

Easter Safeguarding Newsletter

Belfairs Academy

March 2024



To Parents and Carers,

Welcome to our latest edition of the Newsletter from Belfairs Safeguarding Team. We aim to bring you all the latest, relevant help and guidance on issues we feel will be of importance to you.

The exam season can be an anxious time for our young people and their families. This issue explores coping with exam stress. Please contact us if you require further advice or support with this.

We wish everyone in our academy community an enjoyable Easter break and we look forward to seeing you all in the summer term.

Belfairs Designated Safeguard Leads



Mrs Foster
Asst Principal



Mr Zweistra
Vice Principal



Mr Williams
Snr Asst Principal



Mrs Rowland
Asst Principal

If you would like to contact outside agencies for advice, help or guidance, please contact one of the numbers below:

First Contact Team (Social Care): 01702 215007 (Mon-Fri)

Out of Hours Team (Social Care): 0845 6061212 (365 days)

NSPCC Helpline: 0800 800 5000

Childline: 0800 1111

Police: 999 (Emergency) or 101 (Non-Emergency)

Useful contacts for students

Kooth.com

Online counselling service for 11 – 25 years online until 10pm daily.

Young Minds

Telephone 0808 8025544 or text YM to 85258.

Mind

www.Mind.org.uk has A-Z of good information to support anxiety and panic attacks and www.mindful.org aimed at 11-17 year olds.

Childline

0800 1111 / childline.org.uk

EWMHS – 03005551200

Eating Disorders – www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk

Social Anxiety Support - www.social-anxiety.org.uk

Students aged 11-19 can text the school nurse on 07520 649895

The academy nurse can support young people with all kinds of things such as:

RELATIONSHIPS
MENTAL HEALTH
BULLYING
ALCOHOL
SELF HARM
HEALTHY EATING
DRUGS
SMOKING

Text now for confidential advice and support.

Feedback and Questions

If you have a non-urgent query or request for our Safeguarding Leads, you can contact the academy via enquiries@belfairsacademy.org.uk

 **Follow us @belfairsacademy**



To contact the service between the hours of 9am-5pm, Monday to Friday: Call SET CAMHS: Freephone 0800 953 0222 Email: SET-CAMHS.referrals@nelft.nhs.uk

If you need urgent help or out of hours help; call NELFT out of hours: 0800 995 1000



NATIONAL STRESS AWARENESS MONTH



What are you doing today to relax?

WHAT IS STRESS?

Stress is a common feeling adults and children can get when they feel under pressure. A small amount can be good and can motivate to meet goals. But too much stress, when it feels out of control, can impact mood, wellbeing and relationships. Some people, when they go through long periods of stress, experience "burn out" a feeling of complete physical and emotional exhaustion. With exams shortly upon us, make sure you know how to recognise and deal with the signs your child may be stressed and feeling overwhelmed.

DEALING WITH STRESS

When your child is under stress they react differently. At times, they may feel like shouting and throwing things, but instead they may hide away and stop socialising. Other times, they may feel tearful but outwardly appear angry and behave aggressively. Learning to deal with stress can take a lot of practice but it will be worth it in the long run. Here are some tips to help you out when stress is getting the better of your child:

RECOGNISE TRIGGERS – begin to track times where they have felt stressed and look for patterns in how they reacted. What was happening when they felt stressed? What did they think/feel/do just before they felt stressed?

AWARENESS – once they are aware of difficulties that are likely to make them feel stressed you can take steps to prevent stress or deal with it quickly.

SELF-CARE – tell your child to be kind to themselves – stress is a human experience. Try to connect with friends and talk about how they are feeling too.

EXERCISE, RELAXATION AND MEDITATION – some people find that exercises and activities such as meditation and breathing exercises can be helpful. You can find apps to help with this.

EAT WELL AND SLEEP – the better rested they are, the better able they are to cope with pressure.

TALKING THERAPY – if they are finding it difficult to cope, consider meeting with someone trained to help – this might include your GP or talking therapy.



TOP APPS TO HELP WITH STRESS



CALM: guided meditations and sleep stories to ease stress and improve sleep.

HEADSPACE: train your mind for a healthier, happier life by reducing daily anxieties and stresses.

BREATH2RELAX: portable stress management tool.



6 TIPS TO HELP YOUR CHILD MANAGE EXAM STRESS



LISTEN TO THEIR CONCERNS – it's important to understand that your child may well be feeling worried at this time, and that is normal. Encourage them to talk about their concerns and reassure them that their feelings are valid and that you are there to support them.

HELP WITH EXAM PREPARATIONS – Help your child to plan a realistic revision timetable. Break the day and the subjects down into manageable chunks, this will increase their sense of control and confidence. It will also ensure everything is covered. Discuss revision techniques and help them identify which suits them best. It could be flashcards, mind maps or watching revision videos. Make sure your child has a distraction-free place to study too, this could be school or a public library if there isn't suitable space at home.

ENCOURAGE HEALTHY ROUTINES – Sleeping well, eating regular healthy meals and relaxing are important for everyone's wellbeing. Encourage your child to make time for their favourite hobbies or activities. Revision is most effective when combined with regular breaks, so make sure they step away from their books too.

