding information, please visit the school website:
<https://padgateacademy.co.uk/safeguarding>

Helping children and young people with MANAGING DEVICE STRESS AND ANXIETY

The internet and advances in the capability of digital devices have afforded us arguably the fastest period of technological and social evolution in living memory: creating opportunities for us to interact with people anywhere in the world, 24 hours a day. It's also, however, blurred safety boundaries and added new stresses for young people, who are often less aware of the hidden hazards. With almost half of 10–15-year-olds experiencing bullying online and algorithms pushing content in front of our children every day, it's important to know how to address some of these challenges.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

LIVING ONLINE

The internet is awash with sophisticated algorithms that learn from our online behaviour and try to predict our wants and needs. That's very helpful in some respects, but it can make the online world difficult for children and young people to negotiate. Content can be brought to them at any time – it may not always be appropriate, and children may not have the ability or the support to deal with it.

PUSHY NOTIFICATIONS

Content is also directed at us through notifications from our apps: letting us know we have a new message or social post to read, for example. While that's useful in some circumstances, it conditions us to keep going back online (and is designed to do so) and can be a near-constant demand on your child's attention. As such alerts become more common, are we experiencing an 'attack of the pings'?

BLURRED BOUNDARIES

There are now so many ways we can communicate online in real time (like instant messaging apps) or with a delay (such as on social media) that it's possible to be constantly in conversation. Young people often prefer quickfire exchanges of text – but using fewer words can cause distressing miscommunications through the lack of non-verbal cues like facial expressions or tone of voice.

DIGITAL DEPENDENCY

As devices allow access to immediate external help in challenging situations, it's a concern that children may not be developing the inner confidence to work things out for themselves. Likewise, group membership is hugely important to young people – both in digital and 'real' life – and being excluded from online conversations can cause damaging feelings of loneliness and isolation.

DISGUISED DISTRESS

Children often haven't yet developed the emotional resources to deal with many of the setbacks of everyday life, so identifying when it's specifically something online that's worried them can be tricky. A certain level of stress is a normal response to a problem; it spurs us into action to keep ourselves safe. If the stress is excessive, though, it can feel overwhelming and potentially lead to anxiety or depression.

ANTI-SOCIAL SOCIALS

Social media can bring people together in hugely positive ways. Sadly, it does also have a darker side, including 'flame war' arguments which can escalate quickly and have hurtful consequences. With so many people looking on, 'group shaming' situations are also common – while there are continual opportunities for young people to compare themselves negatively with other social media users.

Advice for Parents & Carers

LEARN THE BASICS

It's impossible to keep up with every online change or every new app. The best option is to make yourself aware of the fundamentals of how the internet operates, so you can help your child to grasp how – and why – content reaches them. Devices and the digital world can be confusing, so learning to understand them better will give you the confidence to talk to your child about them.

TALK IT OUT

If a child mentions a comment that's been directed at them in a text chat or on social media, it may sound minor but can actually have a much bigger effect than we realise. In our evolved brains, any perceived threat can get internalised while our body reacts as if we were in physical danger – raising stress levels. It's always worth encouraging your child to get any concerns out in the open.

PUSH DISTRACTIONS AWAY

Notifications to our phones and tablets can be helpful, but they sometimes make one wonder who's really in charge: the person or the device? Checking our phone as soon as it goes off is an easy habit to fall into – especially for young people. Try switching off non-essential alerts on your devices and encourage your child to do the same; you should both feel less triggered and more in control.

LOOK FOR THE SIGNS

This is tricky – and may depend on the child's age – but any sudden change in behaviour is worth looking out for. If your child seems to be checking their phone or tablet more, doesn't want to be parted from them, or appears unusually secretive, anxious or withdrawn, it could be a sign that something is amiss in relation to their device – and, possibly, that they're in need of extra support.

KEEP CHECKING IN

Healthy emotional regulation balances three systems: threat, drive and grounding. Down the various rabbit holes of the internet, however, that balance can easily slip away – so it's important to help your child manage their emotions when they're online. Check in with them regularly when they're on their device, and remember that 'distraction' and 'relaxation' aren't always the same thing.

BE KIND: UNWIND

Be kind to yourselves as parents and carers. Remember that we're all in the same boat, trying to safely guide our children through this complex, fast-moving digital environment. Getting into the habit of having natural, relaxed conversations with your child about their online life (and yours) can level the playing field and make it far easier for them to open up to you about any concerns.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Carole Francis-Smith is an experienced counselling psychologist who specialises in promoting safe and ethical online communications. She consults with and offers bespoke training to businesses and organisations, supporting positive and effective online communications – often by considering some of the more hidden aspects of the various mediums.



NOS National Online Safety®

#WakeUpWednesday

Source: <https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/report/the-big-ask-big-answers/>
<https://www.dns.gov.uk/people/populationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/childrensonlinebehaviourinenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2020>

@natonlinesafety

/NationalOnlineSafety

@nationalonlinesafety

@national_online_safety

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 29.03.2023