

GAA Families' Safeguarding Newsletter

March 2023

Welcome to Great Academy Ashton's first safeguarding newsletter for parents and carers. We plan to send these out every half term and they will also be available on our website.

We hope you find it useful and welcome any feedback you might have.

Digital Parenting

For many parents the online world can sometimes feel like a minefield, where children are way ahead in terms of their knowledge, that they can circumvent every parental protection and have little control over behaviour and consequences. In many respects technology is a smokescreen which becomes a barrier. But how we help and protect our children, how we set rules and consequences should not be any different from the real world to the online world. Leonie Smith has written a useful, down to earth article which explains this really well, explaining that this needs to start early in the child's life and it isn't about trying to stay one step ahead or trying to outsmart children. Take a look for yourself:

[Setting Boundaries around apps and games — Digital Families Counselling](#)

Body Confidence

The world is now more superficial than ever before – TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat and others have standardised, what the world expects people to look like. What the world expects when someone is termed 'beautiful'. For young people, the standard idea of beauty has always been an immense pressure for those transitioning between being a child and being a young person. Most of this transition occurs during secondary schools, and this puts an immense pressure on students to conform with these ideas in order to be popular, or to fit within a group of friends. With an increasingly image based society low confidence among teenagers has become a far greater issue. Bullying and stigmatization against those who don't fit or don't think they fit within these standardised visions of how you should look, has an immensely negative effect on young people's mental health and that can have a negative effect on educational performance and attendance. To help young people with this, ChildLine has created a page over on their site with advice on these issues.

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/you-your-body/my-body/how-you-look/>

Bullying

Bullying exists across all of society, be it at work, within families or in public spaces. The intense pressure to fit within a certain box, or to be liked or adored by your peer base is the overriding drive of many learners. Thousands of days of teaching time are lost to bullying, through learner absences. Learners who are bullied will often hide it from parents and teachers, concerned with feeling weak or helpless, at a time in their lives when they're increasingly being encouraged to stand on their own two feet. As such they may shy away from those who can help. The NSPCC has published a page on their site dedicated to helping you detect those warning signs which can be so vital when dealing with these issues. To find out more please follow the link below:

[Helping Children Deal with Bullying & Cyberbullying | NSPCC](#)



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Eating Disorders (ACAMH)

Young people with an eating disorder have negative beliefs about themselves and about their eating, body shape and weight. This has an impact on their physical and mental health, education, relationships and quality of life. The exact cause of eating disorders is not known, but it's likely that there are several factors at play, rather than one single identifiable cause; for example, a mix of social, biological, psychological and interpersonal causes. In most cases, eating disorders start in adolescence, but they are often not picked up until adulthood. However, the earlier treatment starts, the better the long-term outcomes. Read more about Eating Disorders on the Association for Child and Adolescent Mental Health website here: [Eating disorders - ACAMH](https://www.acamh.org/eating-disorders)



12 Things I wish I'd known about grief (Winston's Wish)

From the 'five stages of grief' to the idea that grieving people should be crying all the time, there are many common myths about grief. The Winston's Wish team look at the truth behind these myths and reveal 12 things you should know about grief. If you require any bereavement support you may find the links below helpful. [Supporting A Bereaved Child | Winston's Wish Bereavement Service \(winstonswish.org\)](https://www.winstonswish.org/supporting-a-bereaved-child)
Read the rest here: [12 things I wish I'd known about grief | Winston's Wish \(winstonswish.org\)](https://www.winstonswish.org/12-things-i-wish-i-d-known-about-grief)

What are County Lines?

County Lines and the gangs that operate them are a key threat to vulnerable children. But in order to combat it effectively, and to protect the children that they threaten an understanding of the definition is required. To help in this effort to safeguard children from the practice's influence the National Crime Agency has published the document linked below: [County Lines - National Crime Agency](https://www.nca.gov.uk/county-lines)



Reporting a safeguarding concern

If you are concerned about the welfare of a student please contact a member of GAA's safeguarding team:



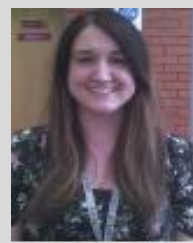
Rachel Gill
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)



Gill Baines
Senior Deputy DSL



Rebecca Holroyd
Deputy DSL



Michelle Hughes
Assistant SL

via admin@gaa.org.uk or tel: 0161 241 9555

Thank you for reading.

Watch out for the safeguarding video clip we will be sending out in 2 weeks' time.

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