

Stanway Safeguarding Newsletter Spring Half Term 2

Spot Signs of Drug Use

Figuring out if your child is using substances can be challenging. Many signs of drugs use in teens are typical young adult behaviour. Many signs of drug use are also symptoms of mental health issues, including depression or anxiety.

If you have reason to suspect drug use, don't be afraid to err on the side of caution. Prepare to take action and have a conversation during which you can ask direct questions like 'Have you been drinking, vaping or using drugs?' No parent wants to hear 'yes', but being prepared for how you would respond can be the starting point for a more positive outcome.

Signs of drug use can include:

- *Shifts in mood and personality*
- *Negative behavioural changes*
- *Changes in hygiene and appearance*
- *Changes in physical health*

For more information please see:

<https://drugfree.org/article/signs-of-drug-use-in-teens/>

County Lines - Parks

There have been reports from the police and local community that young people are being approached by others offering them drugs or gifts. At times, when these have been refused, the person has tried to force them to be taken.

We ask you to be vigilant in the local community for anything suspicious and educate your children that they should come forward to trusted adults if they witness anything of concern; whilst also monitoring their whereabouts. We encourage you to report any concerns to the police.

County lines is when gangs and organised crime groups exploit children to transport and sell drugs, traditionally between big cities or across county boundaries. More recently this is seen locally and within boroughs or even streets.

For more information please visit PACE (parents against child exploitation):
<https://paceuk.info/criminal-exploitation/what-is-county-lines/>

Online Safety Safeguarding Talk

Growing up in today's world is very different to what many of us have experienced during our childhood and the problems and dangers that face our young people are complex. We see the impact of these struggles in our students daily, and work closely with experts locally and nationally to safeguard them. We would like to share key information within these areas with you

You can access our recent online safety safeguarding resources here: [Online Safety Newsletter March 2023](#) and [Parental Controls Information Booklet](#)

Our next safeguarding evening is detailed below:

- **County Lines, Knife Crime, Criminal & Sexual Exploitation - Thursday 27th April 6-7pm.**

Please see this letter for more information:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1JMZvSGh6l1mBJZ2D6PRzNy92P7wiCfM1/edit?usp=sharing&oid=11597091408598407189&rtpof=true&sd=true>

Harmful Sexual Behaviour

Recently a production team from Ticbox came in to talk to some students in Year 9 and Year 10 to hear their concerns and views on harmful sexual behaviours, sexism and misogyny.

They will use our students' voice alongside that of other students in the Colchester area to create a production to educate others on these important areas. They will then be in to deliver this production later in the summer, as well as to work with some students to create a community project that will help inform and educate a wider audience.

Harmful sexual behaviours (HSB) can be defined as: sexual behaviours expressed by children and young people under the age of 18 years that are developmentally inappropriate, may be harmful to themselves or others, or be abuse towards another child, young person or adult.

For more information on Ticbox please visit: <https://ticboxproductions.co.uk/>. For a parents' guide to HSB please visit [Barnardos HSB Parent Guide](#)

'Foopah' TikTok Trend

Safeguarding experts have been made aware of a viral challenge circulating on TikTok using variations of the hashtag 'foopah'. A play of the phrase 'faux pas' (an embarrassing public act), the trend encourages users to upload 'blind and you'll miss it' nudity. This aims to get around the platform's detection and moderation by being hidden in plain sight. Using screens, mirror, and other reflective surfaces are just some of the ways people have taken part in the challenge.

The content itself ranges from those who are sharing more obvious sexually explicit content to suggestive but subtle imagery of themselves. The trend also creates an allure for young people who are taking to various platforms to 'react' to the challenge or discuss it with others online.

The challenge originated from the one TikTok user as a way of promoting her OnlyFans account. For more information please visit:

<https://oursaferschools.co.uk/2023/02/24/explicit-content-tiktok-trend/>

Stanway Manners

As a school community we have returned to basics to encourage students to display good manners

Following staff and student voice, we settled on the acronym of RESPECT to visually show how we respect ourselves and others.

Since launching just after Christmas we have delivered a number of sessions within form time to encourage each aspect. Below are some of these for you to view:



[Engaged](#)
[Sensible](#)
[Empathic](#)

New Support Cards

We have recently created a bank of support cards for our students which are available in the Year Offices, Hubs and LRC. These have a QR code on the front which students can scan to access lots of online support. You can access these below:

Sexual harassment and assault:

[Support Card Links - Sexual Harassment & As...](#)

Domestic abuse:

[Support Card Links - Domestic Abuse](#)

LGBTQIA:

[Support Card Links - LGBTQIA](#)

Drugs and sexual health:

[Support Card Links - Drugs & Sexual Health](#)

Bereavement:

[Support Card Links - Bereavement](#)

Wellbeing:

[Support Card Links - Wellbeing](#)

Food and Heat Banks

We understand amidst the current cost of living crisis in the UK, that Christmas might be a difficult time for some of our families this year. We are keen to support you as much as possible to ensure you family is safe, happy, and comfortable at this time of year.

Colchester Foodbank has a number of locations around Colchester that are there to help with supplies. For more information visit:
<https://colchester.foodbank.org.uk/>

They are also always looking for support with donations of money and food, and also volunteers. For ways you can get involved visit:
<https://colchester.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/>

Colchester Borough Council are also working with organisations across Colchester to develop a map of welcoming warm spaces where you can go if you are unable to heat your home, whilst also enjoying a mixture of support and activities. To view these locations visit:

<https://www.colchester.gov.uk/supporting-colchester/residents-old/warm-spaces/>