

PARENT SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER

LEARNING PROGRAM 4

BHA is committed to safeguarding and promoting the health, safety, and well-being of every pupil. We expect **all staff, governors, and volunteers** to share this commitment.

Welcome, to our learning programme 4 safeguarding newsletter for parents and carers. This learning programme we will focus on consent, county lines and vaping; all impactful topics for our 11–16-year-old pupils. We will explore consent, discussing how to have on going conversations about boundaries and respect, along with advice on recognising signs and supporting those affected by self-harm. Vaping prevalence amongst teens makes it crucial to address its risks, including health and academic impacts.

Consent

As your young person grows up they navigate a world filled with complex relationships and new experiences. One of the topics we support our pupils with understanding is consent. This is also an important topic we encourage to be discussed at home.

****What is consent?***

☺ Consent is all about enthusiastic agreement! It means both people involved are comfortable with what's happening. It should be a clear, verbal "YES!"

****What consent ISN'T***

☹ Silence or lack of resistance doesn't equal consent. It's not a "Yes" if its not enthusiastic and freely given. **Your child should know that consent can be revoked at any.**

Teach your child:

- Your body belongs to you
- You get to decide what happens to your body
- No one should touch you without permission
- Consent means always choosing to respect others' boundaries
- Respecting someone's boundaries shows that you care about them

Our Safeguarding Team at BHA

Designated Safeguarding Leads



Mrs T Adlington



Mrs L Toach



Mr L Ashman

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officers



Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer
Hannah Savage



Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer
Sophie Garratt



Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer
Lindsey Spencer



Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer
Nathan Watson



Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer
Ryan Bourne



Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer
Daniel Jones

Digital boundaries of consent

Discuss the importance of consent in online interactions, including sharing photos or messages.

Sexting

Sexting is the sending or posting of naked or semi-naked images, videos, or live streams by young people under the ages of 18. The term 'nudes' is used because it is most commonly understood by young people and more accurately describes all types of image sharing incidents.

Tips for parents

- Discuss with your child the consequences of sexting.
- Monitor your child's online presence.
- Set clear rules about what they can and cannot do with their devices

Useful Acronyms & Vocabulary

DSL- Designated Safeguarding Lead

CAHMS- Child and Adolescent mental health services

EHAT- Early help assessment

CHAD- Children's advice and duty service



Helpful links:

www.letstalkaboutit.nhs.uk/directory-of-services/support-for-parents/

www.safesecurekids.org/teaching-consent

www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/sex-relationships/healthy-relationships/

[How can I help my child understand consent? - Support for Parents from Action For Children](#)

County Lines

County lines is a form of criminal exploitation where urban gangs persuade, coerce or force children and young people to store drugs and money and/or transport them to suburban areas, market towns and coastal towns.

County lines gangs are highly organised criminal networks that use sophisticated, frequently evolving techniques to groom young people and evade capture by the police. Our local PCSO school liaison officer has been into school this learning programme to talk to our children about County lines and dangers of exploitation.

Phrases that young people may use to refer to county lines include:

- 'running a line',
- 'going OT/out there'
- 'going country'
- 'going cunch'.

Recognising

Grooming: The grooming process involves the gang:

- seeking out a child to exploit
- observing the child for vulnerabilities
- finding out what the child's needs and wants are
- manipulating the child into believing that being in the gang can fulfil these needs.

Who is vulnerable to county lines exploitation?

Any child could potentially be at risk of criminal exploitation by a county lines gang.

Factors that make a county lines gang more likely to target, groom and exploit a child include:

- the child having experienced neglect, physical and/or sexual abuse in the past
- social isolation or social difficulties
- poverty
- homelessness or insecure accommodation status
- connections with other people involved in gangs
- having a learning disability
- having mental health problems
- having substance misuse issues
- being in care or having a history of being in care
- being excluded from mainstream education

Signs that a young person may be involved in criminal exploitation

The following signs may indicate that a child is being exploited by a county lines gang:

