

SAFE & Well



Gartree High School's Termly Safeguarding & Wellbeing Bulletin

Issue 9

Spring 2023

Welcome!

Welcome to the 9th issue of Safe & Well. We have had a really busy and exciting term; highlights have included Children's Mental Health Week, Safer Internet Day and our Teen Safety and Wellbeing event aimed at parents. We hope you enjoy finding more out as you read through this term's edition.

Stay safe!

MCAS App

A reminder about our new school communication app, 'MyChildAtSchool' (MCAS). We aim to have 100% parent engagement with this app, which we feel will help your child to be safe and successful at school.

MCAS can be used to check on your child's homework and what they have been consuming for school dinner. It can also be used to purchase things like locker keys and school trips. Given its key role in aiding communication between parents and school we would strongly encourage parents to download and use the app.

Find out more here:

<https://www.gartree.leics.sch.uk/mcas-log-in-help>

and contact this email address if you have any difficulties accessing the app: lbowley@gartree.leics.sch.uk



Children's Mental Health Week



We celebrated Children's Mental Health week last term

Students completed work in tutor time and assemblies from Ms Boyce focussed on "ways to wellbeing"

The theme of Children's Mental Health Week 2023 was Let's Connect, and we are very keen to encourage people to make healthy, rewarding, and meaningful connections. Mental Health and Wellbeing is a crucial part of being healthy and making connections with other people is a crucial part of maintaining positive mental health. Here are five ways parents and carers can support children to make healthy connections;

Work together to grow their friendship skills

Talk to your child about what makes a good friend, and practice friendship skills such as listening, sharing, compromising, and negotiating.

Help them to gain confidence

If your child is shy, this can make it feel more difficult to make and keep friends. Give your child lots of opportunities to connect and communicate with you in whatever ways you feel comfortable for them. Practising with you will give them more confidence to connect with others.

Model positive and healthy relationships

By modelling positive relationships of your own, you can help your child to see what positive, healthy and meaningful relationships should look like – and to recognise when friendships aren't positive.

Reassure them that it's natural for friends to fall out sometimes.

Let your child know that being friends doesn't always mean agreeing or getting along with others all the time.

Talk the talk

Sometimes children can find it difficult to know how what they can say when talking with their peers. You can help your child by practicing what they can say to introduce themselves to someone new or to make a new friend.

In this short film series created by BAFTA, stars from across film, TV and radio reflect on the different ways that they connect with others. <https://youtu.be/dw8UERapnjc>

Secondary school students talk here about the different ways they connect, and how connections can impact their mental health and wellbeing.

https://youtu.be/guDmjMbw_Ag



Teen Safety and Wellbeing Evening

This event was held on 28th March in school. It was a pleasure to see many parents come along and meet many members of our school community who support the wellbeing of students in school. Also present were representatives from local police, counselling services, South Leicestershire Schools Sports Partnership, Teen Health and our student wellbeing ambassadors.

There was a chance for parents to meet and chat with these people in an informal way, with information stalls set up. This was followed by a presentation which shared information about a range of topics which the school and stakeholders felt it was important for parents to know – including vaping, County Lines and online safety.

We will share some of the key information from this evening later in this edition.




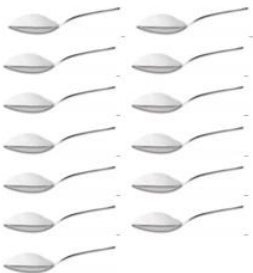

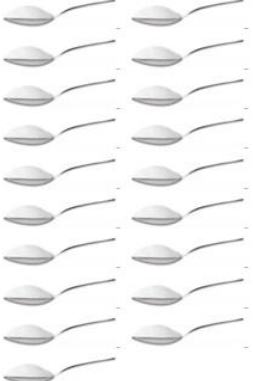


Healthy Eating at Easter!

Easter is one of those times of year when our healthy eating habits can be challenged. Whilst we are keen for young people to enjoy all the treats that the Easter period can offer, we thought we'd share some useful tips from Leicestershire Healthy Schools about how to ensure we can look after ourselves while still enjoying the occasion...

