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SAFEGUARDING BULLETIN

Issue 8 (July 2023)



Welcome to our eighth ALNS safeguarding bulletin where we are hoping to share with you the latest knowledge, tips and support services for various issues in order that we can work together to keep your children safe. Each bulletin will focus on a different area of safeguarding.

Key Focus – Summer Safeguarding

Exploitation

Some statistics worth noting: -

“62% of children said they were frightened of being attacked and / or exploited by gangs during the summer holidays.”

- **Childhood Trust**

“Across the UK the true number (of exploited children) could be as high as 50,000 children and young people with more than 1,000 county lines in operation nationally.”

- **Safeguarding Network**

More free time = More time to be in the wrong place at the wrong time – be alert to the signs (see safeguarding bulletin issue 2 – December 2021 – on our website)

Online Safety

UNICEF tells us that 50% of 9–16-year-olds in the UK go online in their bedrooms or other private spaces.

Summer holidays can lead to an increase in online safety concerns – more free time and less chance for schools to support any friendship disputes or unkind behaviour.

As a recap from a previous bulletin – these days, it’s all about using open social media spaces – getting likes and followers for your content – the more the merrier. An instant response is expected from people leading to pressure and FOMO (fear of missing out). Young people need to consider what they are posting, who they are interacting with and how – are they being kind?

Be aware – There have been an unprecedented number of dispersal orders in Portsmouth so far this Summer – mostly centered around the Seafront (South Parade Pier, Canoe Lake, Hotwalls etc). These are a result of high levels of Anti-Social Behaviour in the area and where that is happening there are usually safeguarding concerns.

Tombstoning – it’s still happening!

“The activity of jumping into the sea from a cliff or other high point”.

Even though our young people think they invented everything fun – this is not new!

At the moment, we are told this is most likely to take place at Southsea Pier, Eastern Road into Langstone Harbour and Halsea Lido.

In the UK between 2005 and 2015 83 serious injuries and 20 deaths occurred as a result of tombstoning.

In all likelihood, they are going to do it regardless of what adults say so please have conversations about water depth, submerged objects being dangerous and the shock of cold water.

How can you support your child?

Useful resources:

For Mental Health Support: -

- **Kooth** – online resource for 11- 18-year-olds for anonymous counselling, peer support via chatrooms and online advice Kooth.com
- **Shout** – text SHOUT to 85258 – 24/7 text support available with trained volunteers. Giveusashout.org
- **Youth Counselling** – a new service in Portsmouth – refer your child or they can self-refer via HYA (hampshireyouthaccess.org.uk)

For Online safety: -

- **CEOP.police.uk** – CEOP is a law enforcement agency, there to keep children and young people safe from grooming and online sexual abuse. You are able to make a report or seek advice
- **Thinkuknow.co.uk** – useful resources for parents and for children

Know where they are going and who they are with (as far as they will let you!). See the front page note for key areas that are currently attracting trouble and therefore potentially “risky”.

Check their phones – the most common platforms for sharing material between young people are WhatsApp and Snapchat.

Changes in behaviour - Keep your eye out – you might spot both extremes – eg withdrawn or overtly “misbehaving”, emotional changes too - anything out of the ordinary is worth exploring. Most children will not disclose a problem and it is up to us as adults to notice something is not right.

Grab education opportunities – A long summer holiday means more time to “get up to no good”! We certainly know nagging teenagers doesn’t work – they know best, and us adults haven’t lived! But grab downtime opportunities to drop a bit of knowledge about vaping etc here and there.



Important contacts details for the Summer!

- If you need to contact the school over the Summer for safeguarding reasons, you can ring the admin team on 02392364536 (during office hours). In an emergency, they will then make contact with the safeguarding team. Please remember though that staff are on their summer holidays.
- If you are concerned that a child or young person has suffered harm, neglect or abuse, please contact Portsmouth Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). You can contact the MASH during office hours on either 02392 688793 or 0845 671 0271 or email: MASH@secure.portsmouthcc.gov.uk If it is during out of Office hours (5pm -8am weekdays, weekends and bank holidays) the number is: 03005 551373.
- If a child is at immediate risk of harm, call the Police on 999.

If you have any concerns you want to discuss at school please contact your child’s tutor, their Head of House or the Designated Safeguarding Lead – Mrs Holness.