



Safeguarding newsletter

July 2024

The aim of the newsletter is to share, key related information, in an effort, to better improve communication between the Academy and you as parents / carers.

HEALTH FOR TEENS

Health for Teens is an online site where you can access help for many issues that affect teenagers today.

One of the things they support with is Resilience and they share 6 key messages

1-Having a positive attitude

Be optimistic. Even though you may be facing difficult times, try to look outside 'the box' to see the positives rather than just focusing on negatives.

2-Build good relationships

It's important to build good relationships with others, including family and friends because accepting help and support from those who care about you will strengthen your resilience.

Don't keep your worries to yourself. Talk to someone you trust and feel safe with

3-Ability to regulate and manage emotions

You can't stop stressful situations but you can change how you feel, think and therefore what you do about them.

4-Learn by your mistakes

Look at how you managed difficult situations in the past to help you handle future challenges.

Trust yourself and be creative with solutions.

Set yourself goals and challenge yourself by trying something new.

5-Look after yourself

Pay as much attention to your emotional and mental health as you do your physical health.

- Eat well
- Drink plenty of water
- Sleep well
- Exercise regularly
- Engage in activities you enjoy and find relaxing

6-Be persistent

Never give up. Keep trying, recognise small successes and be creative.

If one way isn't helping you to reach your goal, be ready to try something different.

Internet Safety

There are so many topics for you to seek support on regarding social media – we will continue to share resources via the website, parent seminars and newsletter. This resource is a one stop shop for you if you have specific needs at any given time – please do also get in contact with school.





CEOP Education

Supporting you to help protect children and young people from online sexual abuse

#SaferSummerTogether

From 15th July, CEOP Education will be launching #SaferSummerTogether on social media. Six weeks of tips and activities helping parents and carers to keep their children safer online this summer and beyond.

Look out for our Tip Tuesday and Family Friday posts focused on these weekly themes:

- Week 1: online gaming
- Week 2: socialising online
- Week 3: sharing pictures and videos
- Week 4: protecting personal privacy
- Week 5: harmful content online
- Week 6: getting help

Support and increase your engagement with parents and carers this summer by:

Following us on Facebook (CEOP Education) and X (@CEOPEducation)

Following #SaferSummerTogether

Sharing #SaferSummerTogether posts with parents and carers



Dear Parent/Guardian,

As lead of the safeguarding team, I continue to share resources via our website and newsletter in the hope you are empowered to feel confident to navigate your child's safety in the community as well as at school.

All schools in the UK have recently been sent information from the National Crime Agency, raising awareness of the recent rise in reporting of financially motivated sexual extortion (a type of online blackmail often known in the media as 'sextortion'). Children and young people worldwide are being targeted.

This type of crime involves an adult offender (often from an organised crime group based overseas) threatening to release nude or semi-nude images and/or videos of a child or young person, unless they pay money, or meet another financial demand, such as purchasing a pre-paid gift card.

Victims of any age and gender can be targets, however a large proportion of cases have involved male victims aged 14-18.

A child or young person is never to blame if they have been a victim. Offenders will have tricked, groomed and/or manipulated them into sharing an image. Find out more about online blackmail on CEOP Education's parents and carers website.

Talking to your child

It's important to have frequent, open and non-judgemental conversations with your child about relationships, sex and being online to build trust and support them if something goes wrong. Financially motivated sexual extortion should be included in those conversations. Here are some tips about how to approach this:

- Chat regularly about their life online: have ongoing conversations with them about their life and time online. Continue to take an interest as they grow, explore new apps and sites together and talk in a balanced way, considering the benefits and the potential harms.

Talk about where to find information about relationships and sex: Organisations like CEOP Education, Childline and Brook have age appropriate advice topics such as sexual communication and image sharing. This will help your child to understand what unhealthy relationships look like, such as applying pressure and blackmail; and give them trusted sources of information to explore these topics.

- Review privacy settings: Talk to your child about the importance of using privacy settings on their accounts to restrict who can contact them. Read CEOP Education's advice on how to talk your child about their privacy settings.

- Make sure they know where to go for support: Let them know that they can come to you with any concerns and won't be judged. It's also important to make them aware of other trusted adults or sources of support, if they feel they can't talk to you, such as Childline.

- Make sure they know where to report: Remind your child how you can help them to report an incident to the police or using the CEOP Safety Centre. Let them know that if a nude or semi-nude of them has been shared without their consent, they can take these 3 steps to try and get them removed:
 1. Use Report Remove, a tool from Childline and the Internet Watch Foundation. Your child can use this to remove images that have been shared or might be shared.
 2. Use Take It Down, a tool from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. Your child can use this to remove or stop the online sharing of images or videos.
 3. Report directly to the platform or app that the incident has occurred on. For advice on how to report to major social media platforms, visit Internet Matters. To learn more about what resources are available to help you support your child, visit the UK Safer Internet Centre.

What can I do if this has happened to my child?