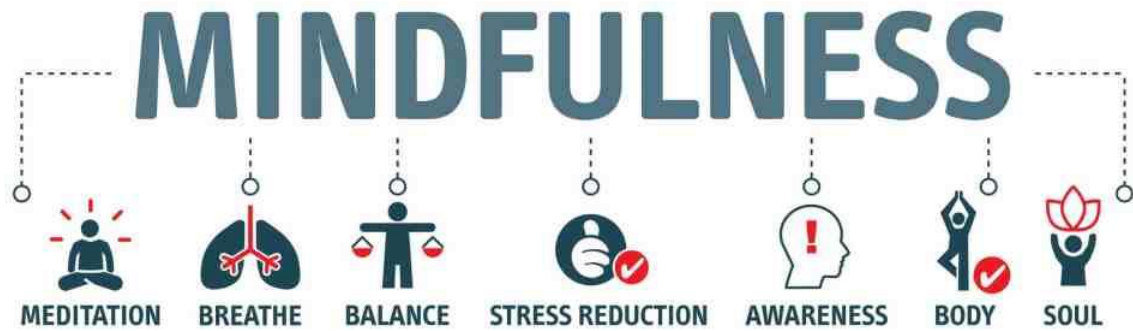
- Keep chocolates and sweets to **mealtimes only** as an occasional treat, try not to snack on them throughout the Easter break; It is not just the *amount* of easter eggs eaten that would cause tooth decay, it is *how often* they are consumed.
- Consider low-sugar alternatives, or opt for dark chocolate which has less sugar than milk or white chocolate. Fondants and caramel inside the chocolate egg are potentially more damaging to teeth than the chocolate egg itself. An even better option for children would be to provide entirely different treats instead, such as Easter colouring activities, Easter egg hunts with toy eggs or Easter pictures, pin the tail on the Easter bunny, or a new Easter book.
- A glass of plain water is the best drink to give your child after eating chocolate.
- Ensure your child stops eating chocolate at least one hour before going to bed to give the tooth enamel enough time to recover before brushing with a fluoride toothpaste.

<https://www.leicestershirehealthyschools.org.uk/>

Cadburys crème egg 40g 	26.5g sugar (6 teaspoons) 
Lindt milk chocolate bunny 100g 	54g sugar (13 teaspoons) 
Thorntons unicorn easter egg 151g 	80g sugar (19 teaspoons) 



Mindfulness



This is a re-posting of key information about mindfulness from last Spring's edition. One of the questions raised by parents at our wellbeing evening was how we can encourage our school community to practice mindfulness – so please have a look at the info and links below.

Mindfulness is about stopping, being in the moment and opening all of your senses to the things immediately around you – being present and aware of what you are doing. A short video that explains this is available from the Mindfulness In Schools Project:

[What is mindfulness?](#)

In a modern world where the mobile phone makes it harder to get away from it all and take a genuine moment to yourself, the benefits of mindfulness have never been greater. Mindfulness has been found to help improve relaxation and sleep, reduce stress, increase attention and reduce anxiety. All students at Gartree have been exposed to mindfulness through a tutorial task however, this is an area we hope to develop further and introduce properly in the future.

Mindfulness is best done in a quiet environment, but can be completed anywhere – some excellent tips can be found here to get the most out of the experience: [How to Practice Mindfulness - Mindful](#) Please see below for some sample exercises that you can have a go at yourself:

[Mindful Moment](#)

[Five Minute Mindful Breathing - YouTube](#)

And here for a guide on how to introduce it into everyday life: [5 Simple Mindfulness Practices for Daily Life - Mindful](#).

Finally, there are some excellent apps out there that can help, such as Calm, Serenity and Mindfulness Coach.



Notices:

Safer Internet Day

Safer Internet Day was on 7th February. Assemblies focused on the Do's and Don'ts of internet use, and encouraged students to think about what information we can trust online.

As part of this assembly we shared results of a recent survey conducted with our students. We were concerned that several students say that they would consider meeting a friend they had only met online without other people being present – please ensure you have this conversation with your child if you haven't already.

We were more comforted to learn that the vast majority of our students report that their parents monitor their online activity. We have shared some of the practical ways parents do this below. At the end of this edition there are further tips for parents about online safety.

10 ways to stay safe online!

