

March 2024

WPS Parents' Safeguarding Newsletter

Interactive Stories

internet
matters.org

Internet Matters have put together some great interactive stories covering a range of issues from self-image and identity, online bullying, relationships and more. The interactive stories are really useful for parents to go through with their children.

More information can be found [HERE](#)

Palworld



Palworld is a new game similar to Pokemon and Digimon with a PEGI rating of 12 for fantasy-character-style violence. Given its similarity to Pokemon there's every likelihood that younger children will be playing this game and so Internet Matters have compiled some advice and guidance for parents about the game: what it is, how it works, safety settings etc.

You can find the article [HERE](#).

What is Y99 chat?



After many years of concern, earlier this year the anonymous chat website Omegle was forced off the internet. However, although Omegle has gone, there are many more sites and apps to take its place. One of these sites is Y99, it's one to keep your eyes and ears open for.

Internet Matters have written a good article about Y99. You can find the article [HERE](#).

Supporting Children with SEND

internet
matters.org

Internet Matters have a great range of guides and advice hubs available for parents of neurodivergent children including connecting and sharing online, online gaming and more.

You can access all of the guides [HERE](#).

Staying Mentally Healthy During Exam Time



As our learners head towards the main exam time here are some tips on how you can support your children at what can be a very stressful time.

Young Minds have a series of support pages aimed to help with exam stress and anxiety. Their advice is available to help parents and the young people themselves. You can find this helpful advice on the links below:

[Advice for Parents](#)

[Advice for Children](#)

Better Internet for Kids

Online Beauty Ideals Study

TikTok, Instagram, YouTube and X have revolutionised global society. For children and young people, whom are often permanently online, the perception of attractiveness and behaviour is formed in this sphere. What is considered desirable or beautiful has always been at the forefront of people's perception of themselves. Now those ideals change faster than ever, and not being able to fit into that bracket of desirability can be a driver of personal issues among young people. In this vein the Austrian Safer Internet Centre held a study of 400, 12 to 17 year olds, on the topic of beauty ideals. To read this informative report, please click the link [HERE](#).

THE CONVERSATION

Navigating the Nuances of Social Media

It can be difficult for parents to think like a teenager, however parents can probably remember the difficulty of relationships, friendships and social approval. For many young people much of this is carried out online, and for parents this can be difficult to understand, it might feel secretive, which can cause concern.

Linda Kaye, Associate Head of Psychology at Edge Hill University has written a great article in 'The Conversation' which gives a really good insight into how teenagers navigate the nuances of social media, and what adults can learn from them.

You can find the article [HERE](#).

Teens and AI - Virtual Girlfriends and Boyfriends



The US Cyberbullying Research Centre have put out a really interesting article related to AI chatbots as girl/boyfriends. These chatbots are apps, freely available for download where you can interact with messages, voice messages and in some cases, image exchanges. Given the curiosity of young people in particular there is a likelihood that some teenagers are interacting with these chatbots so it's important to be aware of what they are and the risks they pose.

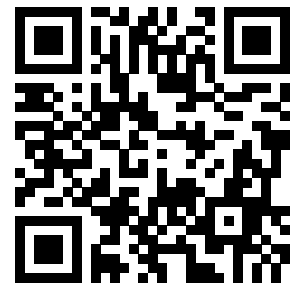
You can see the full article [HERE](#).

A Parent's Guide to Cyberbullying



Many young people who are victims of cyberbullying suffer in silence.

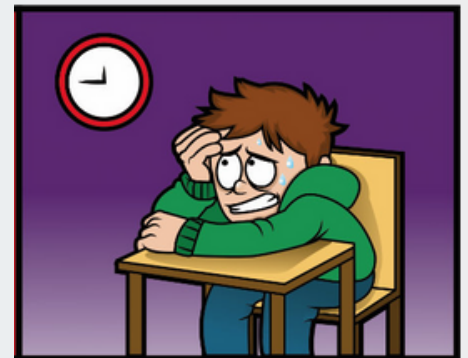
They feel they can't turn to parents or a trusted adult for support as they fear they may get in trouble or have their devices taken away from them. It can carry on all day, all evening and all weekend for the world to see, causing a lot of emotional stress to the victim and their family.



scan the QR code with your phone's camera for Parent Guides on how to help keep your children safe online



It can very quickly lead to the victim feeling trapped, scared and vulnerable to grooming and blackmail.



Online safety is when young people know who they can tell if they feel upset by something that has happened online.

Parents please contact your school to enquire attending their next e-safety workshop or have any concerns.

Working with Home Office 'PREVENT', The Police and Crime Commissioner and Children's Safeguarding Partnerships to help keep children safe online.

Skips Educational Email: info@skipsed.com Tel: +44 121 227 1941

Developed in partnership with





WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW COUNTY LINES

Children of all ages and backgrounds are at risk of being exploited by criminal gangs who'll use them to transport drugs and money around the country. Understand what county lines is and the signs to look out for.

