

RIVERMEAD INCLUSIVE TRUST

PARENTS AND CARERS SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2022



inspiring the journey for
independence together

Welcome from the Team

The Rivermead Inclusive Trust Team are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in our community.

We believe it is important that everybody understands their safeguarding responsibilities and want you to stay up to date with recent changes and learn about how we take care of your children, because they are important to use too.

We are committed to working with pupils, parents, carers and community partners to support them with the ever-increasing range of new and unique challenges that we all face in today's world.



We will be sending out a newsletter which will focus of different areas of safeguarding each term to keep you up to date with current safeguarding issues both locally and nationally.

Please contact your school DSL if you are worried about something or would like more information.

MEET THE SCHOOL SAFEGUARDING TEAMS 22-23

Each Trust school has a dedicated team of Designated Safeguarding Leads and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Teams who can help families, children and young people to access support and specialist services. Please contact them via the school office if you have any worries, concerns around safeguarding or ideas to improve safety within the school and community.



Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, every day.

What is Safeguarding:

Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

Safeguarding means:

- protecting children from abuse and maltreatment
- preventing harm to children's health or development
- ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care
- acting to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes.

What is Child Protection:

Child protection is part of the safeguarding process.

Child Protection means:

Focusing on protecting individual children identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. This includes child protection procedures which detail how to respond to concerns about a child.

Worried about a child or young person?



Information, help, support and advice if you are worried about a child in Medway.

If you have concerns that a child or young person living in Medway is suffering from harm please phone **01634 334 466** or the 24-hour emergency number **03000 419 191**

Medway Children's Safeguarding Partnership <https://www.medwayscp.org.uk/mscb/>

If you have concerns about a child you can also phone:

NSPCC on **0808 800 5000**

Child Line on **0800 1111**



SAFEGUARDING IN THE NEWS



Who is Andrew Tate?



It is not difficult to imagine harmful or abusive behaviours being present on social media. What can be challenging to deal with is the presence of popular online personalities or influencers who become well-known and even famous for exhibiting this behaviour over online platforms. This is especially concerning when children and young people begin to view this harmful content online.

Online safety experts have recently received reports of children as young as 11 quoting online personality Andrew Tate at school, even resulting in acts of violence towards females.

Andrew Tate is an American-British former professional kickboxer turned internet personality. He is a self-described 'success coach' and has a subscription-based online marketing programme called 'Hustler's University' with over 100,000 subscribers. Tate has recently seen a rise in online notoriety due to a string of controversial comments and behaviours, such as:

- Saying that rape victims put themselves "in a position to be raped" and "must bear some responsibility", claiming most do this for advancement in 'opportunity'.
- Leaving the country amid rape allegations, suggesting it was 'easier to evade charges' and that it was 'probably 40% of the reason' he moved to Romania.
- Claiming mental illness makes people 'weak' and that depression 'isn't real'.
- Promoting gendered violence and misogyny on his podcast and posts about relationships (e.g. "It's bang out the machete, boom in her face, and grip her by the neck...").

These behaviours and more have led to his accounts being removed from social media platforms like TikTok, Facebook, and Instagram for violating policies on "dangerous organisations and individuals." This followed a successful campaign by UK-based advocacy group **Hope Not Hate** to remove him from all major platforms.

Bonfire Night



Stay safe this bonfire night with our tips and advice including bonfire guidance and the firework code.

FIREWORK CODE

Only adults should deal with setting up firework displays, the lighting of fireworks and the safe disposal of fireworks once they have been used (and remember, alcohol and fireworks don't mix!).

Children and young people should be supervised, and watch and enjoy fireworks at a safe distance. Follow these top 10 tips for a safer fireworks party:

1. Plan your firework display to make it safe and enjoyable, and ensure it finishes before 11pm
2. Only buy fireworks which carry the CE mark, keep them in a closed box and use them one at a time
3. Read and follow the instructions on each firework using a torch if necessary
4. Light the firework at arm's length with a taper and stand well back
5. Keep naked flames, including cigarettes, away from fireworks
6. Never return to a firework once it has been lit
7. Don't put fireworks in pockets and never throw them
8. Direct any rocket fireworks well away from spectators
9. Never use paraffin or petrol on a bonfire
10. Make sure that the fire is out and surroundings are made safe before leaving.

SPARKLER SAFETY

Sparklers are often viewed as being harmless but they burn at fierce temperatures, equivalent to a welding torch. Follow these top tips for sparkler safety:

1. It is recommended that sparklers are not given to under-5s
2. Make sure everyone handling sparklers wears gloves
3. Hold sparklers at arm's length while being lit and light them one at a time
4. Don't wave sparklers about close to other people
5. Never hold a baby in your arms while you are holding a sparkler
6. When the sparkler has finished put it in a bucket of cold water.

BONFIRE SAFETY

Follow these safety tips for ensuring bonfires do not get out of control:

1. One person should be responsible for the bonfire and children should be supervised
2. Choose a site away from wooden fences, sheds and where children will be playing
3. Never pour petrol, paraffin on to a fire - it's safer to use fire lighters to prevent flare-ups
4. Keep a bucket of water handy in case of an accident
5. Avoid loose clothing and tie back long hair
6. After the party, pour water on the fire, rather than leaving it to burn out.

Vaping



What's the Bottom Line on the Risks of E-cigarettes for Children, Teens, and Young Adults?

Vaping has become popular among children in the past few years. There are restrictions on the sale and advertising of e-cigarettes to young people, but many children still use them.

When children vape, what they're doing is inhaling steam that comes from hot nicotine liquid. Research shows that vaping has many medical risks.