PROMOTE A SENSE OF PERSPECTIVE – Young people can feel overwhelmed by pressure to get high grades in exams. It comes at them from school, peers, social media influencers and more. So, while it's important to want your child to do well, it's important that you avoid heaping on more pressure, and that you help instil a sense of perspective. Avoid nagging and over-policing their revision. Encourage your child to focus on realistic goals of their own, rather than compare themselves critically to their peers.

LOOK OUT FOR SIGNS YOUR CHILD IS STRUGGLING – While some degree of worry or nerves around exams is expected, do be aware of signs that anxiety levels may be building. If your child's anxiety is spiralling, encourage them to talk to you, a teacher, about how they are feeling.

BE POSITIVE - Let your child know that you believe in them and feel positive about their future. Planning a special treat and talking about things they are looking forward to after the exams can help them feel positive, motivated and less worried.

Reassure your child that exam results do not define them; that they are far from the only measure of success; and that you are proud of them whatever happens on results day.



ESSEX POLICE NOTICE - THC VAPES



Nationally there have been concerns raised with **Cannabis vapes and edibles** and particularly their use by **children**, which has led to multiple near fatal overdoses. There have also been deaths linked to Cannabis edibles in the last two years.

Cannabis is regarded by many as a 'safe' drug, with a low risk of overdose. However, this is not the case and particularly when higher strength THC products are ingested or vaporised, they can easily lead to an overdose.

Worryingly, some edibles products and vape pens sold as containing THC contain even more potent chemicals, including synthetic drugs like Spice (SCRAs). SCRAs are not derived from cannabis but affect the same receptors in the brain. They are also far more potent and carry an even greater risk of overdose leading to breathing difficulties, seizures and even death.

In December, a child in Essex collapsed in school after using another pupil's vape pen. A further similar incident happened in Essex in January and the same school reported they had unsubstantiated reports of similar occurrences in the same school. In both cases, no vape pens were recovered, so we have been unable to submit anything for testing. Several more recent incidents in schools have involved cannabis edibles, with at least one requiring hospital treatment.

Areas including Greater Manchester, Yorkshire, Humberside and London have reported multiple similar incidents in schools resulting in Hospital treatment, with a large percentage of the vapes found to contain SCRAs. It is important that any suspicious vapes or edible products are secured, and any such incidents reported to Police.





GAMING SAFETY CHECKLIST



Knowing what needs to be set on devices can sometimes feel overwhelming. To support parents ygam.org have put together a simple checklist of topics to explore with regards to ensuring your child's device(s) have safe control measures.

- Have I set up a password to access the device and any games or apps?



- Is the username appropriate?



TIP: a good username should be random and NOT include any personal details such as date of birth etc.

- Who can view my child's personal details and who can engage with my child?
TIP: you can choose from anyone, just friends, just contacts etc when deciding who can engage with your child.



- Are location settings deactivated to stop people being able to see where my child is playing?



- Have time limits been set on devices to control how much screen time?

- Have controls for purchasing game/apps/microtransactions been set on each device?



TIP: you can set passwords, age limits or parent authorisation to download additional content.

- Have parental controls on all devices your child(ren) plays on with been set up? **TIP: some channels automatically play features so even if your child has searched for something suitable the next video to play may be unsuitable if no content or age settings are made.**





USEFUL PODCASTS TO KNOW ABOUT:



The Catch22Minutes podcasts delve into some of today's major social challenges. They speak to frontline experts, industry leaders and young people, in pursuit of ideas for reforming public services.

- **Online Harms and Online Helps (19/01/23)** - the online world presents huge opportunities for finding purpose, connection and community. The online World can also present significant risks for children and young people. It's a fast-moving space and the threat of online grooming and exposure to harmful content is undoubtedly growing. This podcast discusses these topics and concerns.
- **Missing Children and Child Exploitation (01/12/22)** – this episode explores how and why children go missing, how it can be prevented and the signs that a missing episode may be linked to exploitation.
- **County Lines (02/02/23)** – this episode discusses county lines and the impact of county lines on children and young people's lives and the lives of those around them, techniques perpetrators use to lure children into county lines activity and what support is provided.



The MINDSHIFT app is a free self-help anxiety relief app, helping young adults reduce worry, stress, and panic by following evidence-based strategies based on cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT).

KIDS MEAL OFFERS OVER EASTER

ASDA – 'Kids Eat for £1' all day, every day, no adult spend required.

SAINSBURYS – Kids eat for £1 (hot main meal or lunch bag) with the purchase of an adult hot main meal for £5.20.

BEEFEATER (Strawberry Field, Rochford) – 2 children get free breakfast with one paying adult.

MORRISONS – Kids eat free with any one adult meal with a value of £4.49 or over.

TGI FRIDAYS – Download 'Stripes Rewards' App and kids eat free when ordering adults main meal, all day every day.

BREWERS FAYRE – Up to 2 children (under 16) eat free, unlimited breakfast with any purchase of an adults breakfast.

HUNGRY HORSE – Kids eat for £1 when accompanied by a paying adult, only Mondays.

DUNELM – Kids eat free at Pausa Café with every £4 spent in the café.