

RIVERMEAD INCLUSIVE TRUST

PARENTS AND CARERS SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER

JULY 2022



inspiring the journey for
independence together

Welcome from the Team

**Welcome to the second edition of our Safeguarding
Newsletter.**



The Department for Education (DFE) document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020 (KCSIE)' provides the statutory safeguarding guidance for schools. Safeguarding is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Acting to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

The main purpose of our newsletter is to promote the importance of proactive safeguarding by keeping you informed about current and emerging safeguarding issues, so we can all continue working together to help protect and keep our young people safe.

SAFEGUARDING IN THE NEWS

Media attention continues to highlight safeguarding issues which families should be aware of.

PEER ON PEER ABUSE/SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Parents and carers have a hugely important role to play in reducing levels of sexual harassment/abuse.

Parents Protect

Together we can prevent
child sexual abuse

PARENTS PROTECT

Parents Protect is a child sexual abuse and prevention website created by the sexual abuse and prevention campaign Stop It Now! UK and Ireland and The Lucy Faithfull Foundation. The Stop It Now! Campaign aims to prevent child sexual abuse by raising awareness and encouraging early recognition of warning signs of abuse. It also sets out identifying and responses to the problem by abusers themselves and those close to them.

Click [PARENTS PROTECT](#) - Learn to educate yourself on all aspects of safeguarding. The website has many resources for parents and carers to access. Click [Parents protect -resources](#) to see the full range of information leaflets, safety plans, posters and books to share with children.

Sexual Abuse Learning Programme (Parents Protect)

Parents Protect has developed this online child sexual abuse and exploitation awareness learning programme for parents/carers and professionals to help:

Understand potential risks

Recognise the signs of possible abuse in children

Be aware of inappropriate behaviour in adults

Know where to go for help if you have concerns and would like to talk about them



[STOP IT NOW](#) believes that sexual abuse and exploitation is preventable and gives adults the information they need to protect children effectively whilst urging abusers and potential abusers to seek help. Stop It Now! encourages adults to create a society that no longer tolerates the sexual abuse of children. There is a confidential and anonymous helpline and email service.

Stop It Now!

UK & IRELAND

Helping prevent
child sexual abuse

Call **0808 1000 900** or live chat if you are not ready to speak to someone on the phone. Click the following link: [Live chat - Stop It Now](#)

TICK TOCK

TikTok is starting to offer users a new level of control over their 'For You' page. The company has announced that you'll be able to specify specific words or hashtags you don't want to see in your feeds, and the app will automatically filter them out.



The platform is also rolling out two new automated moderation and filtering tools. One, called Content Levels, ranks content based on "thematic maturity" and is designed to keep mature content of all types from being shown to young users. (TikTok compared it to the rating systems you'd find on movies or video games.) The other attempts to identify videos that are okay one at a time but problematic in bulk – dieting fads, depression-related content, and the like – and avoid showing them repeatedly to users.

Visit <https://www.theverge.com> for further information.

STRIP SEARCHES IN SCHOOLS

The Government has issued new guidance to all schools around searches in schools. Schools should consider whether strip-searching a pupil is "absolutely necessary", before involving police. The new advice for schools in England has been issued following national outcry over the treatment of a 15-year-old black girl, known as Child Q, who was strip-searched by female police officers in 2020 after she was wrongly suspected of carrying cannabis at her school in east London.

The guidance, which comes into force in September, adds that where possible staff should inform parents in advance of any search. At least two other people, one of whom must be an appropriate adult, must be present for a strip-search involving exposure of intimate body parts, except in cases where there is risk of serious harm to the pupil or others.

Pupils should be given appropriate support following a strip-search, even if a suspected item is found. "If an item is found, this may be a police matter, but should always be accompanied by a safeguarding process handled by the school which gives attention to the pupil's wellbeing and involves relevant staff, such as the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy)."

All of our Trust Schools will be adding a Search and Confiscation Policy to their websites in the Autumn term.

ONLINE SAFETY UPDATES

Snapchat has been in the news recently. Please make sure your child is using social media safely.

For help and advice visit: <https://nationalonlinesafety.com/guides>



STREAKS, MEETS, AND SNAPS

YOUR HOW-TO GUIDE TO SNAPCHAT FEATURES

SNAPCHAT is a social media platform used to share customisable photos, messages, and short-form videos referred to as 'Snaps' which can disappear after 24 hours. But this app isn't only for turning your messages into ghosts. It has a multitude of features that keep it fresh and current with young people today.

