



## Safeguarding & Well-being Newsletter for Families

# November 2022

### What's in this issue?

- The importance of sleep
- What parents need to know about.. online challenges
- Our Safeguarding Team details

**Keeping  
children safe  
is everyone's  
responsibility**



Welcome to our monthly safeguarding newsletter. In this edition, we will be focusing on the importance of sleep and regular routines. Please remember that if you ever have a safeguarding concern regarding your child, or indeed another child, you can always speak to any member of staff or a member of our school's safeguarding team, details of which are available from the school office or via our school website.

### What's the importance of sleep?

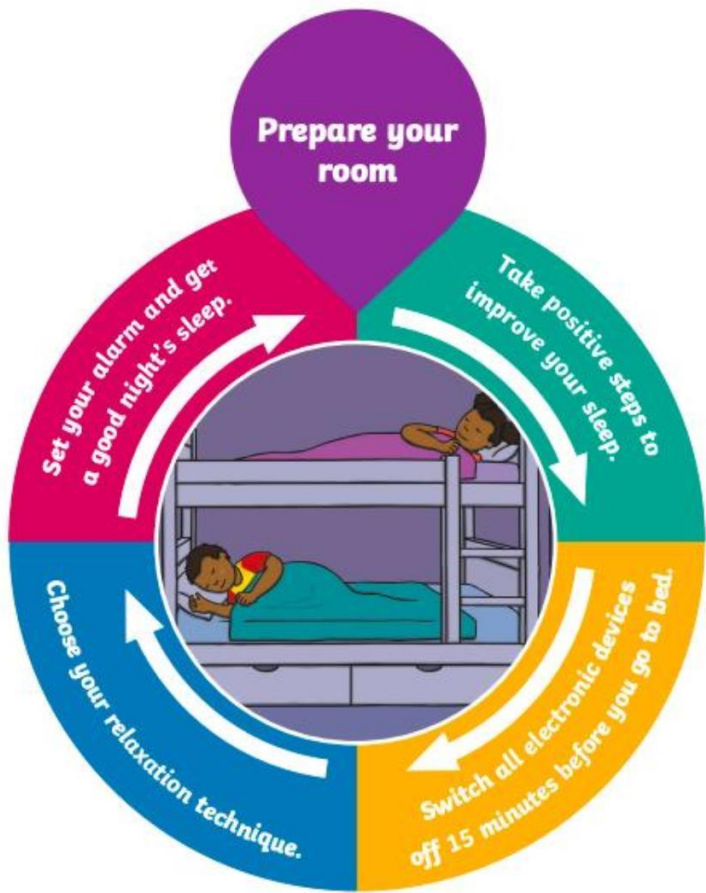
A good night's sleep is essential to feeling good, being able to learn and staying healthy. A lack of sleep can make you feel poorly, unable to learn and not want to go out with your friends and family. If you, or your child, is struggling to get a good night's sleep, follow these top tips:

1. **Think about your bedtime routine - What time do you go to bed? If you are going to bed too late, you will not get enough sleep. Try bringing your bedtime forward by 20 to 30 minutes at a time.**
2. **Make sure you are tired before going to bed - the less time you have to spend awake on bed, the better.**
3. **Have at least 15 minutes of quiet time before going to sleep so that your body and brain can relax and prepare for sleep.**
4. **Don't use your phone or computer before bed - this can stimulate your brain and make it more awake.**
5. **Try having a lukewarm bath as this can help your body to relax.**
6. **Try to go to bed at the same time every day once you have a settled routine**
7. **Choose a relaxing activity before bed, such as reading or listening to calm music.**
8. **Create a cosy environment. Is the room dark enough? Is the room at the correct temperature... not too hot and not too cold?**

# Do you know how much sleep your child needs?

The amount of sleep that your child is recommended to have is based upon their age. The NHS recommends the following:

| Age                 | Amount of sleep     |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| 5 years old         | 11 hours            |
| 6 years old         | 10 hours 45 minutes |
| 7 years old         | 10 hours 30 minutes |
| 8 years old         | 10 hours 15 minutes |
| 9 years old         | 10 hours            |
| 10 years old        | 9 hours 45 minutes  |
| 11 years old        | 9 hours 30 minutes  |
| 12 and 13 years old | 9 hours 15 minutes  |
| 14-16 years old     | 9 hours             |



## Avoid screens in the bedroom

Tablets, smartphones, TVs and other electronic gadgets can affect how easily children get to sleep. Older children may also stay up late or even wake in the middle of the night to use social media. Try to keep your child's bedroom a screen-free zone, and get them to charge their phones in another room. Encourage your child to stop using screens an hour before bedtime.