WHAT IS COUNTY LINES?

- A child is 'groomed' by a criminal gang, then exploited to transport drugs and money from one area (county) to another - usually from an urban location to a rural or coastal one. Grooming can happen in person, or online on social media apps like Snapchat
- The child is likely to face violence and sexual exploitation
- The child may be trafficked to the gang's 'trap houses' or 'bandos' miles away from home, to find 'customers', deal with rival gangs and sell drugs
- The 'lines' refer to the dedicated mobile phone lines that gangs use for selling drugs

IS MY CHILD AT RISK?

Criminal gangs are known to target:

- Children with vulnerabilities, such as poverty, family breakdown, exclusion from school - because they're more likely to respond to manipulation and coercion
- Children from stable or affluent families - because they're less likely to be known to the police and may blend in better in the town the gang sends them to
- Girls and young children - children as young as 7 are being groomed by gangs, and girls are often groomed into relationships with gang members or used to transport drugs as they're less likely to be stopped by the police

However, any child is vulnerable to exploitation.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I SUSPECT MY CHILD IS BEING EXPLOITED?

Talk to your child, stay calm and ask questions about what is going on, reassuring them you want to keep them safe. Try to be open, honest and non-judgemental - remember, they may be scared.

If you are still concerned, seek help straight away - there are organisations that can help you. You could do any of the following, but you must tell someone:

- Contact our school. Ask to speak to the designated safeguarding lead and explain your concerns to them. They will be able to advise you where to go next
- Report your concerns to children's social care. A social worker will be able to listen to your concerns and help you to protect your child
- Contact your local police station or call 101. If your child is missing, remember you don't have to wait 24 hours before making a report
- Contact organisations such as:
 - ▶ Crimestoppers: 0800 555 111
 - ▶ NSPCC: 0808 800 5000
 - ▶ Family Lives: 0808 800 2222

If you believe your child is in immediate danger, or a threat is made against you or another family member, call 999 immediately.

WHAT SIGNS SHOULD I LOOK OUT FOR?

Potential signs that a child is involved in county lines include:

- Leaving home without explanation
- Returning home late, staying out all night or going missing
- Being found in areas away from home
- Being secretive about who they're talking to and where they are going
- Persistently going missing from school or college
- Receiving unexplained money, phone(s), clothes or jewellery
- Forming relationships with controlling/older individuals or groups
- Using sexual, drug-related or violent language you wouldn't expect them to know
- Showing increasingly disruptive or aggressive behaviour
- Coming home with injuries or looking particularly messy
- Owning hotel cards or keys to unknown places
- Taking drugs, or being found with large amounts of drugs on them
- Receiving excessive texts/phone calls and/or owning multiple handsets

Noticing any of these signs doesn't mean your child is being exploited through county lines. However, you should still talk to them about any concerns you have.

SOURCES

- [What is county lines? The Children's Society](#)
- [Keeping children safe in education, GOV.UK - Department for Education](#)
- [County lines, Fearless](#)
- [Rescue and response pan-London county lines service, Greater London Authority](#)
- [County lines, National Crime Agency](#)
- [County lines: information for parents, Cumbria Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

This factsheet was produced by The [Key Safeguarding](#): www.thekeysupport.com/safeguarding



WOOTTON PARK

WELLBEING SESSIONS

Wellbeing Drop-in Service

Each day there will be a wellbeing drop in service at school during the Easter break. Mrs Knight will be available in the meeting room at the front of school should any learners wish to drop in.



Mrs Knight

Mental Health Nurse

MON-FRI
8th to 12th April, 2024



START AT
13:00PM - 14:00PM



Mrs Knight will also be available via email should you wish to contact her:

c.knight@woottonparkschool.org.uk



For wellbeing resources visit
Learner Wellbeing

West Northants NCT Newsletter



Please click on the link below to access the West Northants Children's Trust newsletter, which includes information on amazing events, clubs and groups that families, children and young people can access across the county that are free or affordable to attend:

[West Northants NCT Newsletter](#)

Safeguarding During the Holidays

We hope you have a lovely Easter break, if you have any safeguarding concerns over the holiday please contact a member of our safeguarding team on one of the phone numbers below:

07857 801573

07857 801568



Reporting a Safeguarding Concern

If you are concerned about the welfare or safety of a learner please speak to a member of the safeguarding team.



Jane Page
Designated Safeguarding Lead



Sam MacDonnell
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead



Claire
Woodbridge



Corinna
Kerrou



Dan
Rosser



Gemma
Kingston-Wade



Carla
Grady



Adam
Cowdell



James
Coe



Phone call
01604 931139

Website
www.woottonparkschool.org.uk

Email Address
info@woottonparkschool.co.uk

School Address
Wootton Hall Park, Northampton, NN4 0HZ