If your child tells you that someone is trying to trick, threaten or blackmail them online:

- Don't pay, do stop contact and block: You may be tempted to pay, but there is no guarantee that this will stop the threats. As the offender's motive is to get money, once you have shown you can pay, they will likely ask for more and blackmail may continue. If you have paid, don't panic but don't pay anything more. Help your child to stop all communication with the offender and block them on any accounts that they have been contacted on.
- Avoid deleting anything: Try not to delete anything that could be used as evidence such as messages, images and bank account details.
- Report to the police or CEOP: Call 101 or 999 if there is an immediate risk of harm to your child. Or you can use the CEOP Safety Centre to report any online blackmail attempts

If it has already happened and your child has shared an image and sent money to someone exploiting them:

- Reassure them that they've done the right thing by telling you: Make sure they know they are not to blame for what has happened and they have done the right thing to ask for your help. Children and young people's mental health may be negatively impacted by experiences of exploitation; you can find advice on looking after your child's mental health from the NHS.
- Report to the police or CEOP: Call 101 or 999 if there is an immediate risk of harm to your child. Or you can use the CEOP Safety Centre to report an incident. If your child is 18 and over, call 101 or 999 if they are at risk of immediate harm.
- Report any images or videos that have been shared: Help your child to remove images that are online or prevent images being shared online by following these three steps:
 1. Use Report Remove, a tool from Childline and the Internet Watch Foundation. Your child can use this to remove images that have been shared or might be shared.
 2. Use Take It Down, a tool from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. Your child can use this to remove or stop the online sharing of images or videos.
 3. Report directly to the platform or app that the incident has occurred on. For advice on how to report to major social media platforms, visit Internet Matters.

I hope this information has been insightful and if you need support regarding any of the matters raised, please do get in touch. Similarly, please encourage your child to report to school via any of the means shared on our website.

Yours sincerely,

Nikki Thompson

STAY SAFE ONLINE THIS SUMMER

THINK
BEFORE
YOU
POST

SHARE FEEL-GOOD
CONTENT & LEAVE
POSITIVE COMMENTS

NEWS

DOUBLE CHECK
STORIES –
DON'T FALL FOR
FAKE NEWS!

MAKE THE
MOST OF THE
OUTDOORS

Stay off devices just before bed

USE CAUTION
ON PUBLIC
WIFI

ENABLE PRIVACY
SETTINGS

Report bullies &
ignore trolls

KEEP YOUR
PERSONAL
DETAILS
PRIVATE

AVOID BINGE
STREAMING AND
ALL-DAY GAMING

TAKE
FREQUENT
BREAKS

ENJOY
SCREEN-FREE
ACTIVITIES

BE CAREFUL
WITH IN-APP
SPENDING



National
Online
Safety®

#WakeUpWednesday

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

WAPP

AGE RESTRICTION
12+

on the App Store:
'Everyone' on Google Play

Developed in Germany, this social networking app is called 'W App' in the Apple Store and Google Play but is also branded as 'Slay' in some territories. Aimed primarily at teens and marketed as a 'zero-negativity' zone, it asks users to connect with others from their school. They are then asked a positive question (such as "Who is the nicest person?") and shown four people from their school to choose from. All users from a school can appear in the poll: not just those a child is friends with. The app is mainly anonymous – but does offer clues to reveal who selected you for each question.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

FAKE ACCOUNTS

There is no verification when signing up to W App. Once someone joins, they can see all users at their school and add them if they wish. Users provide their name, gender, school and grade – but are also able to change these (aside from their name) as often as they like. This concerned our expert: predators could potentially keep attempting to build connections with children at different schools.

PROFILE OVERSHARING

Young people tend to have multiple social media accounts, so it's vital their identity is protected online. By default, W App shares someone's school and grade, while users choose whether to share their full name, photo and other social accounts. Most people appear to select this – making it easier for someone to build up a picture of who they are, what they enjoy and where they go to school.

SPAMMING CONTACTS

The app's activity feed notifies a user when they have been put forward for a poll. They're then given the option to reveal the initial of the person who nominated them, by inviting a friend to join the app. The friend doesn't have to sign up, but they will receive a 'get the app now' text, followed by a link. This process could result in texts being continually sent to a child's contacts.

CATFISHING RISKS

As well as invented fake accounts, users could also sign up and pretend to be someone else from their school. By joining under another person's name (possibly with their photo), they can take part in polls while masquerading as that other person. Some polls hint at an attraction or crush, which – if deliberately misused by imposters – could result in misunderstandings and embarrassment for teens.

SUBSCRIPTION COSTS

W App is free to download and use, but there is also a 'gold membership' package (costing £4.99 per week) available. Subscribing allows users to reveal the names of people who selected them in polls (slightly defeating the point of it being an anonymous app), gives unlimited hints and offers exclusive play modes – all of which may tempt a curious young user into spending their money.

REPEATED USE

Like most other social media platforms, W App wants users to log in regularly. Every time someone completes a set of 12 polls, they earn virtual coins. These can be cashed in for perks such as being included in random polls (so that more users will see them) or adding their name to their crush's poll. This may not seem much of an incentive currently, but that may alter as the app evolves.

Advice for Parents & Carers

DISCUSS FRIEND REQUESTS

Talk to your child about the risk of sharing their other social accounts, especially on anonymous platforms where there is no verification – so a user could be anyone. If someone they don't normally talk to at school approaches your child via W App and suggests connecting on TikTok, Snapchat or Instagram, emphasise that it's safest to confirm it with that person face to face before accepting or replying.

PROTECT PERSONAL INFORMATION

It's crucial that trusted adults regularly remind children about the importance of not sharing too much of their personal information online (and demonstrate it on their own social accounts, where possible). W App automatically displays the user's school on their profile – but if your child does want to use the app, you can advise them to only enter their first name and not to upload an image of their face.

BE MINDFUL OF REJECTION

The polls in W App are designed to be complimentary rather than negative. However, never being nominated or picked by their peers could leave a child – especially a status-conscious teen – feeling ignored and isolated. If you think that W App is having this effect on your child, it might be time for a supportive reminder that social media doesn't reflect someone's true worth or popularity.

DO SOME 'APP ADMIN'

Before letting your child download W App, you may want to (via their device's settings) disable the option to make in-app purchases: £4.99 per week for the subscription can soon mount up. Likewise, if a friend's use of W App is causing your child to be inundated with texts inviting them to sign up too, you could suggest asking that friend to stop selecting your child's name from their contacts list.