

# Safeguarding Newsletter

Summer 2024



Westfield School  
Chorus Education Trust

**Safeguarding Cover**

**Julie Swift – 07903632307**  
(22<sup>nd</sup> July to 2<sup>nd</sup> Aug)

**Diane Hague – 07903632298**  
(5<sup>th</sup> Aug to 16<sup>th</sup> Aug)

**Dan Griffiths - 07903632307**  
(19<sup>th</sup> Aug – 30<sup>th</sup> Aug)

**Helpful Numbers.**

101 – Police

01142734855 – Safeguarding Hub

111 – NHS

0800 1111 – Childline



*Your safety is important to us....*

## Mental Health

### Things I can do to look after my Emotional Wellbeing....



Manager. However if you feel more comfortable with someone else please speak up.

#### Online:

**Kooth** offers free, safe and anonymous online support for young people

**The Mix** offers free, safe and confidential support for people via telephone or email helpline

**YoungMinds** is a UK charity committed to improving the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people.

#### Face to Face:

**Door 43** is a support service for young people, they have drop-in clinics or you can be refer to them for 1:1 sessions

**GP** can refer to additional services that are we not such as CAMHS and Ryegate

**FIS** is a Family Intervention Service that can support young people and their families with mental health and wellbeing.

## Staying Safe in Open Water

During the school holidays, and in hot weather, increasing numbers of children put themselves at risk of drowning. On average 40-50 children drown per year in the UK.

To keep yourself safe, when you are in, on or beside water, always follow the Water Safety Code.

### Spot the Dangers

**Water may look safe, but it can be dangerous. Learn to spot and keep away from dangers. You may swim well in a warm indoor pool, but that does not mean that you will be able to swim in cold water.**

#### The dangers of water include:

- Very cold temperatures
- Hidden Currents
- Fast flowing water, beware of locks and weirs
- Deep water, it can be difficult to estimate the depth
- There may be hidden rubbish or debris under the surface that can trap, snag or cut
- It can be difficult to get out, banks can be steep, slimy and crumble away
- No lifeguards, most outdoors waterways do not have lifeguards
- Water pollution may make you ill

## Vaping

### How Do I Know if My Child Is Vaping?

Start by asking your child in a nonjudgmental, concerned way if they have tried vaping. You want to encourage conversation, not shut it down. Even if you don't think your kids vape, talk about it with them anyway so they know it's unhealthy.

#### Signs of vaping include:

- New health issues such as coughing or wheezing
- e-cigarette supplies, like cartridges or other suspicious looking items
- New smells (some flavourings are banned, but others are in nicotine and marijuana vapes — so parents might notice fruity or sweet scents)

#### What Should I Do if My Child Vapes?

Your child will need your help and support to quit. Help them find the motivation to stop vaping. You might want to talk about:

- wanting to be the best, healthiest version of themselves
- not wanting to be addicted
- avoiding health effects including decreased sports performance, breathing issues etc
- not wanting to increase anxiety or depression

## ANXIETY



Anxiety is a normal, natural response that everyone experiences through our thoughts and feelings. We often associate anxiety with a feeling of fear or worry and a tense feeling within our body. To help manage our levels of anxiety it's helpful to break down what is making us feel anxious. To do that we need to look at it in three parts, what is my thought, how do I feel and what can I do to help myself manage what I am thinking and feeling. If I feel overwhelmed it is useful to ground myself by being in the here and now. If I look around and name three things that I can see I'm using my eyes which are an important part of my safety system. Secondly, I can also use my ears and identify three things that I can hear, this will allow me to feel grounded and then if I move three parts of my body, may be my head, my arms, and my legs, I am moving my body, so I am not stuck in a tense position. If I feel i cannot do this on my own, I can always ask someone to help me do this. There are lots of useful grounding exercises which I can use which can use <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=30VMIEmA114..> Once you are comfortable in grounding myself, I can use the system below to start and look at what is causing my levels of anxiety and look at useful ways to manage it differently.

#### Example

##### What is my thought?

Am I going to struggle to answer the questions in my exams? (Am I going to fail)?

##### What am I feeling?

Sick, stressed, panicking, hot, can't focus etc...

##### What Action am I taking?

Avoiding the studying (if I do not study, I do not think about it).

##### What action can I take?

Put a revision plan in place, keep active to reduce stress levels and eat healthy food. I can ask my teachers about anything I am unsure about so that I feel comfortable with the

You can apply this method to all your thoughts and feelings so that you can better understand what the triggers are and look at ways of changing what you can do to get a different outcome. There are people in school that can help you look at this in more detail should you wish to explore this further.

# What is sextortion? Guide to tackling sexual coercion.

## What Is Sextortion?

The meaning of sextortion comes from the combination of 'sex' and 'extortion'. It refers to someone threatening to share or distribute intimate images unless the victim takes a certain action.

Victims of the blackmail threats might know the perpetrator. However, they can also be a stranger. The perpetrator might demand that the victim share more images or send money. Sextortion scams usually fall into these two categories:

- **Image sextortion:** the purpose of the extortion is to obtain indecent images of an individual;

**Financial sextortion:** the purpose is to gain financially. With financial sextortion, victims pay money to stop the perpetrator from sharing

- images more widely.

## How does it impact victims?

Sextortion is illegal and very distressing for the victim. Those behind it (often criminal gangs) prey on these feelings; perpetrators know that victims will feel this way.

In some cases, victims also worry about having their intimate images or videos shared more widely. As a result, they feel scared and might do things they do not want to do. Additionally, many children and young people feel embarrassed and ashamed if they fall victim to sextortion. So, they will often keep the abuse to themselves. This can lead to further impacts on their wellbeing.

## What are the warning signs?

Remember that in some sextortion scams, children and young people believe the perpetrator is someone their own age. They will genuinely believe they are talking to someone who is interested in them and who wants to get into a relationship with them. Parents need to think back to when they were this age. Did they tell their parents everything that they did with their partner at the time, particularly sexual things?

The following changes in your child could suggest they have experienced online sexual coercion or extortion. However, it's important to recognise that some of these signs could relate to other changes.

- Your child might appear withdrawn, worried or unhappy compared to their normal.
- They might stop using their phone or mobile device. Or, they might seem worried when a message appears.
- Apps that they love might become sources of anxiety. As such, they might stop using those platforms. Sextortion can happen on any platform where users communicate with others.

Some additional signs might resemble those that also come with [child-on-child abuse](#) or [grooming](#).

## How to help children and young people

Parents and carers need to recognise just how embarrassing and shaming sextortion can feel for young people.

As such, they will often struggle to admit they have shared nude images with someone who took advantage of them. Again, those behind the scams know this. As such, if your child has told you that this has happened then that is a massive first step.

If a child or young person tells you about an incident of coercion, remember they are a victim of a crime. Often, victims don't report sextortion crimes. Additionally, extreme cases have led to children and young people [taking their own lives](#). So, reassure them that you are there to help.

