

## Safeguarding & Child Protection at Ellesmere Port Catholic High School



At EPCHS we are :

**Ready  
Respectful  
Safe**



"Great things happen when you care"

Dear Lord,  
Fill our lives with Joy  
Fill our lives with Love  
Fill our loves with Peace  
We give thanks to you for the  
gift of life,  
Give us the courage to live it  
to the full.  
Amen

As we draw to a close on the academic year and the start of the summer holidays, we would like to say a large 'well done' for all that you have achieved during the past academic year. We know that your teachers are all so proud of the way that you adjusted and how well you've done since being back in the classroom. You should be proud of everything that you have achieved this year and we hope you can enjoy your summer holidays and look forward to returning to school in September.

We would like to say thank you to all of the parents and carers who have continued to support our school community. We hope that next year both pupils and teachers will be able to enjoy a normal school year, but for now we would like to wish all of you a wonderful summer holiday.

Please stay safe over the coming weeks.

### Young Minds



We know parenting isn't always easy. Although it's often amazing and rewarding to watch your children grow up, and to help them learn to be independent, it can also be really hard work. It can feel especially hard if your child's mood and behaviour seem different and you're not sure why, or what you can do to help. But you are not alone.

We have lots of practical advice and tips on supporting your child - from how to encourage your child to open up about their feelings to dealing with mental health services. No matter what you and your child are going through, things can get better. We also have our Parents Helpline who can provide advice and support if you're worried about a child or young person.

You can call us for free on 0808 802 5544 from 9:30am - 4pm, Monday - Friday.

Our Parents webchat is open 9:30am - 4pm, Monday - Friday. To access the webchat, select

### Are all your contact details up-to-date?

If you change your home phone/email/mobile number, please let the school know, so that we have the most up-to-date contact details.

### Designated Safeguarding Lead

**Mrs Jayne Jones**

### Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

**Mrs Carly Hughes**

### Useful Acronyms and Vocabulary

**CEOP** - Child Exploitation  
and On-line Protection  
Centre

**CYC**—Cheshire Young  
Carers

**CAMHS** - Child and  
Adolescent Mental Health  
Services

**KSCIE** - Keeping Children  
Safe in Education

**RSE** - Relationships and  
Sex Education

**ELSA** - Emotional Literacy  
Support Assistants

### Useful Websites

[youngminds.org.uk](http://youngminds.org.uk)

[nspcc.org.uk](http://nspcc.org.uk)

[childline.org.uk](http://childline.org.uk)

[cheshireyoungcarers.org](http://cheshireyoungcarers.org)

[ldas.org.uk](http://ldas.org.uk)

[papyrus-uk.org](http://papyrus-uk.org)

[Kooth.com](http://Kooth.com)

## Water Safety in the Summer!

### STOP & THINK! LEARN HOW TO FLOAT!

As the warm weather approaches, children can be drawn to water. As part of the school personal development programme, our students learn about staying safe around water. The RASS and RNLI offer lots of advice to children and parents but here are a few tips ...



[www.free-for-kids.com/childrens-water-safety-advice](http://www.free-for-kids.com/childrens-water-safety-advice)  
[www.riverandseasense.com/water-safety](http://www.riverandseasense.com/water-safety)

1. **Buddy up!** Always swim with a partner, every time — whether you're swimming in a backyard pool or in a lake. Even experienced swimmers can become tired or get muscle cramps, which can make it hard to get out of the water. When people swim together, they can help each other or go for help in an emergency.
2. **Get skilled.** It's good to be prepared. Above all, know how to swim. It's never too late to learn. Learning some life-saving skills, such as CPR and rescue techniques, can help you save a life
3. **Know your limits.** If you're not a good swimmer or you're just learning to swim, don't go in water that's so deep you can't touch the bottom and don't try to keep up with skilled swimmers. That can be hard, especially if your friends are challenging you. But it's a pretty sure bet they'd rather have you safe and alive.
4. **Swim in safe areas only.** It's always best to swim in places that are supervised by a lifeguard. No one can anticipate changing ocean currents, rip currents, sudden storms, or other hidden dangers. If something does go wrong, lifeguards are trained in rescue techniques. Swimming in an open body of water (like a river, lake, or ocean) is different from swimming in a pool. You need more energy to handle the currents and other changing conditions in the open water. Strongly consider wearing a personal floatation device in open bodies of water, even if you are a strong swimmer.
5. **Be careful about diving.** Diving injuries can cause head injury, permanent spinal cord damage, paralysis, and sometimes even death. Protect yourself by only diving in areas known to be safe, such as the deep end of a supervised pool. If an area has "No Diving" or "No Swimming" signs, pay attention to them. A "No Diving" sign means the water isn't safe for a head-first entry. Even if you plan to jump in feet first, check the water's depth before you leap to make sure there are no hidden rocks or other hazards. Lakes or rivers can be cloudy and hazards may be hard to see.
6. **Watch the sun.** Sun reflecting off the water or off sand can intensify the burning rays. You might not feel sunburned when the water feels cool and refreshing, but the pain will catch up with you later. Remember to reapply sunscreen often and cover up much of the time. Don't forget your hat, UV protection sunglasses, and protective clothing.
7. **Getting too cool.** Staying in very cool water for long periods can lower your body temperature. A temperature of 70°F (20°C) is nice on land, but water below that will feel cold to most swimmers. Your body temperature drops far more quickly in water than it does on land. And when you're swimming, you're using energy and losing body heat even faster. Check yourself when swimming in cold water and stay close to shore. If you feel your body start to shiver or your muscles cramp up, get out of the water right away. It doesn't take long for hypothermia to set in.
8. **Alcohol and water never mix.** [Alcohol](#) is involved in many water-related injuries and up to half of all water-related deaths. The statistics for teen guys are particularly scary: One half of all teen male drownings are tied to alcohol use.

