

Safety Rocks

Spring Newsletter 2015

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Working Together to Keep Children Safe

Online Safety

It's clear that online safety is an issue that is significantly affecting young people; The NSPCC reports that last year there was a 168% increase in contacts to Childline about online abuse and that many parents rate keeping their children safe online as a top concern for the welfare of their child.

What is online abuse?

The NSPCC define online abuse as "any type of abuse that happens on the web, whether through social networks, playing online games or using mobile phones. Young people may experience cyberbullying, grooming, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or emotional abuse. This could be from people they know as well as by strangers."



Parenting Team worker Tasha Barefield asked local parents what they would like to know about online safety, they said:

- ? *More about cyberbullying*
- ? *How to apply privacy/safety settings across different devices*
- ? *Internet security (how much do kids know and what do they need at different ages?)*
- ? *Filters and parental controls for popular sites like Instagram and YouTube*
- ? *How to block/limit internet sites*
- ? *Guidance on X-box (gaming)*
- ? *Clearer guidelines about settings on photos and tablets*
- ? *What is the recommended amount of screen time for different ages?*
- ? *What is the effect on the brain & behaviour of too much screen time?*
- ? *A list of what sites/apps/games are appropriate at what age*
- ? *How to set boundaries as a parent for online time and content*
- ? *Where can I get information?*



The NSPCC has a useful guide for parents called Share Aware which allows parents to look up different sites, games and apps to see what the recommended age is and what the risks and benefits are:



net-aware.org.uk

UK Safer Internet Centre has lots of information for young people and parents about staying safe online saferinternet.org.uk



Common Sense Media promote safe technology and media for children. Contains reviews of apps, games, books movies written by children AND their parents.



commonsensemedia.org

Vodafone Digital Parenting - Helping you to help your child manage their digital world. Includes age specific checklists, expert advice and 'How To...' guides as well as activities to do with your children



vodafone.com/content/parents

Safety Net has developed online safety sessions for parents, young people and professionals.

Please call if you would like us to visit your school or community.

Call 01273 420973 or email: training@safety-net.org.uk

Staying Safe Online and Personal Safety

Stay safe online

Remember the 5 SMART rules when using the internet and mobile phones.



S SAFE Keep safe by being careful not to give out personal information – such as your full name, email address, phone number, home address, photos or school name – to people you are chatting with online.

M MEET Meeting someone you have only been in touch with online can be dangerous. Only do so with your parents' or carers' permission and even then only when they can be present.

A ACCEPTING Accepting emails, IM messages, or opening files, pictures or texts from people you don't know or trust can lead to problems – they may contain viruses or nasty messages!

R RELIABLE Information you find on the internet may not be true, or someone online may be lying about who they are. Make sure you check information before you believe it.

T TELL Tell your parent, carer or a trusted adult if someone or something makes you feel uncomfortable or worried, or if you or someone you know is being bullied online.

Find out more at Childnet's website ...

www.kidsmart.org.uk

Childnet International © 2002-2007 Registered Charity no. 1080173 www.childnet.com



Screen Time: Ask the Experts

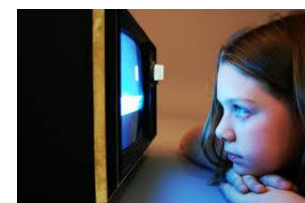
Psychologist Dr Aric Sigman, talking to the BBC, gave the following advice:

Too much screen time over stimulates the brain and makes it hard to wind down and fall asleep. For this reason screens are not a good idea in your child's bedroom

Set rules about screen time and switch off all devices at least an hour before bedtime to get a good night's sleep

Explain to young people the reason for setting the rules

And lead by example!



More sleep is good for teenagers' physical and mental health

Did you know?

- ✓ The recommended amount of sleep for Teenagers is 8 – 10 hours a night
- ✓ Teenagers tend to go to sleep later and wake up later because their body clock is programmed about two hours later, possibly for hormonal reasons
- ✓ US scientists found that young people with poor sleep habits were more likely to drink, take drugs and engage in risky behaviour in later years than those who slept soundly
- ✓ Sleep is important for controlling weight and preventing weight gain. The hormone leptin plays a key role in making you feel full, when you don't get enough sleep, leptin levels drop so you feel hungrier
- ✓ Getting the right amount of sleep improves memory and performance- while we sleep, our brains process our memories from the day. If you don't get enough sleep, it seems like those memories might not get stored correctly and can be lost
- ✓ Regular exercise, 20 minutes 3 times a week, can help young people sleep better
- ✓ Getting enough sleep can improve mood and emotional regulation
- ✓ A good sleep routine and just one extra hour of sleep can make a big difference to how you feel



The Sleep Council

Eating Disorders

The week of February 23rd to March 1st was national eating disorders awareness week. The national charity Beat Eating Disorders is raising awareness about the issue through its 'Sock it to Eating Disorders' Campaign. For more information go to www.b-eat.co.uk



What are eating disorders?