SNAP MAP

- Shows real time location on an interactive map.
- Includes street, town/city, and building names.
- Options for 'meet up' and 'live location sharing' with friends.



CAUTION: This feature is 'on' by default. You will need to activate 'Ghost Mode' to stop your location from appearing on the map.

FILTERS

- A moving image 'overlayed' onto pictures and videos.
- Can range from colour changing to face/setting altering.
- A popular way for users to express themselves.



STORIES

- Personalised images or videos on your profile.
- Can be seen by select friends, all friends, or wider public.
- Posts will last for 24 hours before disappearing forever.



NEVER FORGET
If you want to stop a snap or story from disappearing, it can be archived in 'Memories' to be timestamped and reshared.

DISCOVER

- A live news feed featuring Snapchat's chosen publishers.
- Wall Street Journal, ESPN, and others are included.
- Influencers and brands are also featured.



DID YOU KNOW...

Snapchat is the original disappearing messages app! It's been around since 2011.



SNAPSTREAKS

- Achieved when two users send messages daily for 3 or more days.
- Once reached, a flame emoji appears next to the friend's username.
- The number of days will appear as well to show how long the streak is.



SPOTLIGHT

- Short form videos used for viral video content.
- Users can like, reply, and share with friends on Snapchat.
- Videos cannot be downloaded or shared to other platforms.



THE PUBLIC EYE

Snapchat accounts must be 'public' to create Spotlight videos. This feature can be viewed and accessed by all users.



ALL ABOUT SNAPCHAT+

Snapchat launched a premium option for its platform called 'Snapchat+' in June 2022 across the world. Described as having "exclusive, experimental and pre-release features", this paid version costs £3.99 per month and includes:

- 'Ghost Trails' - see up to 24 hours of a friend's shared location history.
- 'Story Rewatch Indicator' - view which users have rewatched a story.
- 'Friend Solar System' - use planetary order to highlight friendships.



RISKS, RISKS, AND MORE RISKS

- AGE VERIFICATION** - there is currently no effective process to verify user age.
- STRANGER DANGER** - 'Friending' users is easy and opens up direct contact.
- SCREENTIME OVERLOAD** - trends like 'Snapstreaks' could encourage bad habits.
- CYBERBULLYING** - disappearing messages may give bullies extra ammo online.
- EXPLICIT INTERACTIONS** - users may feel more comfortable 'sexting' others.
- PRESSURE** - users might experience pressure to send nude imagery to others.



'DISAPPEARING' DANGER

Just because images and videos 'disappear' within 24 hours doesn't mean that other users can't save them. Even though Snapchat tells you when another user screenshots your message, it does not consider secondary devices or video capturing software being used to record photos or videos.



TOP TIPS



TALK ABOUT ONLINE FRIENDSHIP CULTURE.

Remind young people that they should only ever share personal details with trusted friends who they know in-person.




TURN ON PRIVACY SETTINGS.

Explain the importance of protecting their privacy on apps where others may have access to their profile and their real-time location.



DISCUSS WHAT NOT TO SHARE WITH OTHERS.

By talking through the false security of 'disappearing' messages, you can help them feel more confident saying "no."



REMINDE THEM WHO THEY CAN TALK TO.

Check that your young person knows who their trusted adults are and that they can turn to them if something happens.

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With the recent announcements that both Yubo and Instagram will be partnering with Yoti as part of their new strategy to verify users' ages, we took a closer look at what Yoti is, and whether photo age verification can help keep young people safer online.



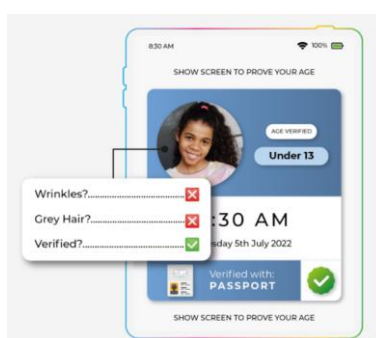
What is the Yoti App?

Yoti is a digital ID app that enables users to prove their identity to businesses and digital services. It's been around since 2014 but has been hitting the headlines recently due to their partnerships with social media platforms Instagram and Yubo.

Yoti works both as an independent app which anyone can download and create an account on, and as an integrated software on other apps (like Instagram).

Yoti uses facial analysis technology to verify age by asking the user to take a photo 'in real-time' and uses algorithms to verify that it is a photo of a real person. The algorithms read the pixels of the image for age identifiers (such as wrinkles, grey hair), but does not 'recognise' the image as a face.