E-cigarettes contain a lot of nicotine, which is very addictive. Getting addicted to nicotine can make it harder for teenagers to focus and concentrate. E-cigarettes also contain chemicals that could cause cancer, and there are many reports of serious lung problems connected to vaping. Additionally, vaping can make children more likely to start smoking regular cigarettes.

Unlike regular cigarettes, e-cigarettes don't have a strong smell, so it's much easier for kids to use them in secret. The kid-friendly packaging and flavours make vaping look fun, so even kids who wouldn't try cigarettes may be tempted. Children often think that vaping isn't dangerous, and it's easy for underage children to buy vaping devices online.

If you're worried your child might be vaping, start with a general conversation. Try asking if other kids at their school vape, and what they think about it. By finding out what they already know, you can start helping them understand the risks. This usually works better than just telling them that vaping is wrong. If your child is addicted to vaping, make sure to get care from an addiction specialist. Addiction to nicotine from vaping can be even more serious than addiction to regular cigarettes.

- E-cigarettes can contain other harmful substances besides nicotine.
- Young people who use e-cigarettes may be more likely to smoke cigarettes in the future.
- E-cigarettes are known by many different names. They are sometimes called "e-cigs," "e-hookahs," "mods," "vape pens," "vapes," "tank systems," and "electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS)."
- Using an e-cigarette is sometimes called "vaping."
- Nicotine is highly addictive and can harm adolescent brain development, which continues into the early to mid-20s.

Children's Mental Health

Knowing how to talk to your child about their mental health, or recognising the signs that they might be struggling, can be really hard. Signs of depression or anxiety in children can sometimes look like normal behaviour, particularly in teenagers who can keep their feelings to themselves.

It's also natural for children or young people to feel stressed or anxious about things like exams or moving to a new school. But while these experiences can be very difficult, they're different from longer term depression or anxiety, which affect how a child or young person feels every day.

It can help to think about what's normal for your child and if you've noticed signs that they've been behaving differently recently.

Signs of anxiety in children and teenagers can include:

- becoming socially withdrawn and avoiding spending times with friends or family
- feeling nervous or 'on edge' a lot of the time
- suffering panic attacks
- feeling tearful, upset or angry
- trouble sleeping and changes in eating habits.

Signs of depression in children and teenagers can include:

- persistent low-mood or lack of motivation
- not enjoying things, they used to like doing
- becoming withdrawn and spending less time with friends and family
- experiencing low self-esteem or feeling like they are 'worthless'
- feeling tearful or upset regularly
- changes in eating or sleeping habits.

Ways to help a child who's struggling include:

- letting them know you're there for them and are on their side
- try talking to them over text or on the phone if they don't feel able to talk in person
- being patient and staying calm and approachable, even if their behaviour upsets you
- recognising that their feelings are valid and letting them know it's okay for them to be honest about what it's like for them to feel this way
- thinking of healthy ways to cope you could do together, like yoga, breathing exercises OR mindfulness
- encouraging them to talk to their GP, someone at their school or Childline. Especially if they're finding it hard to talk at home.
- take care of yourself and get support if you need to. Try not to blame yourself for what's happening and to stay hopeful about your child's recovery.

Cost of Living Crisis

Managing finances and household bills can be challenging, and unexpected costs can increase that burden. The cost of living crisis is affecting us all due to rising fuel, energy and food costs, but help is available.

Free School Meal Vouchers

If your child is eligible for Free School Meals, Medway Council will be issuing vouchers to families across Medway in the October half term. If you have not had any information from your school, please get in touch with the team.

Food Banks

[Food support in Medway | Medway Council](#)

In addition to the free school meal Vouchers, Medway work with many charities who can offer support.

[You do not need to be eligible for free school meals to seek support from the food banks.](#)

Is Your Home Ready for Winter?

[Sustainable Warmth scheme | Medway Council](#)

Southern Water

[What if I can't pay my bill? \(southernwater.co.uk\)](#)

Household Support Fund - Medway Council

[About the Household Support Fund | Household Support Fund | Medway Council](#)

Family Fund

[Family Fund](#)

Council Tax Reduction Scheme

[Exceptional Hardship Fund | Council Tax Reduction scheme | Medway Council](#)

Reporting to CEOP

You can report concerns about grooming and sexual abuse directly to CEOP. Remember, you know your child better than anyone. If you feel something isn't right, get in touch.

Contact the NSPCC helpline

If you're worried about a child, even if you're unsure, contact our professional counsellors for help, advice and support.

Call us or email help@nspcc.org.uk

0808 800 5000

Find out more

[Reporting to CEOP \(thinkuknow.co.uk\)](https://thinkuknow.co.uk)
[NSPCC](https://www.nspcc.org.uk)

[How to Help Children Suffering From Depression & Anxiety |](#)

FRANK Drugs A-Z News ▾ Help and advice Contact

Help and advice

- What to do in an emergency
- 10 ways to deal with peer pressure
- Concerned about a friend?
- Concerned about a child?
- What is drug treatment like?
- Find a support centre

YOUNG MINDS
 fighting for young people's mental health

What do you need help with?

- My child's feelings and behaviour
- Getting help for my child
- Talking to my child
- Parents Helpline and Webchat
- Cost-of-living crisis
- I don't know where to start

[Help & Advice | FRANK \(talktofrank.com\)](https://talktofrank.com)

[Find Help For My Child's Mental Health | Parents | YoungMinds](#)

Please contact your school Safeguarding Team if you have concerns or need further advice/support.