### Free Summer Holiday Activities with Lunch

Edsential are delighted to be coordinating the Holiday Activity Fund (HAF) for 2022 on behalf of Wirral Council and Cheshire West & Cheshire. HAF provides enriching activities, delicious nutritious meals, and a chance for young people to meet new friends in a safe & fun environment during the school holidays.

They offer over 120 activities with lunch provided completely free for eligible children. Whether your child is 5 or 15, is football-mad, loves swimming, forest school or day trips; you can browse and book a suitable club in a few simple clicks.

Call Mike today on **07975 729694** or email [info@golfstarz.pro](mailto:info@golfstarz.pro) to register.

## **Blackout Challenge**

Parents are being warned about the new Blackout Challenge on TikTok that is on the rise among children and teenagers.

The Blackout Challenge is an online trend that is proving to be dangerous, if not fatal, after it reportedly claimed the lives of four youngsters so far this year. There have been 2 reported incidents in Warrington this month

### **What is the Blackout Challenge on TikTok?**

The Blackout Challenge on TikTok is where users are encouraged to hold their breath until they pass out due to a lack of oxygen. It can also be referred to as the "choking challenge" or the "pass-out challenge".

Four children under the age of 12 have already died after attempting to copy the challenge.

It is thought that youngsters are keen to try the challenge as it involves intentionally trying to choke oneself or another in an effort to obtain a brief euphoric state or "high". But death or serious injury can result if strangulation is prolonged.

### **When did the Blackout Challenge start?**

The Blackout Challenge is not as new as you may think - it's actually started back in 2008 as a choking game but it's now doing the rounds on TikTok and therefore reaching an audience in a different mode.

Parents are warned to watch out for the signs that a child may be engaging in the choking game and these include:

Discussion of the game – including other terms used for it, such as "pass-out game" or "space monkey"  
Bloodshot eyes.....Marks on the neck.....Severe headaches.....Disorientation after spending time alone,  
Ropes, scarves, and belts tied to bedroom furniture or doorknobs or found knotted on the floor....Unexplained presence of things like dog leashes, choke collars and bungee cords

**Nitrous oxide** - Nos is a colourless gas sold in canisters, usually inhaled using a balloon. Also called...Balloons; Chargers; Hippie Crack; Laughing Gas; Nos; Noz; Whippits.

**Common risks:** It's more dangerous inhaling directly from the canister. It can be hard to judge how many balloons to use. Too much nitrous oxide can make you faint, lose consciousness, or suffocate.

**Nitrous Oxide – NOT A Laughing Matter**

Posted on September 28, 2020 by alexgloster in Community Safety // 0 Comments

**Nitrous oxide** (laughing gas)

**Not a laughing matter**

Nitrous oxide is a colourless gas used medically as an anaesthetic.

Some people use it as a recreational drug without knowing the risks.

**Burns**  
**Dizziness**  
**Heart attack**  
**Nerve damage**  
**loss of self-control**  
**Confusion**  
**Headaches**  
**Suffocation**  
**Paranoia**



**How do you take it?** Nitrous oxide is inhaled.; People open the canister, transfer the gas into a container (usually a balloon), then inhale from the balloon. Inhaling nitrous oxide directly from the canister is very dangerous because the gas is under such high pressure. It can cause a spasm of the throat muscle and stop a person breathing

**What are the effects:** Memory loss; Incontinence; Depression; Psychological dependence; Psychosis; Weak immune system; Numbness in hands and feet; Limb spasms. Possible death.

