

SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER



SUMMER 2021 – Issue 9

Latest advice for Parents and Carers



Welcome to the third of our summer term Newsletters from the Rooks Heath Safeguarding Team. We aim to bring you all the latest, relevant help and advice on issues that we feel will be of importance to you.

We hope that you had a lovely half term break. As we enter the final half term of this academic year, this edition highlights the current risks/potential threats, both locally and nationwide. Trends in Edibles (cannabis infused sweets), concerns with County Lines activity and the dangers of Scams via mobile phones/emails have increased recently. Listed below are practical steps that you can take as parents/carers, to ensure that you are equipped with the knowledge to help prevent, but also to assist you, should the need arise.

EDIBLES – IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Recently, there have been concerns locally about the use of edibles by a small number of young people, which has resulted in some requiring medical assistance.

What are edibles? Edibles are food products that may contain cannabis. There are many forms of edibles, including sweets, gummies, and lollipops. They usually contain – or are marketed as containing - several chemicals, many of which are harmful and controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act (1971) including tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). THC is the psychoactive compound in cannabis and can make people feel a range of effects, while cannabidiol (CBD) is the non-psychoactive chemical compound which does not have the same effect. Any CBD product containing THC is illegal in the UK. The sweet versions are widely available on the internet and via social media and may be easily accessed by young people. The packaging is often deliberately targeted to attract young people. There is NO quality control of these products.

What are the worries? The amount of cannabis in these products can vary greatly and sometimes other harmful drugs are added too. The effects of consuming edibles are unpredictable, and it can be very easy to accidentally take a larger dose. Edibles take between 1-3 hours to have an effect because food is absorbed into the bloodstream through the liver. Because it takes longer, the person taking them may end up consuming larger amounts of the drug while thinking the drug is not working. As edibles may look like other products, there is also the risk someone may ingest them without realising they contain drugs - this could include other children in the home.

Displayed side effects may include paranoia, panic attacks, nausea, impaired mobility, hyperactivity, elevated heart rate, hallucinations.

What can you do? Monitoring food packaging/wrappers, looking for wording such as CBD or THC suggesting the items are cannabis oil infused. *In an immediate medical emergency call 999.*

If you are made aware of any social media accounts advertising these items, please report information to the police, school, or [Crime Stoppers](#)



County Lines - Explained

What is County Lines?

County lines are a form of criminal exploitation where urban gangs persuade, coerce or force children and young people to store drugs and money and/or transport them to suburban areas, market towns and coastal towns (Home Office, 2018). It can happen in any part of the UK, it is against the law as well as being a form of child abuse.

Children and young people may be criminally exploited in multiple ways. Other forms of criminal exploitation include child sexual exploitation, trafficking, gang, and knife crime.

County lines gangs are highly organised criminal networks that use sophisticated, frequently evolving techniques to groom young people and evade capture by the police. Perpetrators use children and young people to maximise profits and distance themselves from the criminal act of physically dealing drugs (National Crime Agency, 2019).

Young people do most of the work and take the most risk. Dedicated mobile phone lines or 'deal lines' are used to help facilitate county lines drug deals. Phones are usually cheap, disposable, and old-fashioned because they are changed frequently to avoid detection by the police. Gangs use the phones to receive orders and contact young people to instruct them where to deliver drugs. This may be to a local dealer or drug user or a dealer or drug user in another county.

County lines

We need your help to stop it

#KnowTheSigns
#CountyLines



Possible indicators to be aware of

- Frequently going missing from school, home, or care
 - Travelling to locations, being found in areas with no obvious connections
 - Unwillingness to explain their whereabouts
 - Acquiring unaccountable money, clothes, accessories, or mobile phones
 - Receiving excessive texts or phone calls at all hours of the day
 - Having multiple mobile phone handsets or sim cards
 - Withdrawing or having sudden changes in personality, behaviour
 - Having relationships with controlling or older individuals and groups
 - Unexplained injuries, carrying weapons
 - Significant decline in school results or performance
 - Being isolated from peers or social networks
 - Associating with or being interested in gang culture
 - Self-harming or having significant changes in mental health
- (Ministry of Justice, 2019)*

For help and further information on County Lines please click links below for essential parental guidance/advice.

