

Week: 24



MAY 2023

SAFE AT Summerhill

At Summerhill School we are committed to Safeguarding our children and young people as well as promoting positive well-being for all.

This Safeguarding newsletter, aims to help staff, parents and students alike to be aware of the safeguarding and mental health issues, giving you useful links and resources to use if you have concerns. Please do not hesitate to contact us on the main school number 01384 816165 or via email on studentssupport@summerhill.dudley.sch.uk

Exam Stress

As Year 11's start GCSE's next week we know exams are a stressful time. Mood swings and outbursts are more likely to occur during this period. Look out for other signs that your child may be struggling, including poor sleep patterns or a change in appetite or behaviour. It's worth preparing ways of supporting your child during exam weeks and thinking about how you will react and respond on the day if they don't get the result that they, or you, are hoping for. Things which can help in the lead up to exams; Encourage your child to take revision breaks and find a balance between studying and doing things they find enjoyable and relaxing. Remember to remain positive and hopeful! If you would like to read more on tips to help your child during exams please follow this link - https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/parents-a-z-mental-health-guide/exam-time/?utm_source=enewsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=may2023&utm_term=o25



Who's Looking After the Children?

This is an FT drama about online harm, regulation and responsibility. This shows the search for their missing son which leads a mother and father to a digital gatekeeper who seems to have all the answers. This is a powerful watch and shows the realness behind internet safety and how much harm it can really be doing to our children. - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6UY2HOpuTlk>

Conversations About Mental Health

We all need good mental health and wellbeing to be able to make the most of life's opportunities and challenges, and we can nurture good mental health in young people whether they have a diagnosed mental health condition or not. To do this, we need to be able to have supportive and positive conversations with young people about their mental health. You may find when you ask how a young person is feeling, they do not feel comfortable or want to open up to you at that moment – but don't take that personally! Even though they may not take you up on a first offer to talk, you should make the offer again. It might take more than one – or even two or three – invitations before they open up, but just reminding them you are there if they need you is a great start to building trust. There is tips on how to start a conversation with a young person about mental health, setting boundaries and noticing signs of distress. Please follow this link to read on this more https://www.youngminds.org.uk/professional/resources/how-to-have-a-conversation-with-young-people-about-mental-health/?utm_source=enewsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=may2023&utm_term=o25



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Designated
Safeguarding
Lead



Mr Randle
Deputy
Safeguarding
Lead



Ms Gordon
Deputy
Safeguarding
Lead



Mr Quirke
Deputy
Safeguarding
Lead



Mr Cresswell
Deputy
Safeguarding
Lead

10 top tips for safely using SMARTWATCHES

Kids love gadgets, and smartwatches – available to buy from as little as £20 online – make a tempting gift. As with any type of mobile technology, though, smartwatches can pose risks to children unless they're used safely. Receiving unwanted calls, cyber-stalking and distracting a young person when they're crossing the road are all known risks associated with smartwatches. However, these devices can bring plenty of benefits for children and parents alike – so let's examine the pros and cons of smartwatches.

AVOID CHEAP OPTIONS

A quick search online yields a torrent of cheap smartwatches for kids, costing as little as £20. It's wise to avoid this bargain basement tech: it tends to deliver a poor experience with inferior battery life, and it's hard to have faith in the software's safety. There have been cases of smartwatches being hacked to track or contact children; stick to known brands who have a reputation to protect.

CONTROL CALLING

Many smartwatches have the facility to make or take calls. As with a phone, you may want to restrict who your child can call – or be called by. On Apple Watches, you can select trusted contacts who are allowed to ring your child, while other watches' controls vary hugely. Some need to connect to a linked phone for calls, so you may be able to block unknown contacts via that device instead.

BEWARE HIDDEN COSTS

For a smartwatch to allow calls independently (that is, without being connected to a phone via Bluetooth), it will need its own mobile data plan. This might take the form of a tiny SIM card that you slot into the watch – or an eSIM, where the physical card is replaced by software settings. Either way, this will incur an additional monthly cost that you'll need to factor into any buying decision.

ENABLE FAMILY SHARING

Apple Watches aren't cheap, but they do offer superb safety features – allowing parents to control calls, messages and emails on the device, as well as a location tracking system that can send alerts if kids wander beyond pre-set boundaries. Their SOS function enables children to contact emergency services instantly if they're in trouble, which simultaneously also alerts parents and carers.

MAKE THEM COOL FOR SCHOOL

Some schools have banned smartwatches, as pupils have been using them as substitute phones. If your child's school does permit them, some devices can be set to prevent distractions in class. For example, Apple's Schooltime feature turns their watches into ordinary time-keeping devices during school hours. The display changes in this mode, showing teachers that it isn't being used for other purposes.

TRACK ITS LOCATION

Both Apple and Android devices have apps which allow you to track a smartwatch's location. They can also initiate an audio alert – avoiding those cushion-hurling panics when a treasured device can't be found at home. If you're planning to track your child's location via their watch, make them aware of that in advance. You could even make it a condition of them getting the watch in the first place.

THINK 'SAFETY FIRST'

Smartwatches are often worth hundreds of pounds, which can make young people wearing one a target for thieves. Advise your child to keep the watch hidden in public (when possible) and not to resist if muggers demand their watch. If you manage to track a stolen device, pass that information to the police: location data isn't always accurate, so you could end up wrongly accusing someone.

STORE MEDICAL INFO

Devices including the Samsung Galaxy Watch and Apple Watch can store the owner's medical details (such as their blood group and any pre-existing medical conditions), potentially giving emergency services access to vital information in a crisis. These devices also have 'hard fall' detection, which sends a text message to selected contacts along with a map showing the wearer's location.

USE THEM AS MOTIVATION

If you're worried your child's spending too much time slumped on the sofa staring at screens, smartwatches are great fitness trackers and can be a powerful incentive to get moving. Some devices will alert the wearer if they've been inactive for a long time and encourage them to do some exercise. Many watches record the user's daily step count and measure other health metrics.

BE MINDFUL OF BEDTIME

Many smartwatches offer sleep tracking, which some (usually older) children use to justify wearing them to bed. However, that also presents a temptation to message friends or check social media late at night, even if their phone is downstairs. Unless there's a valid reason not to, you could encourage your child to remove the watch in the evenings and ensure the charger stays in a different room.

Meet Our Expert

Barry Collins has been a technology journalist and editor for more than 20 years, working for titles such as the *Sunday Times*, *Which?*, *PC Pro* and *Computeractive*. He's appeared regularly as a technology pundit on television and radio, including on *BBC Newsnight*, *Radio 5 Live* and the *ITV News at Ten*. He has two children and writes regularly about internet safety issues.



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