

Dear Parents and Carers,

This will be the final safeguarding newsletter for this academic year. The last four months have been challenging for us all in many different ways. We are offering advice around issues that many families have told us they require support with. You will find a list of services that are accessible to you during the summer break on the website. We have also posted this on our Facebook page.

### **E-Safety**

During the COVID-19 crisis online activity and remote communication has increased significantly, bringing huge benefits but also, sadly, more opportunities for fraud, radicalisation and other dangers for vulnerable users, including children.



- Young People  
Our children are spending a lot more time online during the lockdown, a parent's guide attached that talks about keeping them safe from bad influences online, and there is more information available at <https://www.ltai.info/staying-safe-online>
- Parental Toolkit  
The Childnet site continues to be a goldmine of excellent practical resources for families as they live their life online: <https://www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers/parent-and-carer-toolkit>
- Government guidelines  
Government guidance changes very regularly so here is the most up to date guidance and links: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-keeping-children-safe-online/coronavirus-covid-19-support-for-parents-and-carers-to-keep-children-safe-online>
- Spam and Fraud  
There has been an increase in spam and fraudulent emails in the UK, many of which are using the pandemic to scam individuals and businesses. The National Cyber Security Centre has lots of advice available in one website to help protect businesses and families to keep themselves secure online. [www.ncsc.gov.uk](http://www.ncsc.gov.uk)

**Internet use during the night is a key concern – please do not allow your children to take their devices to bed with them.**

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## **Wellbeing Advice**

During the lockdown, we know that sleep disorders amongst young people have risen dramatically, with many completely losing their sleep routine. Sleep is critical to physical health and effective functioning of the immune system. It's also a key promoter of emotional wellness and mental health. The Sleep Foundation suggests some simple steps to help rebuild your sleep cycle:

**Wake-Up Time:** Set your alarm and have a fixed time to get every day started

**Wind-Down Time:** This is an important time to relax and get ready for bed. It can involve things like light reading, stretching, and meditating along with preparations for bed like brushing your teeth

**Bedtime:** Pick a consistent time to turn out the lights and try to fall asleep

**Stay Active:** Regular daily activity has numerous important benefits, including for sleep



**Watch What You Eat and Drink:** keeping a healthy diet can promote good sleep.

## **It's good to talk**

The pressure on family relationships has really been put to the test during lockdown. The only way we can navigate through as a unit is by talking; speaking and actively listening. People in your home will all have good days and bad days, and taking time to check in, be truly present and acknowledge how we are all feeling can really help release the pressure.

The conversation is not looking to fix anything, as much of what is creating the anxiety raised through lockdown, is out of our control. It's just there as a valve to release the tension built up in these unusual times. Using something as simple as "I'm struggling today" can allow people to quickly understand, it's not anything to worry about, just something to acknowledge, feel and then move through as our coping strategies kick in. Leaning into our discomfort, rather than shrinking back from it, is the quickest way of wading through it and coming out a little more resilient the other side.



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### **Children at home alone**

As the country tries to return to some sort of normal you may be required to go back to work. We understand this will be difficult as your children are not in school. We urge you to think carefully about leaving your children at home on their own and discuss this with your employer.

There is no legal minimum age at which children can be left on their own, but parents and carers can be prosecuted for cruelty if they are put at risk of suffering or injury. Consider the following

Would your child be able to cope if something unexpected or scary happened? To help you decide whether or not to leave your child on their own for the first time this summer, follow our tips.

- Babies, toddlers and very young children should never be left alone.
- Children under the age of 12 are rarely mature enough to cope in an emergency and should not be left at home alone for a long period of time.
- Children under the age of 16 should not be left alone overnight.
- Parents and carers can be prosecuted for neglect if it is judged that they placed a child at risk by leaving them at home alone.
- A child should never be left at home alone if they do not feel comfortable with it, regardless of their age.
- If a child has additional needs, these should be considered when leaving them at home alone or with an older sibling.
- When leaving a younger child with an older sibling think about what may happen if they were to have a falling out - would they both be safe?

If you have any safeguarding concerns during the summer please email them to

[SecureDSL@oasisshortheath.org](mailto:SecureDSL@oasisshortheath.org). This email will be checked on an ad hoc basis so please call 999 if it is an emergency.

We hope you have a peaceful and restful summer break and look forward to welcoming all children and families back in Sep 2020.

Stay Safe – The safeguarding Team

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