

Safeguarding Newsletter

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WELCOME

to the fifth issue of Tapton School's Safeguarding Newsletter.

This month I want to give you some information about gang violence, the importance of strong passwords for keeping safe online, why talking to your children about internet safety is more effective than warnings and the issue of breast ironing.

Kath Tabari

THERE'S A VIRAL SCARE ONLINE. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Reports of online scares or challenges encouraging harmful or suicidal behaviours can be alarming and confusing. Most have been found to be hoaxes, fake news or wildly exaggerated stories. As a parent, there is a lot you can do to support your child. It's important to help your child feel safe by staying calm. If your child has not yet heard about the scare, don't bring it to their attention by naming it or trying to explain it. You don't want to frighten them, and the last thing you want is for your child to feel curious and try to look for the scary content online. Instead, remind them that if they ever feel worried about something they see online - or hear about from friends - worries them they can come to you or another adult they trust for help.

GANG VIOLENCE

The Children's Commissioner for England has published a report looking at children and young people in England who are members of gangs.

The report is based on findings from a 12 month engagement programme with children, their families and professionals, analysis of data, learning from serious case reviews, and research.

It estimates that: 313,000 children and young people aged 10-17 know a street gang member and 34,000 children who have been the victims of a violent crime in the past 12 months either are a gang member, or know a gang member. Recommendations include: the Government needs to be clear that child criminal exploitation is a national priority, and lay-out expectations for all the organisations working with children, including the police, schools, children's services and NHS bodies. Read more [here](#)

NEW HELPLINE FOR GRIEF AND BEREAVEMENT

Grief Encounter is one of the UK's leading bereaved child charities, providing free, pioneering services and support to bereaved children, young people and their families.
Phone: 0808 802 0111 (Free to call; Monday - Friday 9am - 9pm)
Email: grieffalk@griefencounter.org.uk
Website: <https://www.griefencounter.org.uk/>

PASSWORDS

A recent survey by the UK's [National Cyber Security Centre \(NCSC\)](#) has highlighted the need for strong passwords on the many accounts that we all have.

Are you one of the millions of people using easy-to-guess passwords on sensitive accounts?

The survey found 123456 was the most widely-used password on breached accounts; followed by

123456789

qwerty

password

111111

12345678

abc123

1234567

password1

12345

The NCSC recommended using three "random but memorable" terms in a password, to reduce the risk of having an account breached.

Ian Levy, NCSC Technical Director, said in a statement.

"Password re-use is a major risk that can be avoided -- nobody should protect sensitive data with something that can be guessed, like their first name, local football team or favourite band. Using hard-to-guess passwords is a strong first step and we recommend combining three random but memorable words. Be creative and use words memorable to you, so people can't guess your password."

It's easy to check if your email address or password have been hacked at the website [haveibeenpwned.com](#) which was set up by cyber expert Troy Hunt, a Microsoft Regional Director and blogger at [troyhunt.com](#). He says "I created HIBP as a free resource for anyone to quickly assess if they may have been put at risk due to an online account of theirs having been compromised or "pwned" in a data breach. I wanted to keep it simple to use and entirely free so that it could be of maximum benefit to the community.

Best practice dictates that you should use a different password for all of your online accounts, but remembering them all can be nearly impossible – particularly if you want to use strong logins that are difficult to crack. However, there is a solution to both of these problems: a secure password manager that will generate strong passwords for you using a combination of letters, numbers and special characters, and store them all in an encrypted vault.

Read more about the best password managers [here ...](#) at [techradar.com](#)

BREAST IRONING

Breast ironing awareness should be made part of the mandatory school curriculum to protect young girls from abuse, the National Education Union has said. The practice involves ironing a girl's chest with hot objects to delay breasts from growing, so she does not attract male attention. Conservative MP Nicky Morgan said teachers must also be educated, as they have a "very important role to play". The Home Office said teachers have a duty to report concerns.

It is often the child's mother who will undertake the breast ironing, which usually involves heating a stone or spoon on a flame then pressing, massaging or flattening the breast. This can go on for months. Some girls are also made to wear an extremely tight strap around their chest. It is thought that around 1,000 girls in the UK have been affected by breast ironing.

While awareness is growing around female genital mutilation (FGM), there are fears that few people know about breast ironing. Kiri Tunks, joint president of the National Education Union, is now calling for school staff - and in particular PE teachers - to be taught how to notice the signs. She also wants it to be covered in schools in the same way as FGM will be from 2020, as part of compulsory relationships and sex education classes in secondary schools.

Read more [here...](#)

Supporting our children through the exam period

Exams can be a stressful time for any young person. Mood swings and outbursts are more likely to occur during this period. There are many ways that as parent's you can support your child through what can be a difficult few weeks.

Look out for 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.

Young Minds who are the UK's leading charity fighting for children and young people's mental health say these are things that can really make a difference:

- Work with your child to find what revision style works for them.
- Encourage your child to take revision breaks and find a balance between studying and doing things they find enjoyable and relaxing.
- Make sure they are eating and drinking at regular intervals.
- Encourage them to take some time after revising to wind down.
- Reassure them – reinforce that you are and will be proud of them no matter what happens.
- Remain positive and hopeful!
- Plan a treat or an activity together to mark the end of the exams.
- Set aside one to one time so that they can talk to you about any worries.
- Let them know their feelings are valid and normal, but also offer support and solutions where possible.
- Anxiety is often worst at night and this means it is useful to encourage good bedtime routines
- Work with them to develop relaxation techniques.
- If anxiety and stress start impacting their day-to-day life seek help from your GP.

You can speak to your child's school to see how they are helping.

- Speak to your child's teacher(s) to find out what revision techniques they recommend.
- If your child is struggling with a specific subject, talk to the relevant teacher and explore whether they can provide additional help.
- Find out if the school has learning mentors that can help with practical steps including revision timetables.
- If your child has additional learning or developmental needs, speak to the school SENCO and establish what specialist provision they can put in place.

You can find more helpful advice here

[Young Minds](#)
[BBC Bitesize](#)
[Childline](#)