**Where to get help: WDP (Westminster Drug Project)**

**<https://www.wdp.org.uk/cheshire-west-and-chester>**

If you are looking for advice, this is a good place to start.. Our service in Cheshire West and Chester offers support for young people who may be affected by drug or alcohol problems. This service is available to young people under 18 who live in Cheshire West and Chester or attend schools and colleges in the borough.



We offer personalised services to meet young people's individual needs.

## Summertime, Screentime

It's summertime and holidays are well and truly upon us, whether that be at home, abroad, or just a change of scenery. While we can't guarantee sun time, we can predict high levels of screentime for our children and young people during the school holiday season.

*Children in the UK aged 7 to 16 spend nearly 4 hours a day online*

### *Should we be calling time on screentime?*

It might be tempting to shout NO to summer screentime and chuck all devices in the bin, but—there are some things you need to consider first:

- Screentime activities like gaming can be a hobby, a source of fun, and, similar to social media, is a big (and important) part of how younger generations feel connected to the world.
- A ban on ALL screen time may not work and could be counterproductive (even harmful, in certain cases). You don't want to set yourself up for the same argument time and time again!
- A softer approach that focuses on compromises and establishing healthy habits is more likely to be effective – and cause fewer meltdowns.

## Children, young people, and screens

Managing screentime in your household doesn't need to be about earning it as a reward. In fact, when we use screens *solely* as a reward, it can result in children searching for other ways to engage online without your knowledge. A shift in how we look at screens and how we manage time engaging with digital content and media is important. Children and young people being 'glued to the screen' is not a new issue for parents, but the culture of entertainment and social interactions has changed so much over the last few years that it is certainly a much bigger challenge. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, children's lives have adapted to include more screen time as a necessity for meeting their educational, social, and entertainment needs. So how do we say, "Back away from the Xbox! Step away from the screens!" *without disregarding their feelings about the devices that have become a lifeline for some children.*

Summertime presents us with opportunities for important conversations with children and young people about healthy habits, what they enjoy doing online, and how we can help them to be safer on digital platforms.

So this summer, why not commit to being intentional by **getting involved** and **staying interested**. **Here are some simple tips and inspirations to help you have those conversations, whether it's your first time approaching the topic or your fifty-first!**

**Be intentional** – Take the opportunities that summer presents to engage. Learn a little more about the popular platforms and games those in your care are using or exploring this summer. Some of these platforms may have parental controls, safety settings, and reporting functions that are important to know about. You can use our online safety shareables and our safety centre to help you enable these and learn more.

**Get involved** – Consider downloading your own apps (social media platforms, games, lifestyle tools) even if your young person doesn't use it. You don't have to be an expert on every platform, but engaging in one will give you a greater level of understanding on how social media platforms and games work. You may even see why those in your care have difficulty staying away from screens!

**Be curious, not confrontational** – In the regular conversations you have with your children and young people about online behaviours, approach questions out of interest instead of from your own angle. For example: "What do you enjoy doing online?" or "That game looks fun. I would love to know how it works. Could you tell me more?"

**Manage screentime** -Review your family's screentime habits by using our activity pack to facilitate your family discussion. Agree together on what good summer screen time habits are. Remember to avoid comparison with other families! It's alright to get inspiration and learn from others, but every family context will be different.

**Be accountable** – Check in regularly with everyone in your household throughout the summer. New habits can sometimes take longer to form, and we all need encouragement, support, and accountability, no matter what age we are.

**Lead the way** – Believe it or not, adults spend nearly as much time online and on their devices as their children and young people. In fact, some statistics show nearly half of us spend a combined 11 hours a day looking at screens! Whether it's monitoring the amount of time you spend scrolling on your phone, agreeing not to look at devices during family meal time, or voicing your opinion on social media – always remember your children are looking to you as an example.



## YOUR SUMMER GUIDE TO POPULAR GAMES



### Rocket League

3

A videogame that bridges the gap between car racing, sport matches, and gladiator fights. Put simply, it's rocket-powered cars playing an intense game of football. Rocket League has a reputation for being a toxic environment for gamers with reports of offensive and inappropriate language filling text chats.



### Fifa

3

A football simulation video game where gamers can choose to play as their favourite real-life footballers in their favourite real-life teams. FIFA is readily played by adults of all ages, meaning it would not be uncommon for a young person to interact with someone older.



### Minecraft

7

An adventure game which allows players to explore and create worlds using building blocks to customise their worlds. Children and young people may experience addiction to the game due to its engaging nature.



### Roblox

7

An online gaming and game creation platform. Users can play and create games for others to play. It also includes social features such as friend requests and chats where players can design an avatar and speak to others while they play. Roblox has previously faced criticism following harmful sexualised content being prevalent on the platform.