- frequently going missing from school, home or care
- travelling to locations, or being found in areas they have no obvious connections with, including seaside or market towns
- unwillingness to explain their whereabouts
- acquiring money, clothes, accessories or mobile phones which they seem unable to account for
- receiving excessive texts or phone calls at all hours of the day
- having multiple mobile phone handsets or sim cards
- withdrawing or having sudden changes in personality, behaviour or the language they use
- having relationships with controlling or older individuals and groups
- unexplained injuries
- carrying weapons
- significant decline in school results or performance
- being isolated from peers or social networks

Helpful links:

[4206.1-County-lines-leaflet-final-web.pdf \(cscp.org.uk\)](#)

[What Is County Lines? | The Children's Society \(childrenssociety.org.uk\)](#)

Vaping

Vaping is the inhaling of an aerosol (mist) created by an electronic cigarette (e-cig). It is becoming more common among teens. The aerosol is not just water vapor. It usually contains nicotine, other harmful chemicals and flavourings. Even e-cigarettes that claim to have no nicotine have been found to contain nicotine. Some might contain Marijuana, herbs or oils.

What are the health risks of vaping?

- Addiction
- Anxiety and Depression
- Becoming a smoker
- Impotence
- Sleep problems.
- Chronic bronchitis
- Lung damage

How do I know if my child is vaping?

Start by asking in a non judgemental way what their thoughts are on vaping and if they have tried it. You want to encourage conversations, not shut it down.

Signs of vaping include:

- New health issues, such as coughing or wheezing
- E-cig supplies, like cartridges or other suspicious looking items
- New smells- fruity or sweet scents are common

How Can Kids and Teens Quit Vaping?

For those who want to quit, it can help to:

- Decide why they want to quit and write it down or put it in their phone. They can look at the reason(s) when they feel the urge to vape.
- Pick a day to stop vaping. They can put it on the calendar and tell supportive friends and family that they're quitting on that day.
- Chew sugar-free gum or suck on lollipops to help distract them from cravings. Get rid of all vaping supplies. Download tools (such as apps and texting programs) to their phone that can help with cravings and give encouragement while they're trying to stop vaping. Truth Initiative's [This Is Quitting](#) texting program, for example, can help young people quit vaping. [Smokefree.gov](#) also offers free apps and other tools that can help someone trying to quit smoking or vaping.
- Understand withdrawal. Nicotine addiction leads to very strong cravings for nicotine, especially in the first few days after stopping. It also can lead to headaches; feeling tired, cranky, angry, or depressed; trouble concentrating or sleeping; hunger; and restlessness. These problems get better over the following days and weeks.

Further reading:

There is a great deal of support for parents, giving helpful advice and tips on how to help keep your child safe online, including children who are SEND. We have listed below a range of websites you can access this information:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-keeping-children-safe-online/coronavirus-covid-19-support-for-parents-and-carers-to-keep-children-safe-online>

<https://parents.actionforchildren.org.uk/mental-health-wellbeing/online-safety-wellbeing/keep-teenager-safe-online/>

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety>

<https://www.theparentsguideto.co.uk/post/ways-to-keep-your-teen-safe-online> [https://](https://www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre)

www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre

<https://eephonesmart.co.uk>

<https://eephonesmart.co.uk/kids>

Further support for your child's wellbeing

If you have a child who is struggling with their wellbeing and needs to talk to someone when away from school, please use the contacts below:

North Staffordshire urgent mental health helpline: call 0800 0 328 728 option 1 (covers Stoke-on-Trent, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffs Moorlands).

Advice for children & their families, from early help support through to safeguarding call Staffordshire Children's Advice and Support Service on 0300 111 8007

For mental health support: Visyon Call 01260 290000, out of hours support The Staffordshire Crisis Team on 0300 123 0907

Samaritans www.samaritans.org

Young Minds www.youngminds.org.uk

For help with any sort of worry, big or small:

NSPCC www.nspcc.org.uk

Childline www.childline.org.uk

If you believe that a child or an adult is at immediate risk of harm and in need of protection then you should call the Police - 999, straight away.

Alternatively if you want advice from the Police and the child or adult is not in immediate need of protection, you can call the Police on the telephone number 101.