A lot of young people want to be thinner and may try to lose weight by dieting or skipping meals. But for some, a worry about weight becomes an obsession which can turn into a serious eating disorder.

Eating disorders are an illness – not fads or extreme diets. They are conditions that are triggered by stressful life events and transitions.. Eating disorders are a symptom of distress and a coping mechanism which can be very difficult for young people to talk about.

Some Facts about Eating Disorders

The most common eating disorders are anorexia and bulimia

Anorexia:

People with anorexia, might think about food, fat content or calories all the time and try to avoid eating. Losing weight might make them feel in control, or give them a sense of success which makes them feel good, but it can be difficult for them to know when to stop.

Bulimia:

People with bulimia usually keep their weight steady, so it can be very hard to tell if someone has bulimia. People with bulimia 'binge-eat' – they eat a lot of food very quickly. This makes them feel guilty and bad about themselves, so they might try and get rid of the food by making themselves sick, or taking lots of laxatives (tablets or medicine that make you go to the toilet a lot).

Don't forget boys can suffer from eating disorders too
(From Young Minds – Worried about Eating Problems?)

What are some of the signs?

- Weight loss or unusual weight changes.
- For girls, periods being irregular or stopping.
- Missing meals, eating very little and avoiding 'fattening' foods.
- Avoiding eating in public, secret eating.
- Large amounts of food disappearing from the cupboards
- Believing they are fat when underweight
- Exercising excessively, often in secret
- Becoming obsessed with food, , calorie counting and setting target weights
- Going to the bathroom or toilet immediately after meals
- Using laxatives and vomiting to control weight



Getting Help

- **Don't panic** – You are not the only family with a child suffering an eating disorder. Get support from others in similar situations by accessing support groups, online and/or telephone support.
- **Keep talking** Eating disorders thrive on secrecy and talking about it – even though it may be hard – will help you move forward together as a family. Never let the eating disorder be the 'elephant in the room.'
- **Don't go it alone** – Therapeutic support is available for families so speak to your GP or healthcare professional to find out the options available and don't hold back.
- **Be there** - Support from friends and family can be essential for people struggling to get over an eating problem or disorder, but it can be difficult to know how to help. Let them know you are worried about them that you love and care for them. Gently encourage them to seek help and try not to judge.
- **Support one another** – Eating disorders are difficult for everyone involved and impacts on families in a way that nothing else can. The key to recovery is to work at it together as a family, despite the challenges and try to stay positive through the ups and downs

The Brighton and Hove Eating Disorders Peer support Service offers monthly peer support groups for men, women and carers. For enquiries please email Sam Thomas at sam@mengetedstoo.co.uk

Young Minds also provides information and support for young people, parents and carers www.youngminds.org.uk

In the news: Child Sexual Exploitation

There has been a lot of media coverage recently about the issue of child sexual exploitation – what is it and what can you do as a parent to keep your child safe?

What is sexual exploitation?

Sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse, where a young person is manipulated, or forced into taking part in a sexual act. This could be as part of a seemingly consensual relationship, or in return for attention, affection, money, drugs, alcohol or somewhere to stay. It can happen to boys or to girls

Advice for parents

What can you do?

As a parent or carer, it's important to discuss with young people the differences between healthy and unhealthy relationships to help highlight potential risks to them. There are also a number of practical steps you can take to protect them such as:

- staying alert to changes in behaviour or any physical signs of abuse such as bruising
- being aware of new, unexplained gifts or possessions and carefully monitoring any episodes of staying out late or not returning home
- exercising caution around older friends your child may have, or relationships with other young people where there appears to be a power imbalance
- making sure you understand the risks linked to your child being online and putting measures in place to minimise these risks. (see front page of newsletter)
- There is more useful information about child sexual exploitation at the Barnardos web-site http://www.barnardos.org.uk/get_involved/campaign/cse/spotthesigns.htm
- If you are worried that a young person is at risk of sexual exploitation contact the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 01273 290400 or email MASH@brighton-hove.gcsx.gov.uk
- Or call Sussex Police on 101 and quote 'Operation Kite'

(Taken from Barnardos leaflet for parents)

Advice for Young People

The WISE Project in Brighton & Hove is a service for 13 – 25 year olds who are experiencing sexual exploitation or are at risk of experiencing it

http://www.sussexcentralymca.org.uk/information_advice_support/wise_project

If you need help or advice, contact WISE

Phone: 07841 067 418 or 07557 855 731
Email: wise.brightonandhove@ymcadlg.org
Facebook: 'WiSE Worker'
Twitter: @ TheWiSEProject



We would love to hear from you!

To let us know whether people are reading this newsletter and finding it helpful, or to suggest a safety topic for us to cover in future editions, or make a comment, please like us on Facebook or email us at newsletter@safety-net.org.uk



Safety net needs YOU!

As a registered charity, Safety Net depends on people just like you. Please donate what you can to help us keep children safe

You can donate instantly and securely via our website at www.safety-net.org.uk/supportus/donateonline

Or by Text message to **70070** saying, SNet41(space) followed by the amount e.g. SNet41 £10

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