Do

- ✓ Think before you post: only say online what you'd be happy to say in real life
- ✓ Set your profiles to private
- ✓ Block and report any content that concerns you
- ✓ Share what you do online with adults you trust
- ✓ Tell an adult if anything upsets you

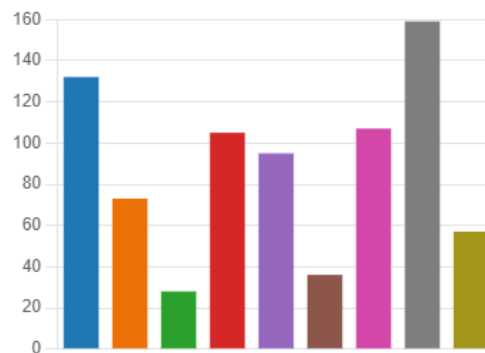
Don't

- ✗ Believe everything you see
- ✗ Trust everyone is who they say they are
- ✗ Give out any personal information (like your name, age or address)
- ✗ Meet up with anyone you've met online
- ✗ Post anything online that you want to keep private

3. If yes or sometimes how do they do this?

[More Details](#)

● Set time limits	132
● Asks about websites that I have ...	73
● Insist on being my "friend"	28
● Checks through my phone	105
● Uses filtering / parental controls	95
● Not allowed to go online in my ...	36
● Has talked to me about what I p...	107
● Is there for me if I have a problem	159
● Has linked accounts to get copi...	57



Appendix

Useful information from the Teen Safety and Wellbeing Evening

What is County Lines?

- County lines is the name given to drug dealing where organised criminal groups (OCGs) use phone lines to move and supply drugs, usually from cities into smaller towns and rural areas.
- They exploit vulnerable people, including children and those with mental health or addiction issues, by recruiting them to distribute the drugs. This is often referred to as 'drug running'. Criminals may also use a vulnerable person's home as their base of operations. This is known as 'cuckooing'.
- **This is a form of criminal exploitation**



Know the Signs - CCE

- The child being more withdrawn, drop in general well being,
- Unexplained injuries - Knife Injuries
- Possession of quantities of money with no legitimate place it could have come from
- Increase in missing episodes
- Drop in school attendance or deterioration of behaviour in school
- Excessive mobile phone/social media use
- Relationships with older more controlling 'friend' associates
- Being secretive

This is not an exhaustive list but more an idea of indicators that may mean a child is being exploited



Useful information from the Teen Safety and Wellbeing Evening



Know the Signs – County Lines

SPOT THE SIGNS OF COUNTY LINES

Children and vulnerable adults are at risk of exploitation from gangs. This could include...



CCE & County Lines

SAFECALL



missing people

Registered charity in England and Wales (1020419) and in Scotland (SC047419)

SafeCall: A Lifeline For Children And Families Forced Into Criminal Exploitation

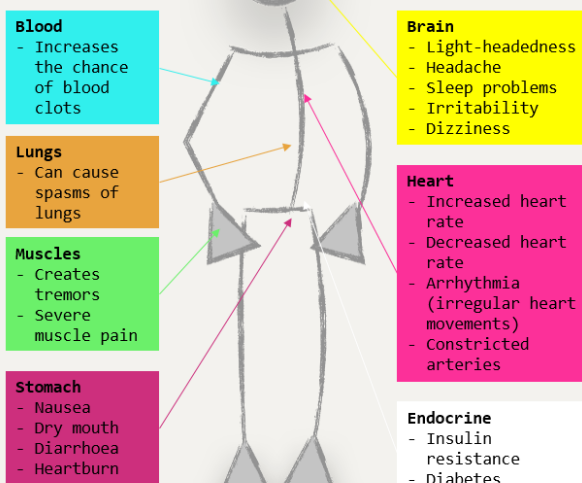
SafeCall Support Service

We provide a national telephone based support service to those in crisis as a result of County Lines. We support young people, families/carers and professionals. We operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week and 365 days of the year.



Useful information from the Teen Safety and Wellbeing Evening

Physical Symptoms of vaping on the Teen Body:



Why are children vaping?

- Children who haven't smoked are significantly more likely to report their main reasons for using one are:

- + 'I just wanted to give them a try' (65.4%)
- + 'I enjoy the experience' (17.5%)
- + 'I am trying to quit smoking' (10.7%)
- + 'I am addicted to them and can't stop' (10.3%)

- The reality is that many children and young people have fallen foul of the same thing that drove young people of the 1970s and 1980s to smoking – marketing, peer pressure and lack of education.



Useful information from the Teen Safety and Wellbeing Evening

What next?

