

KSCS Year 9 and 10 Parent Safeguarding Summer 2023 Newsletter

We plan to produce a safeguarding newsletter each term to highlight some of the areas we think will help you understand and protect your child as they go through the various stages of their life and hope this gives you the extra tools and advice in keeping your children safe from hidden dangers.

As our children get older as parents, we try hard to allow them independence to grow into young adults. We probably remember our own parents letting us go out and meet our friends, go up town on our own and have sleep overs at friends. Fifteen, twenty years ago, although there were hidden dangers, it is nothing in comparison to the dangers our young people are facing. With social media, phones, child criminal exploitation, sexual predators and so much more knowing what your child is doing and where and who they are with is so important in keeping them safe. You probably don't want to think about the ill-advised and life-destroying things some teenagers are doing — but you need to. The biggest influences in a Childs life are their parents and the more we connect with our children the more we can keep them safe.

What is influencing young teenagers today?



Cannabis sweets packaged to look like bags of Haribo and Skittles are being sold and promoted on social media sites such as Instagram and TikTok. Drugs are used to lure children into trafficking drugs by county lines gangs. These sweets are illegal and contain high levels of THC (liquid cannabis) - which is the chemical that gives a user a high.



Did you know children now start **vaping** from as young as ten.

There has been a lot in the press lately about the dangers surrounding vapes in young people and the potential health conditions they could face in the future.

These vapes are purchased illegally and often filled with THC (Cannabis Liquid)

Children using vapes are becoming addicted to nicotine and this influences their behaviours.

Vapes are easy to hide from parents as they do not leave an odour on your clothes, they can be easily hidden, can be vaped in the bedrooms, practically anywhere and difficult to detect. For additional information please see below:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-62052286> <https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/>

<https://www.theparentsguideto.co.uk/post/vaping-what-uk-parents-need-to-know>

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/you-your-body/drugs-alcohol-smoking/smoking/>



As the summer nights offer more time out socialising, we will see an increase in students using Laughing gas (helium balloons) otherwise known as **Nitrous oxide** products such as Smartwhip or Goldwhip can be purchased in small cannisters.

The risks of inhaling too much and suffering negative -effects such as dizziness, shortness of breath, poor co-ordination, accidents, B12 [vitamin] -deficiency, paralysis and even death."

If your child is out, do you know who and where they are? Do you occasionally check up on them? If you are seeing changes in their behaviours, there is normally a reason for it. If your worried please do get in touch.

Let's talk about Sex and Relationships

Teenagers are becoming sexually curious at a much younger age, sometimes as young as 11. Talking about sex and relationships with our children can sometimes feel awkward and uncomfortable. Teenagers are accessing pornography, sometime are put under peer pressure to perform sexual acts, send nudes of themselves or maybe in a relationship with someone who wants more than what they are ready for or is controlling over them.



In school we educate through PHSE however the best teachers to teach your children is you. By creating a sense of emotional safety with you allows your child to be more prepared for the intense emotions of sexual and romantic relationships, and to have coping skills and support when those relationships do occur.

Make sure your child understands consent and its ok to say 'No I'm not ready' not to feel pressurised by anyone to do anything they are not ready to do. Talk to them about respecting themselves and not sending nudes on social media and remind them once its on the internet there is no taking it back and its illegal for both the sender and receiver.

Conversations can take place, whilst watching a movie if something relevant has happened, or maybe on a day when you have parent and child time. Be relaxed in your conversation remind them you were young once and know how it feels.

Break ups for teenagers can be very emotional and often they don't want to discuss things with us, and as parents it can be highly frustrating watching your child suffer and not know what to do to help them. If they will not talk to you tell them about the wellbeing team at school, they can refer themselves or if you are really worried about them give us a call and we can have a chat with them. For more information and support:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/sex-relationships/healthy-relationships/>

Finally

We hope you have found this useful, we are here to help, if you are worried about your child or another child in school, please talk to anyone in the safeguarding team or your Head of Year/Student Support Officer.

You can email us directly on safeguarding@kscs.org.uk.

Finally, we hope you have a good summer term and a safe and enjoyable summer break.

Regards

KSCS Safeguarding Team