Some users may have privacy concerns over Yoti, especially if using the app as a central method of ID and wonder if Yoti is safe to use. Yoti's facial age estimation is built in accordance with the 'privacy by design' principle in the UK (GDPR) and the photo is deleted from the system once analysed.



There are several potential reasons why this type of age verification is important:

- To cut down on fake accounts.
- To ensure young people are communicating with people in the same age range.
- To prevent adults posing as someone underage.
- To protect young people from age inappropriate and harmful content.

On Instagram, the platform will be using Yoti to “provide appropriate experiences to different age groups, specifically teens.”

For further information: [What-is-yoti?](#)

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

If our pupils are to succeed then we must seek to promote their resilience and mental health. At Rivermead Inclusive Trust we strive to raise awareness surrounding mental health and wellbeing. We endeavour to work with families, outside agencies and most importantly the young people as we recognise positive mental health and wellbeing are a key part in keeping our pupils safe.



Raising awareness and signposting support

While raising awareness through preventative work we must also teach young people the knowledge and self-care skills to look after themselves. This is done through our PSHE and Relationship Curriculums. In addition, you can find mental health resource links on our school websites.

Useful support for your child:

<https://youngminds.org.uk/>

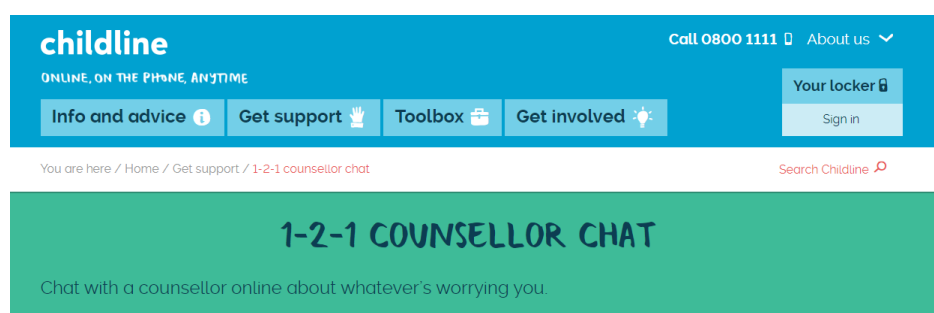
<https://www.kooth.com/>



Both offer free online counselling and emotional wellbeing support.

If you are concerned about mental health issues please contact the Mental Health lead at your school for support.

Childline can also offer support: <https://www.childline.org.uk/get-support/1-2-1-counsellor-chat/>



Medway Young Persons Wellbeing Service (NELFT)

This for people aged 0-18 years or up to 25 with SEN needs. The service offers advice and support for stress, low mood, and depression, anxiety, self-harm, difficult to manage behaviours as well as support for neurodevelopmental difficulties such as ADHD or ASD. You might benefit from some of the self-help resources accessible at or you can self-refer on 0300 300 1981.

[Kent and Medway | NELFT NHS Foundation Trust](#)

SUPPORTING FAMILIES DURING THE SUMMER HOLIDAYS



General Support

MEDWAY FIS 01634 332195 One stop information service

Medway Small Steps: A new service providing support and advice for families whose children are either pre or post diagnosis of Autism or ADHD.

Contact: <https://www.family-action.org.uk//medway-small-steps-service/>

Support with Food

Medway Foodbank - For families who are struggling to afford food, proof of financial difficulties will need to be provided, the following are charities which may be able to support. Foodbank times, day and locations are available from <https://medway.foodbank.org.uk/>

Gillingham Street Angels - Supply food parcels, including fresh food, between 9 am until 1 pm Monday to Friday & 9am until 12 midday Saturday. They also supply clothes, bedding, and general household items. They are part of the Medway emergency food project run by the Medway Council, this was set up during the first pandemic and Medway Food Partnership, to help people of Medway, including children at half term, which is ongoing. The shop is located at shop at 43 Skinner Street, Gillingham
<https://www.thestreet-angels.org/>



2nd Chance Support Charity - Food aid project where food is available at a lower price. <http://www.mrs.plus> This is located in Chatham. Telephone number 01634 408840 / 01634 403340

Financial Support

Family Fund - <http://www.familyfund.org.uk> Family Fund is the UK's largest charity providing grants for families raising disabled or seriously ill children and young people.

Disability Grants - Grants for Children and Young People <https://www.disability-grants.org/>
A list of available grant opportunities, eligibility criteria and how to apply.

