



**Salisbury**  
Primary School

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Friday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2020

### ***Safer Internet Day 2020***

Dear Parents/Carers,

Next Tuesday is Safer Internet Day – a day when children around the country will be learning all about the importance of staying safe online, and what they can do to ensure their safety when using devices such as laptops, mobile phones and tablets.

During the week, children will be taking part in a special ICT lesson based around staying safe online:

- Nursery and Reception children will be reading two stories (Smartie the Penguin and Digiduck's Big Decision) and discussing the messages behind the stories. We will then be decorating bunting showing what we like to do when we use our devices!
- Year 1 and 2 children will be designing a device screen of our very own, filled with our interests and information about us. We will then be discussing which of them are safe to share online, and which are private and must be kept to ourselves, friends and families.
- In Year 3 and 4, children will be discussing what an identity is, and what makes us the people we are. We will then be planning an online identity, thinking carefully about what we should and shouldn't share online as part of our online identity. Finally, we will play a game to see if we can guess who has created each online identity by the information given!
- Finally, Year 5 and 6 children will also be discussing what an identity is and how this differs to an online identity, followed by a discussion on what should and shouldn't be shared online. We will then be looking at a range of different scenarios and debating how these should be responded to, justifying our decisions by reasoning about our opinions.

We hope that, following these exciting lessons, you will be able to talk to your children at home about how to stay safe online and what they should do if they ever feel unsafe on the internet. As always, your child's safety is our highest priority and we appreciate your support in helping us educate your children on the importance of online safety.

Please see the reverse side of this letter for a poster to inform parents of how you can be helping your child stay safe on the Internet.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Forsyth



# SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH

## 10 Conversation Starters for Parents

Talking about mental health to children is sometimes hard. To the point that we can put off raising the subject, not wanting to unearth problems or raise overwhelming subjects that we perceive our child is too young or not ready for. But rather than keeping children in the dark, this guide is designed to help you confidently talk about mental health, so they feel comfortable talking about their own worries and end any stigma before it begins.



National Online Safety®

#WakeUpWednesday

### 1 LISTEN

This sounds obvious, but it is not something we are always great at. Active listening is where we listen without interrupting or making judgements and shows interest in what is being said. If your child feels listened to in the 'smallest of problems' they will become confident that you will listen when the 'biggest of problems' arise.

### 2 ASK TWICE

The campaign from time to change is great. <https://www.time-to-change.org.uk/support-ask-twice-campaign>. Be tenacious about your child's wellbeing. Children instinctively know when your questions and support come from a place of wanting to help and care.

Are you sure?

### 3 THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A STUPID QUESTION

This advice also relates to the first point. If your child can ask you any questions about the smallest of things and you listen and answer without shaming or belittling, then they will have more confidence to ask the biggest of questions.

### 4 BE OPEN AND HONEST

Children appreciate honesty, particularly if you are having to share information or talk about a difficult subject. For example, you may be talking about death or loss; 'It's very sad that Nana has died' or 'I feel sad that Nana has died'. How you talk about a subject will differ depending on their age and developmental maturity. Talking about death to a younger child for example will be different to that of an older teen, as their experience and understanding of death is different.

### 5 KNOW WHEN TO SEEK HELP

Assess the severity of the mental health difficulty you are noticing. Is the difficulty making it hard for your child to function regularly throughout everyday life? How frequently is your child affected, how long does it last and how persistent is it? Are they having problems controlling the difficulty? Talk to your child about your concerns and that it is likely they will need further support beyond family and friends.

### 6 TALK ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH NATURALLY

Speak about mental health as part of everyday life, so that talking about our feelings and those of others is normalised. If the usual 'are you ok?' is not creating an opportunity for dialogue then say something like 'I know when something like that has happened to me I felt like this... is that how you are feeling or are you feeling something else?'

### 7 EMPATHISE

'It makes sense that you would feel this way, it is understandable'. Children often worry about things that we, as adults, might see as trivial or silly. However, for them at their age and stage it is a big concern and they need our kindness and care when they show their vulnerability and share their worries.

### 8 HELP YOUR CHILD FEEL SAFE

Teens particularly feel that by talking about their worries or concerns that this will make things worse. Reassure your child that you will discuss a plan of action together and what may or may not need to happen next. If they are a younger child, it is likely you will need to lead the conversation and explain next steps.

### 9 MIND YOUR LANGUAGE

Be mindful of the language you use at home to describe and talk about mental health. Stigma often arises from misconceptions and a choice of language which is harmful. Using the word 'mental', 'man-up' or other such words in a derogatory way won't encourage your child to talk about their mental health for fear of being belittled.

### 10 IT IS OK TO SAY 'I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO NEXT'

Adults do not have all the answers but often children think they do. It is ok to acknowledge that what your child is experiencing is not something you have come across before or know anything about, but that you will work it out together and seek help together.

## Meet our expert

This guide has been written by Anna Bateman. Anna is passionate about placing prevention at the heart of every school, integrating mental wellbeing within the curriculum, school culture and systems. She is also a member of the advisory group for the Department of Education, advising them on their mental health green paper.



## Sources of Information and Support

- Your GP
- Young Minds <https://youngminds.org.uk/>
- <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/>
- <https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/news-and-blogs/parenting-tips/2016/november/a-simple-guide-to-active-listening-for-parents/>
- <https://www.themix.org.uk/mental-health>