[Parent information leaflet - County Lines](#)

[Childrenssociety.org.uk/Guide for parents](https://childrenssociety.org.uk/Guide%20for%20parents)

If you have immediate concerns about your child or a young person's safety, call the police on 999

Mobile phone and online scams

A worrying trend in recent months has been a text-message scam that infects Android phones and one which is spreading across the UK. The message pretends to be from a package delivery firm such as the Royal Mail, Hermes, DHL, HMRC etc and prompts users to click on a link and install a tracking app, but it is, in fact, malicious spyware. The spyware is called Flubot, it can take over devices and spy on phones to gather sensitive data, including online banking details. The National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) has issued guidance about the threat, including advice on what to do if you have already downloaded the attacker's application by mistake. nsc.gov.uk/flubot-guidance



For more information on these latest potential threats:

[See the Get Safe Online website here, with lots of information about how to keep yourself safe.](#)



Be Fearless.

Speak up against the gangs bringing drugs into your community.

Get info/give info about crime
100% anonymously
fearless.org

-  fearlessagainstcrime
-  fearlessorg
-  fearlessuk

Crimestoppers Trust (also known under youth brand 'Fearless') is a Scottish charity, SC027960, regulated by the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR).

fearless
.org

NSPCC

**Dedicated Helpline
0800 136 663**

This new dedicated helpline provides support to both children and adults who have experienced sexual abuse in educational settings or has concerns about someone or the issues raised. Support and advice include how to contact the police and report crimes if they wish.

The helpline will also provide support to parents too. More information is available at

[Dedicated helpline for victims of abuse in schools](#)
[NSPCC](#)

stop it now! UK & Ireland
Together we can prevent child sexual abuse

[Stop It Now! UK and Ireland](#) 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 – **0808 1000 900** or live chat, secure email if you are not ready to speak to someone on the phone.

Click the following links:
[Live chat - Stop It Now](#)
[Stop It Now! Secure email](#)

Parents/Carers Learning Programme

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 ware of inappropriate behaviour in adults
- Know where to go for help if you have concerns and would like to talk about them

Click here: [Sexual Abuse Learning Programme - Parents Protect](#)

Parents Protect

Together we can prevent
child sexual abuse

On-Line Grooming



IWF safety campaign aims to help parents have conversations with their children about keeping their 'door' closed to child sexual abusers. The campaign includes a booklet for parents, explaining the risks, explaining why children are vulnerable, and suggests practical steps that parents can take.

TALK to your child about online sexual abuse. Start the conversation – and listen to their concerns.

AGREE ground rules about the way you use technology.

LEARN about the platforms and apps your child loves.

KNOW how to use tools, apps and settings that can help to keep your child safe online.



For further details go to: <https://talk.iwf.org.uk/>

USEFUL ON-LINE SAFETY WEBSITES

National Online Safety – safety guides on ALL aspects of internet use

<https://nationalonlinesafety.com/>

Internet Matters – wide range of online safety advice for parents to keep their children safe on-line.

<https://www.internetmatters.org/>

EAL RESOURCES FOR ONLINE SAFETY

Please see below for useful websites to support your children, together with a link for leaflets in other languages that will assist you in keeping your children safe on-line.

Parents: Supporting Young People Online (Childnet)

<https://www.childnet.com/ufiles/Supporting-Young-People-Online.pdf>

Leaflets available in other languages here

<https://www.childnet.com/resources/supporting-young-people-online>

- Arabic
- Bengali
- English
- Farsi
- French
- Hindi
- Polish
- Punjabi
- Somali
- Spanish
- Turkish
- Urdu
- Vietnamese
- Welsh

PARENTAL SUPPORT

YOUNG MINDS

During these extremely tough times, parents find themselves pulled in many different directions. Concerns about COVID-19, work from home/children at home, along with a possible financial impact make for a stressful household. **Young Minds** have created a useful 'Supporting Parents Help Finder'. By answering six questions, parents can find out how to support their child's mental health during the pandemic (and beyond). Find the help finder here:

<https://youngminds.org.uk/supporting-parents/>

HelpHarrow

Help Harrow Digital Product

Help Harrow is being delivered in partnership with Harrow Council. It is a self-referral system for all ages, targeting acute needs in specific social areas in Harrow.