Citizens Advice Bureau - Tel: 01634 383760 - Citizens Advice Medway is a registered charity that offers free, independent and impartial advice <https://www.medwayadvice.org.uk/>

Step change - Tel: 0800 1381111 - <http://www.stepchange.org/debt-info/coronavirus-affecting-finances.aspx>

MEDWAY YOUTH SERVICE: SUMMER ACTIVITIES PROGRAMME

To book visit: [Youth summer activities](#) | [Medway Council](#)

August - week 1

Big Camp
Allhallows Park Days
Hoo Creative
Drop-in football (Walderslade)
Mini Big Camp
Drop-in football (Rochester)
Take Over Day - Strood Youth Centre

August - week 2

Allhallows Park Days
Fun at Gillingham Park
Hoo Creative
Drop-in football (Walderslade)
SEN Cookery
Climbing
NERF event (Lordswood)
Drop-in football (Rochester)
Panic Room
Fun at Gillingham Park
NERF event (St. Mary's Island)


August - week 3

Allhallows Park Days
Life Skills Inventory
Take Over Day – SOAR Trampoline Park
Drop-in football (Walderslade)
Hoo Creative
Cooking Around the World (for ages 8 to 12)
Sports @ Kestrel
Take Over Day – Medway Watersports Centre
Drop-in football (Rochester)
T-shirt printing and shrink plastic workshop
Skate with Team Extreme
Cooking Around the World (for ages 13 to 19)

<https://www.medway.gov.uk/youth>

[Home](#) > [Youth Services](#)


Youth Services



Sign up to our Youth Service ebulletin

Keep up to date with what is happening in Youth Services.


[Sign up >](#)



Youth support services

Youth organisations across Medway offer various support services for young people aged 8 to 25 years old.


[View support services >](#)



Let's get moving with Medway Can

Run, dance, swim or even moonwalk for a mile and join thousands of people helping Medway travel around the world. Log your miles, discover ideas and find out more.

[More about Medway Can >](#)



Youth summer activities

View our free summer activities for 8 to 17 year olds.




[Get involved >](#)

STAY SAFE IN THE SUMMER

For safety advice please visit: <https://www.nsc.org/home-safety/tools-resources/seasonal-safety/summer>

Be Water Safety Aware

When the weather is warm the water can seem so inviting, but it is a risk that is simply not worth taking. Swimming in rivers, canals and lakes is dangerous. Remember these points when out and about this summer:

-  Only swim in properly supervised pools, the dangers of water include: very cold temperatures, hidden currents, fast flowing water, deep water, locks and weirs, pollution, hidden rubbish and debris. It may also be difficult to get out and there will not be lifeguards present.
-  If you see another person or a pet in trouble in the water do not enter the water yourself. Raise the alarm or if you have a mobile phone call 999 and ask for the fire service. Try and give an exact location of where you are and look for and signs or landmarks. If there is a lifebuoy or throwline nearby throw it to them. If not, throw anything to them that will float.
-  If you fall into water by accident try to fight your instinct to thrash about, instead lean back and float on your back while you catch your breath. Once you are calm call for help or swim for safety if you are able.

OUTDOOR FIRE SAFETY

Respect the outdoors and remember these points when you are out with your friends this summer:

-  **Do not set deliberate fires!**
They can put people's lives in danger, put a strain on firefighters and ruin the local area.
-  **If you're found to be responsible for a fire, you will be arrested and get a criminal record.**
-  **Take your rubbish home or put it in a nearby bin.**
Don't leave glass bottles lying on the ground. Sunlight shining through glass can start a fire.
-  **Call 999 if you see a fire – don't try and tackle it yourself and leave the area as soon as possible.**

DON'T BE BLAMED FOR THE FLAMES



SUMMER HOLIDAYS - WORRIED ABOUT A YOUNG PERSON?



Information, help, support and advice if you are worried about a child in Medway.

If you have concerns that a child or young person living in Medway is suffering from harm please phone 01634 334 466 or the 24-hour emergency number 03000 419 191

Medway Children's Safeguarding Partnership <https://www.medwayscp.org.uk/mscb/>

If you have concerns about a child you can also phone:

NSPCC on 0808 800 5000

Child Line on 0800 1111

Medway Police on 0162 2690 690



Please contact your school Safeguarding Team if you have concerns or need further advice/support.



Have a fun and safe summer from everyone at Rivermead Inclusive Trust.