## Your child's bedroom

Your child's bedroom should ideally be dark, quiet and tidy. It should be well ventilated and kept at a temperature of about 18 to 24 degrees. If you can, fit some thick curtains to block out any daylight, especially now as the days are getting longer.

**If you have tried these tips, but your child is regularly having problems sleeping, you may feel that you need further support. You can speak with your GP or health visitor who may be able to provide additional information. Of course, you are also very welcome to speak to a member of staff at school.**

## Stage 1

During this time, our eyes and muscles are active but much slower than when we are awake. Our heart rate and breathing also slows down but we can be aware of noises around us and are easily woken from this stage.

Dreaming is very rare but sometimes our muscles will contract and we get the feeling of falling!

## Stage 5

During REM sleep, our brain waves look the same as when we are awake, as do our temperature, heart rate and breathing rate, which all rise during REM. Our eyes move very quickly from side-to-side but stay closed. This is when we have most of our dreams. As we get older, we spend less time in this stage, for example, babies may spend 80% of their total sleep in REM whereas an adult spends around 25%.

# The Sleep Cycle

## Stage 2

Our eyes stop moving, our body temperature gets lower and our brain waves and heart rate slow down further. We are unaware of sounds around us and our brains start to process information we have gathered throughout the day. This tends to be the longest part of our cycle - over 45% of our total sleep time.

## Stage 3

Our slow brain waves (which are called delta waves) are interrupted with little bursts of faster waves.

This is you in a deep sleep. However, this is also the stage when some people can talk in their sleep or even sleep walk! This is rare but will usually happen when our cycle moves from non-REM to REM sleep.

## Stage 4

We are now in a deep sleep with our brain waves mostly staying slow. At this point, our heart rate and body temperature are at their lowest points. If you are woken during stage 4, you can feel a little confused for a couple of minutes.

## Here are some ways in which you can build chill out time into your regular routine

- Make 'down time' a rule for everyone in the house.
- Encourage good use of 'down time' by making new books available to read, introducing a new style of music to listen to or helping your child to learn a craft.
- Don't over fill your child's week with organised clubs and activities.
- Encourage good time-management techniques. Younger children can be shown how to learn a couple of spellings a night rather than leaving them all to the last minute, for example. Older children can learn to pack their bags the night before school or make a 'to do' list.
- Try to eat together as a family as often as possible and ban phones and other devices from the table. Family meal time is a great time to talk and reflect on the day and share ideas.
- Plan regular family activities such as a bike ride, movie night or trip to the local park
- Play board games or card games together. Teach your child the games you knew as a youngster and let them teach you their favourites.
- Prioritise sleep. Younger children in particular benefit from a regular bedtime routine. Make late nights an exceptional treat, even at weekends.
- Regularly review your child's workload, to include school work, socialising time, clubs, sports and activities. Make sure that you continue to be able to achieve a daily spell of 'down time'. As they get older, include them in this.
- Let your child see you following 'down time' rules too. Teach them that stress is a fact of life for everyone and that what matters is being able to manage it effectively.







In today's digitally connected world, children and adults are constantly presented with new ways to engage, react and contribute. We're sociable beings; it's a natural human instinct, especially amongst younger audiences, to want to belong and join in. Viral Challenges (as they're often known) draw on these emotions and, as the name suggests, spread and gather pace very rapidly. New challenges are constantly emerging and evolving. They're often completely innocent, raising awareness of worthy causes or simply providing amusement. However, they can have much more sinister undertones, putting children at risk of physical harm or, in extreme cases, fatal injury.

# What parents need to know about ONLINE CHALLENGES

## MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

As well as having the potential to cause actual physical harm, some challenges can be extremely upsetting for children. Many are created with the sole purpose of instilling fear in an individual in order to coerce them into doing things that could have a long-term emotional effect on them.

## VARYING LEVELS OF RISK

As a parent or carer, it's important to take a balanced view and understand that not everything online has the potential to do harm. Mass-following and interaction can be a force for good. For example, the Ice Bucket Challenge, which swept the nation, set out to raise money and awareness of Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS). At its height, over 28 million people uploaded, commented on, or liked Ice Bucket Challenge related posts on Facebook. It's equally important to be aware though that online challenges often have a darker side. Malicious trends and challenges can expose children to dangerous or even life-threatening situations, so it's critical that parents and carers are aware of the latest risks and understand what steps to take to mitigate them.