Help Harrow Key Points:

- A portal as a way of connecting vulnerable residents to vital services in the borough during and throughout the current pandemic.
- Currently offers support for food poverty, advice/information in all areas of life, as well as mental health and emotional wellbeing support.
- A 'Single Point of Contact' referral system.
- Referrals can be made directly by the person in need or via an Access Point.

Key Benefits to HelpHarrow.org Users:

- A virtual One stop shop" to organisations and services in the Harrow.
- A choice of relevant organisations listed to support the user's needs.
- Process to start engagement with a person in need within 2 working days of referral received.
- Key organisations in the system including but not limited to Citizen Advice Bureau, MIND, Age Concern and Harrow Carers.

Who is Help Harrow for?

- Local Harrow residents for self-referral
- Households affected by Covid-19
- All ages
- Organisations

Please click on link for more details

<https://helpharrow.org/>

SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER

Parents, are you worried about: Your child's behaviour, finances and putting food on the table, employment, housing, your own mental health or relationship difficulties and want to talk about these?

Students, are you worried about: Your mental health, food, arguments or fights at home, covid-19, or do you have worries about your brother or sister or friend?

I will be holding drop-ins over the Telephone on the days and times listed below:

Mondays 2-4pm

Thursdays 10am-12noon



Please email: Evangeline.phillips@harrow.gov.uk to arrange a call back. If these times don't work for you, we can find another time. Look out for my presentation in virtual assemblies soon!



HELPING LOCAL PEOPLE IN CRISIS

Do you need help from the foodbank?
**THE MOST IMPORTANT STEP IS TO GET A
FOODBANK VOUCHER.**

To provide the most appropriate help for your circumstances, Harrow foodbank works with local agencies. If they feel you are struggling to put food on the table, they will issue you with a foodbank voucher. The local agency can also provide long term support if needed to help address some of the issues behind the reasons for your crisis.

Agencies that they work closely with include: Citizens Advice, housing support officers, children's centres, health visitors, social services, and some local charities.

To Get In Touch

If you [call or email](#) the foodbank they can talk through your situation and put you in touch with the relevant local agency.

[Harrow Foodbank | Helping Local People in Crisis](#)

LEARN HARROW

If you are struggling with Home Learning and supporting your children during this current Lockdown, Learn Harrow, promoted by Harrow Council, provides a wide choice of learning opportunities for all ages and abilities across the borough in partnership with various providers.

They have created a google form for parents to tell them what they are interested in:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1pfXbm0GNJh1Xq3bQqjs8oSfBo3z3v23gZdfVSPk8whg/edit>

They are running various different courses for secondary school parents to attend such as:

- How to use learning platforms such as Google, Zoom and Teams
- Awareness of teenage mental health and how to approach this with your own child
- How to monitor children on the internet
- How to motivate their children to do work
- ESOL
- Functional Skills Maths/English/ICT



*Online Counselling Service
for 11-25 year olds in Harrow*

As part of Mental Health services for young people in Harrow, the service complements their existing early intervention, Harrow Horizons.

It is a free online counselling and emotional well-being support service providing young people in Harrow, aged 11-25 years (up to 25th birthday), with a free, safe and secure means of accessing support with their emotional health and wellbeing from a professional team of qualified counsellors.

SAFEGUARDING TEAM

The Rooks Heath College Safeguarding Team have been trained to an advanced level on all aspects of safeguarding. The team is available to any student, parent or school staff member to discuss and report any safeguarding concerns.

The team Members are as follows:

Designated Safeguarding Lead -

Ms S Rockell

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads –

Ms V Cobblah-West, Miss L Dale and Mrs L Geoghegan

School Social Worker

Ms Evie Philips

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.

**Useful contacts to report a concern
If you are worried and need help, then please
contact one of the following:**

For children click here



Online here



Harrow Children's Services [click here](#)

020 8901 2690

Share the HOPE
Save a life

HOPELINEUK
0800 068 41 41 07860 039 967 pat@papyrus-uk.org

EMERGENCY
APPEAL

