



Safeguarding Briefing - 18th March 2024

Potential Safeguarding Course for Parents

Thank you to everyone who responded to my email on Friday with suggestions for topics for a safeguarding course for parents. Your suggestions were really, really helpful.

I've talked a lot recently about the importance of helping parents understand the world in which their children are growing up. I think that there more we can do, the better, but of course, this is very time-consuming, especially alongside all the other expectations on schools. I thought a video course might help.

There are so many topics that could be included and your suggestions will help me try to focus on just a few 'popular' ideas to start with.

If you didn't get chance to share your 'top three questions' that a parents' safeguarding course could include, you can still do so here:

<https://www.impactmonitor.co.uk/parents>

NEW Safeguarding Course for Governors - Free to access for Safeguarding.Pro members

The guidance documents for governors have been updated; other guidance has been updated or reviewed and so I thought it would be useful to offer a new seminar for governors.

I will be presenting a live seminar for governors on **Wednesday 24th April 2024 7pm - 8:30pm**. To register, please login into your Safeguarding.Pro account and share the link with your governors that you can find in this comment here: [NEW Safeguarding Course for Governors](#)

If you are not already a Safeguarding.Pro member, you can join here: joinsafeguarding.pro

Staff Question of the Week

According to a recent Ofcom report*, what percentage of children have had a social media account setup for them by a parent below the age of 11?

Fifty-eight percent - the top five most popular being: YouTube (33%), TikTok (18%), WhatsApp (17%), Snapchat (14%) and Facebook (9%). *It's worth noting that on 11th April 2024, WhatsApp is changing their minimum age to allow children aged 13+ to use the service (down from 16). WhatsApp offers end-to-end encryption - a security feature that scrambles messages to ensure no one can view the contents.*

How much do children (aged 8 - 17) spend on video games (including in-app purchases)?

The Insights Family* data (Ofcom, 2023) suggests that children aged 8-17 who spent money on video games (including in-app purchases) had spent an average of £38 in the past month.

Further research

*The Ofcom report makes fascinating reading across a number of areas of children's media use. You can download it here: <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/research-and-data/media-literacy-research/childrens>

You can interrogate the data here: <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/research-and-data/media-literacy-research/childrens/children-and-parents-media-use-and-attitudes-report-2023/children-and-parents-media-use-and-attitudes-report-2023-interactive-data>

When do children have their first mobile phone?

On Saturday, I briefly saw a question in a quiz show on TV (The Wheel) which asked 'At what age do most children get their own mobile phone?'. A choice of answers was given, the correct one being 7 years old based on a research by [Childwise](#). I was surprised by this because the research I had seen indicated that it was at the age of 9. This led me down a rabbit hole!

Childwise are an industry company and their reports aren't available without charge. However, other information is available.

An article from the University of Birmingham says, 'There is wide variation in the timing of when children acquire their first phone. According to [the 2022] Ofcom report on children in the UK, some acquire their first phones as toddlers (17% of 3-4 year olds) or young children (28% of 5 to 7 year olds), and others during adolescence (age 10 onwards)...By [the] age of 17, 100% of adolescents have a mobile phone. This variation likely exists because the decision to buy a child's first phone is not straightforward, and may occur after weighing up several factors for each individual child, rather than taking a one size fits all approach. While there is variation, the Ofcom report showed that most children acquire their first phone between the ages of 9 and 11, during which phone ownership rises from 44% to 91%.

Ofcom have been tracking media and device use by children for the past nine years. The more recent Ofcom report for 2023 shows the age of first smartphone as being 9 - 11. (This data shows a decrease in the age of first ownership.)

Children and parents: media use and attitudes report 2023 (Ofcom), page 7, shows ownership of a smartphone as:

3 - 4 year olds - 17%
5 - 7 year olds - 20%
[9 years old - over 50%]
8 - 11 year olds - 53%
12 - 15 year olds - 96%
16 - 17 year olds - 98%

*The Ofcom report makes fascinating reading across a number of areas of children's media use. You can download it here:

<https://www.ofcom.org.uk/research-and-data/media-literacy-research/childrens>

Further reading

Researchers at the University of Birmingham have published an interesting study 'Smartphones, Social Media and Adolescent mental well-being: the impact of school policies (2023)' as part of their ongoing research called the 'SMART Schools study'. You can find this study here:

<https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/13/7/e075832.full>

Did Someone Forward this Safeguarding Briefing to You?

