

Our Well-Being Newsletter

Newsletter for pupils, parents & staff
Issue 10 – November 2021

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Welcome to our November Well-Being Newsletter!

November is the last month of autumn and gives us a taste of the cold days ahead. Although we may feel more inclined to stay at home at the week-end rather than facing the short cooler days, it is still a great time to enjoy the beauty of the autumn season with the possibility of awakening the child in us, feeling and kicking the fallen leaves under our feet. The main theme for this month's newsletter is social media and how young people (and ourselves) can use it in a more positive way. We as adults, often reprimand our young people for spending most of their time on social media, forgetting that we usually do too. The truth is that we are all dependent on our phones and our tablets nowadays. Being able to discern what is beneficial and what is not on social media, is not always easy for young people. They are bombarded with images and opinions that are not always positive or safe for their mental health.

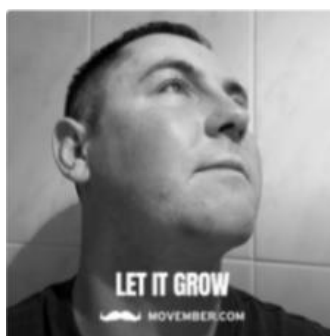


To Mr Tom Parker (Head of Year 8/PE Teacher) for completing the Movember challenge!



Before

After



There is still time to donate on the following link:
<https://movember.com/m/tparker1?mc=1>

By supporting Mr Parker you are making a difference in men's mental health and suicide prevention, prostate cancer and testicular cancer.

The positive and the negative aspects of social media

Social media provides amazing opportunities to share memories and events, promoting our personal or business ideas and to keep in touch with our loved ones. However, it has evolved into something very big and potentially harmful, more so for young people. For instance, the overrepresentation of attractive people leading idealized lives can invite social comparison, personal dissatisfaction, and potentially trigger severe mental health issues, e.g. depression, anxiety, body image issues, etc.

Rather than building stronger social connections, social media can actually diminish a person's capacity for empathy and social skills (research has established that our brain has difficulty processing the constant stimulation of online socializing which excludes verbal and facial clues).

The algorithms enable social media companies to learn our behavioural patterns. Based on that information, they will automatically generate posts and articles that trigger emotional responses, often negative.

Support for Parents/Guardians:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>



Free parenting helpline:
0808 802 5544

How to guide our young people to use social media in a positive way

Social media can be a positive tool. For instance, it helps young people with staying connected with friends and families, meeting and interacting with others who share similar interests, learning or sharing skills, etc.

However, young people don't always make good choices when they post contents online, and this can lead to problems.

Most teens:

- post photos of themselves online or use their real names on their profiles,
- reveal their birth dates and interests,
- post their school name and the town where they live.

This can make them easy targets for online predators and others who might mean them harm.

Seeing how many "friends" others have and the pictures of them having fun or looking a certain way, can make young people feel bad about themselves or feel like they don't measure up to their peers, leading to severe emotional difficulties.

The key for parents/guardians is to stay involved in a way that makes our children understand that you respect their privacy but want to make sure they are safe.

Tell your child that it is important to:

Be nice. Mean behaviour is not OK. Make sure you ask your child to always tell you about any harassing or bullying messages that others post.

Think twice before hitting "enter." Remind your child that what they post can be used against them. For example, letting the world know that you're off on vacation or posting your home address gives would-be robbers a chance to strike. Teens also should avoid posting specific locations of parties or events, as well as phone numbers.

Teach your child not to share anything on social media that they wouldn't want their teachers, college admissions officers, future bosses to see.

Use privacy settings. Privacy settings are important. Also, explain to your child that passwords are there to protect them against things like identity theft. They should never share them with anyone, even their closest friend.

Don't "friend" strangers. "If you don't know them, don't friend them." This is a plain, simple — and safe.

Set some rules on the use of technology (such as no device at the dinner table or when it is time to sleep).

And don't forget that setting a good example through our own virtual behaviour can go a long way toward helping our children use social media safely.



More organisations which offer support in time of crisis:



Bearevment support for children
<https://rainbowsgb.org/>



Qwell: a free online counselling
For over 25s



<https://www.cruse.org.uk/>



Chaplain's Corner



Help me, o God, to be a good and true friend.

To be always loyal and never to let my friends down.

Never to talk about them behind their backs in a way which I would not do before their faces.

Never to betray a confidence or talk about the things about which I ought to be silent.

Always to be ready to share everything I have.

To be as true to my friends as I would wish them to be me.

This I ask for the sake of You who are the greatest and the truest of all friends.

For your love's sake.

Amen