## 'FOMO' - FEAR OF MISSING OUT

The 'Fear of Missing Out' (FOMO) is a strong emotional characteristic, particularly displayed in young people. The nature of viral challenges encourages children to explore and push boundaries. They tap into FOMO by feeding on a child's natural desire to join in, be accepted and share experiences with their friends and the wider online community. A recent study also found that FOMO is one of the greatest causes of Social Media addiction.



## STRIVING FOR LIKES

In a major study by the Children's Commissioner, it was found that children as young as ten years old are reliant on 'Likes' for their sense of self-worth. A major concern around viral challenges is not knowing how far children will go to earn 'Likes'. Couple this growing appetite for acceptance with commonplace peer pressure and the potential problem is compounded. The result is that when young people are drawn into online challenges, because it is what all their friends are doing, saying 'no' can seem like a very hard thing to do.

"The coolest person at school will start a trend and then everyone copies her"  
Merran, 12, Year 7

"If I got 150 likes, I'd be like that's pretty cool it means they like you"  
Aaron, 11, Year 7



**National Online Safety®**



# Top Tips for Parents



## COMMUNICATION & MONITORING

It's important to talk to your child regularly and monitor their online activities. Encouraging honesty and openness, will give you a much clearer viewpoint of how your child is interacting online and what concerns they have. Create an atmosphere of trust. Ensure they feel they can confide in you or another trusted adult regarding anything they may have seen or experienced online that's upset them.

## THINK BEFORE ACTING

As with most concerns in life, let common sense prevail when it comes to Viral Challenges. Young people need the freedom and space to explore and going in all guns blazing may well be counter-effective. Address the importance of safety and wellbeing, both online and offline, by getting the facts and understanding the risks. Start a discussion about the Online Challenges that may have captured your child's interest, gauge their likely involvement and explain the importance of thinking and acting independently when it comes to participating.

## SETTING UP EFFECTIVE PARENTAL CONTROLS

As with all online activity, ensuring you have effective parental controls set up on all devices will help filter and restrict the dangerous or inappropriate content you don't wish your child to access. Additional measures for protecting your child include checking the privacy settings on your child's devices, monitoring their friends list, ensuring their personal information is safe and secure and keeping a watchful eye on the content they're sharing.

## REPORTING & BLOCKING

Parental controls can only go so far in blocking potentially harmful content. A rise in the decoding of social media algorithms, has led to age inappropriate content increasingly appearing on platforms and apps used by children. Where possible, you should regularly monitor what your child sees online and flag/report any content which is inappropriate or dangerous. You should take the time to talk to your child, define what you consider to be appropriate content and show them how to report and block users/accounts themselves.

## VALIDATE SOURCES

Not everything is as it seems. Some people create fake content that's designed to 'shock' in order to encourage rapid sharing. If your child has seen something online that has triggered concern you should encourage them to, check its origin, verify that it came from a credible source and check the comments made for any clues to its validity.

## FACING REALITY

Trends and Viral Challenges can be tempting for children to take part in; no matter how dangerous or scary they may seem. As a parent or carer it can be difficult to keep pace with the very latest Online Challenges emerging. In recent months these have included potentially dangerous crazes, including the 'Bird Box' challenge, which was inspired by Netflix's popular film and encourages followers to upload videos of themselves attempting everyday tasks while blindfolded. The best advice is to keep talking to your child. Show that your taking an interest and not just prying. Ensure your child knows they don't have to get involved and if they're unsure, let them know you're there to talk before they consider participating. Children often need reassurance that not everything they see online is real. If your child has viewed distressing or frightening content it's important to talk to them about their experience, support them and, if required, help them find additional support.



## Our Safeguarding Team

Designated Safeguarding Lead:

Catherine Stratton



Deputy Safeguarding Leads:

Alice Cowles



Designated Wider safeguarding Team:

Family Support worker:

Theresa Miller



Safeguarding Governor:

Linda Hawbrook



Contact Number for the Safeguarding Team in school

(01522) 702669

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### **The Importance of Attendance for Safeguarding**

Attendance monitoring is a key part of our safeguarding processes in school. We take non-attendance and lateness seriously. School will maintain records of where children are and reasons for non-attendance or late arrival. We are a duty to investigate non-attendance - see [section 175 Education Act 2002](#).

Please keep the school informed of any changes to your contact details

**For more safeguarding information,  
including our current safeguarding policy  
please visit our school website at  
[www.saxilby.lincs.sch.uk](http://www.saxilby.lincs.sch.uk)**