If you would like to receive your own copy of the Safeguarding Briefing, simply go to: www.safeguardingbriefing.co.uk

Guidance to Legislation Around Sexual Images

In the briefing we frequently feature resources around raising awareness of and explaining the effect of nude images. Particularly when shared in the form of sextortion, revenge porn, deception etc. However, understanding the labyrinthine nature of the law in regards to this topic is difficult even for practitioners and commentators. The UK Council for Internet Safety, in collaboration with the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology has produced a guide to the legal framework used to deal with this area. The guidance has been updated this month, and so it's a perfect time to take a look. If interested, please follow the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people>

Respond to the online sexual harassment of school/college staff (SWGfL / UKSIC / POSH)

Sadly, examples of online abuse are not unusual. For school staff it can be extremely distressing when pupils are involved in the creation of fake accounts, online stalking or writing insulting or intimidating messages and posts. When these incidents happen, the Professionals' Online Safety Helpline (0344 381 4772) can be very helpful in dealing with this material and can expedite getting it removed from view.

Now, the Professionals' Online Safety Helpline (SWGfL) and partners, UK Safer Internet Centre, have published their guidance in document form.

The guidance can be downloaded here:

<https://swgfl.org.uk/resources/how-to-respond-to-the-online-sexual-harassment-of-school/college-staff/>

The Professionals Online Safety Helpline is open from 10am - 4pm on weekdays on **0344 381 4772**. More information can be found here:

<https://swgfl.org.uk/helplines/professionals-online-safety-helpline/>

NEW Video seminars on Safeguarding.Pro

I've recently added a couple of new videos into Safeguarding.Pro on the following topics.

[Fabricated and Induced Illness or Perplexing Presentations](#) (27 mins)

[Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment](#) (8 minutes)

If you are not already a Safeguarding.Pro member, you can join here: joinsafeguarding.pro

Medical Tracker

The start of the year has been busy for Medical Tracker, after winning an award within the 'Leadership & Management Solutions' at the BETT Awards in January. They have now reached over 2,000 schools, with 1 in 12 schools now going paperless for their first aid records with Medical Tracker. Medical Tracker is also excited to announce the launch of their new medication stock control tracking feature, designed to provide schools with real-time visibility into their medication inventory for students, staff, and emergency supplies on-site.

Schools can now:

Set-up automated alerts to notify staff when medication levels are low or depleted.

Notify parents or carers instantly to replenish medication supplies.

Access to a live overview of remaining medication quantities.

You can find out more here: <https://www.medicaltracker.co.uk/>

Forthcoming Courses

Advanced Safeguarding for DSLs

This is a four-session course for DSLs over a full-day. The course is offered live and as a recorded replay. When the course is live, there are plenty of opportunities to contribute with observations, questions or answers. As a recording, the interactions from other people are included and feedback notes that this makes it feel like you are not on your own.

"I just wanted to say that I thought today's training was absolutely fantastic. By a mile it was the most engaging training I have done."

Next live online courses are:

Wednesday 17th April 2024 [Book here](#)

Tuesday 14th May 2024 [Book here](#)

The on-demand course is always available and is updated after each live session [Book Online](#)

Live and in-person

Remember that you can book Andrew to share his Advanced Safeguarding for DSLs' Course at your own school or organisation. The group size can be up to 25, and to spread the cost, the group can be made up of people from more than one school, so why not invite your neighbours! Email office@safeguardingschools.co.uk to enquire.

Conference Speaking

One of my favourite activities is sharing my presentation as a conference keynote. The talk is, of course, centered around safeguarding, and also includes examples from my learning as a teacher, headteacher and consultant in a wide variety of schools and organisations.

Other available online courses include:

Whole School Safeguarding Course

Safeguarding Refresher

An Introduction to Cybersecurity

For further details, go to:

www.safeguardingschools.co.uk/availablecourses

Until next time, keep safe,

Andrew Hall

Specialist Safeguarding Consultant,

Director, Success In Schools Ltd.

Are you a busy DSL with no time?

Need a place to ask questions. find support and download resources

Click here and join Safeguarding.Pro today!