- Try to monitor any **access to cash and pocket money** that your child has – some children spend upwards of £2,000 on vapes and liquids, but others spend just a few pounds
- Try to **discourage shopping** from disreputable retailers, or purchase snacks and drinks for your child
- Look through your bank statements and monitor what payments are going through any **online accounts** – many children use their parent/carer's online accounts such as eBay or Amazon to make small purchases from new sellers
- Talk to your child about **the consequences of shoplifting**
- If you or someone in your household uses vapes, try to **keep all vapes and accessories locked away** from your children
- **Start the conversation** about vapes now, if you haven't already, and remind children of their dangers to anyone who isn't following an NHS Stop Smoking Plan.

What are we doing in school?

Thankfully, the picture at Gartree is not quite so bleak, but vaping remains a priority.

We are already working to keep children in our community safe by:

- Holding Drugs Awareness events, and evenings like this one!
- Operating dedicated lessons within the PSHE scheme of learning through Drugs Education topics
- Re-education opportunities with Pastoral Team and access to Healthy Teens/School Counsellor
- Developing awareness amongst all stakeholders – students, teaching staff, support staff, parents/carers and the wider community
- Interventions with local Police and local retailers
- 'Vape detectors' in bathrooms with sensors activated by vapour
- Increased CCTV so all areas of the school remain safe and welcoming
- Bag and locker searches (where appropriate and in-line with our behaviour policies)



Useful Websites/Contacts:

- www.itai.info/ - PREVENT information and advice
- www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk – Anti-Bullying information and advice
- www.bullying.co.uk – Anti-Bullying information and advice
- www.nspcc.org.uk – Support for many areas around child welfare & wellbeing
- www.childrenssociety.org.uk/ - Charity supporting vulnerable children
- www.childline.org.uk/ - Information and advice in lots of areas
- www.youngminds.org.uk – Information and advice for young peoples’ Mental Health, including a great section for Parents
- www.net-aware.org.uk/ - Parent guides to Apps and gaming
- www.bbc.co.uk/webwise/topics/safety-and-privacy/ - Online safety
- www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/parents-and-carers/parental-controls-offered-your-home-internet-provider - How to set Parental controls on your internet
- <https://lrsb.org.uk/> - Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Board
- www.firstcontactplus.org.uk/ - Leicestershire advice and support
- www.fearless.org/en/campaigns/county-lines - Information on “County Lines”
- www.kooth.com – Free online counselling for young people
- <https://www.camhs-resources.co.uk/> - Resources from CAMHS
- www.annafreud.org/ - Excellent advice and support for families on wellbeing/mental health
- <https://www.teenagehelpline.org.uk/> online mentoring and advice for your child
- safeguarding@gartree.leics.sch.uk – Gartree safeguarding email address
- stop@gartree.leics.sch.uk – How to report bullying or Peer on Peer incidents





Steps you can take to help keep your child safer online

Parental controls: Parental controls have been designed to help you manage your child's online activities. There are various types, some of which are free but others which can be bought. However, nothing is totally fool proof so they shouldn't replace the need for you to support and advise your child using the internet. For more information and step by step instructions on setting up parental controls, visit [Parental Controls & Privacy Settings Guides - Internet Matters](#).

Have an ongoing conversation: Continue to talk about the apps, games and sites they like to use, and what they like and don't like and any concerns about being online. Discuss with them when to unfollow, block or report. For help starting this conversation, read [having a conversation with your child](#).

Be non-judgemental: Explain that you would never blame them for anything that might happen online, and you will always give them calm, loving support.

Make sure they know where to go for support: Remind your child they can always speak to you or an adult they trust if anything happens online that makes them feel worried or upset. For a breakdown of report services, visit: [Supporting your child with reporting unwanted content online](#)

Make sure they know about NCA CEOP: Young people can report a concern about grooming or sexual abuse to NCA CEOP at <https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/> and get support from a specialist Child Protection Advisor.

Talk about how their online actions can affect others: If your child is engaging with peers online, remind them to consider how someone else might feel before they post or share something. If they are considering sharing a photo/video of somebody else, they should always ask permission first.

Tell them about Thinkuknow: Our websites provide open and honest guidance for young people on friends, relationships and the internet, covering topics like dealing with pressure; consent; and getting support when you're worried. Visit our [website for 11-13's](#) or our [website for 14+](#) for age appropriate information.

Direct your child to age appropriate information about relationships and sex: It's natural for young people to start exploring their sexual feelings online and adolescents are more inclined to take risks. It's important to understand this and to talk to your child in a positive, encouraging and safe way. [Thinkuknow](#), [Brook](#), [The Mix](#) and [Childline](#) all provide age appropriate information about relationships and sex that you can signpost your child to.

