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Safeguarding Parent Newsletter - 31 March 2023
Latest advice and guidance for parents and carers

Great Wyrley Academy Safeguarding Team

The Great Wyrley Academy Safeguarding Team has 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.

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Mr D Fielder

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads: Mrs M McCarthy, Mrs J Foyle, Mr J McFarlane, Mrs S Herrington, Mr J Studholme

Overview

Welcome to our latest edition of the Newsletter from the Great Wyrley Academy Safeguarding Team. Our aim is to bring you all the latest, relevant help and advice on issues that we feel will be of importance to you.

At Great Wyrley Academy, both staff and students are trained and educated in many areas of safeguarding. Staff are informed of the signs and symptoms to look for and be aware of, that could be an indication that there is a concern and how to report concerns. Students are given appropriate information into safeguarding topics and given strategies on how to stay safe.

This issue will cover:

Keeping Your Child Safe On Snapchat

What is Snapchat?

Snapchat is an app for sending photos and videos (known as 'Snaps'), and text messages. The 'Stories' feature lets users share photos or videos with all their contacts at once.

Snaps disappear after being opened, usually within seconds. Stories disappear after 24 hours. Images and messages aren't automatically saved on phones.

The **minimum age** to use Snapchat is **13**, but it's easy to sign up if you're younger.

What's the problem

>There's a risk of seeing sexual content, and of bullying

>Your child's location could be shared automatically with their contacts, which could put them in danger if they have strangers as 'friends' on the app. A new 'Meet Up' feature allows people to get directions to another user's location, if they're sharing their location

>There's a risk of children being 'groomed' by strangers into sharing pictures and information about themselves. Gangs also use apps to groom and recruit children

4 steps to help your child use Snapchat Safely

1. Tell your child to only use it with real friends

Anyone could pretend to be a child or teenager online, so encourage your child not to talk to people they don't know in real life. Encourage them not to share information such as what school they go to or where they live with people they don't know offline.

2. Use privacy settings

By default, only 'friends' your child has added on Snapchat can contact them directly and see their story or location, so encourage your child to keep those default settings.

To check and change the settings:

Tap the person icon in the top-left of Snapchat, then the cog in the top-right

Scroll down to the 'Privacy Control' section and tap the relevant options (e.g. 'Contact Me' and 'View My Story')

Under 'See My Location', enable 'Ghost Map' to turn location sharing off

Under 'See Me In Quick Add' you can stop your child's profile from being suggested to strangers as a potential 'friend'

3. Talk to your child about image sharing and being careful about what they share

Even though images disappear in Snapchat, they can be screenshotted and then shared – outside of the original sender's control.

So, remind your child to think carefully about the images they share, and with whom. Before they share anything, tell them to ask: "Would I be happy for other people to see this?"

In particular, make sure your child knows the risks of **taking, sharing or viewing naked or sexually explicit pictures of themselves or another child, either voluntarily or if asked to by someone else**.

This is known as 'sharing nudes and semi-nudes' or 'sexting' and is illegal, even when the person doing it is a child. It can also be distressing for a child to have their image shared more widely, or to see an inappropriate image that someone else has shared.

4. Make sure your child knows how to use reporting and blocking functions

To **report** a Snap or Story, press and hold on it, tap 'Report Snap', then explain the problem

To **remove** or **block** a friend, swipe to the right to go to the 'Chat' screen, then tap and hold on the person's name. Tap 'Manage Friendship', then choose 'Remove Friend' or 'Block'

What can I do about online bullying?

Encourage your child to talk to you if someone says something upsetting or hurtful to them

Look for signs they may be being bullied, like being afraid or reluctant to go to school, feeling nervous, losing confidence or becoming distressed and withdrawn, or losing sleep

Tell our school about any bullying your child experiences

There are also a few ways you can save images and messages as evidence:

Use another device to, quickly, take a photo of the image or message (this is the only way you can save the image without other people knowing)

Tap on the message, quickly, to save it (other people will know, from the grey background)

Take a screenshot, quickly (the person who shared it will get a notification)

Change your 'delete' settings to save messages for 24 hours – swipe to the right to go to the 'Chats' screen, tap and hold a friend's name, then 'Chat Settings' > 'Delete Chats…' > '24 Hours after Viewing'