### Among Us

7

An online multiplayer game which revolves around players attempting to figure out who is a friend and who is an enemy. Crewmates try to complete tasks while the imposter aims to sabotage the mission and kill them without being found out. Risk of talking to strangers through the chat feature however there is a chat-censor feature which can be turned on to prevent this.



### Poppy Playtime

12

A horror game that involves an investigation of a mystery in an abandoned toy factory. You solve puzzles to survive the "vengeful toys" left behind including "Huggy Wuggy". Horror games containing frightening content can cause added anxiety and stress to young people, intrusive thoughts and new fears.



### Fortnite

12

An online multiplayer "shooter style" game meaning players battle it out against opponents with multiple weapon styles. It allows players to create and personalise their own game components. Persuasive design features of the game can keep children hooked, encouraging them to spend in-game currency and add to their screen time.



### Overwatch

12

A team-based game starring a cast of powerful heroes. Players can travel the world and build teams together. Overwatch has been included in eSports competitions and has scenes of blood, tobacco use and violence.



### League of Legends

12

A team-based strategy game where two teams of five champions face off to destroy the other's base. Children may be exposed to bad language, hate speech, insults, and sexual language.



### Apex Legends

16

A free-to-play shooter type game with the objective of being the last team standing by collecting loot and fighting enemy squads. It includes some violence and players may talk to others through voice and text chat.



### Elden Ring

16

An action role-playing game in a world of different characters. You can explore the world, grow in strength and fight or ally those you meet. It features strong violence involving both human and fantasy characters, which can be deemed age-inappropriate for younger players.



### Grand Theft Auto

18

An action-adventure game in which players complete missions to progress through the story. Children will be subjected to profanity, violence, sex, crime and other mature themes.



### Call of Duty

18

A series of first person shooter games including 'Modern Warfare', 'Black Ops', 'Vanguard' and 'Warzone'. Involves live user interaction – squads can be made up of friends or players from all over the world.



### Horizon Worlds

18+

A virtual social space which consists of a catalogue of virtual experiences through the Metaverse. There have been several reported incidents of users experiencing sexual harassment while using the platform.



### Avakin Life

18+

A virtual 3D gaming world where users create their own character by choosing outfits and interacting with others at different in-game locations. Users can easily access children and young people online via private and public chats.

Cheshire West and Chester Domestic Abuse Services  
Public Contact Details:

**women's aid**  
until women & children are safe

Phone: 0151 356 4686 (Refuge referrals: 24 Hours)

Phone: 0151 348 8102 (Dispersed refuge referrals: Mon-Fri 9am-5pm)

Email: [whag@whag.info](mailto:whag@whag.info)

Phone: 01244 374 020 (Community outreach and complex needs referrals: Mon-Fri 9am-5pm)

**Service Users: Women, men and children experiencing domestic abuse**

Cheshire West and Chester Housing support

Emergency out of hours

If you are homeless out of normal office hours you can ring the West Cheshire Homes out of hours number. This number is not for general housing advice but for people who are in need of accommodation that night.

Telephone: 0300 123 8123

Homeless or at risk

The council can help you if you are homeless or if you are worried about becoming homeless.

Advice if you are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless

If you are homeless or threatened with homelessness and you need assistance from us, you should contact our Housing Options team as early as possible if you are homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days.

<https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/housing/housing-advice-and-homelessness/housing-advice-and-homelessness>

Food banks - Ellesmere Port



As a nation, we know it isn't right that anyone should be left hungry or living in extreme poverty. But whilst we work for long-term change, our network of food banks provides emergency food and compassionate, dignified support to people locked in crisis.

Trinity Centre, Whitby Road, (opposite Port Arcades), Ellesmere Port - Monday & Thursday 10-12

Salvation Army, Whitby Road, Ellesmere Port—Tuesday & Friday 10-12

Westminster Community Centre, Church Parade, Ellesmere Port - Wednesday 10-12

Sutton Villages, St Saviours Parish Centre, Tarporley Road, Gt Sutton - Friday 4-6

Little Sutton Hub, The Royal British Legion, Chester Road, Little Sutton - Tuesday 10-12



**PAPYRUS**  
PREVENTION OF YOUNG SUICIDE

**0800 068 41 41**

HOPELINEUK - Our suicide prevention helpline, HOPELINEUK, is a free, confidential, non-judgemental space to talk openly about your

thoughts of suicide with our trained advisors. We work with young people, concerned others and professionals via phone, text, email and web-chat, everyday.

Help & Advice - From coping strategies to conversation starters, distraction techniques and dealing with anxiety, we have a broad range of help and resources for you to download.

[www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org)