TERM 2

WELLBEING BULLETIN

Updates for the students and parents of Nailsea School

Social Media & Mental health

Social Media is often scrutinised as having a negative impact on children's mental health. Whilst currently there is not enough evidence or research to say whether this is true or not, there are certain 'modern pressures' connected with social media which trusted adults need to be aware of. Children and young people are constantly connected and whilst this comes with some benefits, it also comes with a feeling that you are constantly visible. This bulletin is designed to encourage trusted adults to think about their children's mental health and their social media activities, providing them with some useful tips on improving and supporting mental health among young people.

We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. If you have concerns that a child has been harmed, or is at risk of harm then please contact a member of the safeguarding team in person or on the following email address:

safeguardingteam@nailseaschool.com

SUPPORTING CHILDREN ONLINE

1 Stay involved

Keep talking and stay interested in what they're doing. Don't be afraid to bring up challenging issues like sexting, Pornography and cyberbullying. It could be embarrassing, but you'll both benefit from the subjects being out in the open.

2 Talk about online reputation

Let them know that anything they upload, email or message could stay around forever online. Remind them they should only do things online that they wouldn't mind you, their teacher or a future employer seeing. Get them to think about creating a positive digital footprint.

3 Keep their information private

Your child can set privacy settings on most social networking sites so that only close friends can search for them, tag them in a photograph or share what they've posted.

4 the law

Make sure they know that it is illegal to share naked images of themselves and others. It is good to discuss the reasons why they feel the need to share such images and the potential long-term impact this could have on them and others if the pictures are used without consent.

5 Don't give in

Peer pressure and the desire for attention can be reasons why some children feel the need to share inappropriate photos with their online friends. Remind them how important it is not to give in to peer pressure to send inappropriate comments or images.

6 Be responsible

Talk to your teenager about being responsible when they're online. Children often feel they can say things online that they wouldn't say face-to-face. Teach them to always have respect for themselves and others online.

7 affected by content

If they are deeply affected by the posts, consider advising them to take a break from the social network and concentrate on other activities that might make them happier. If you feel that the comments may be affecting your child's mental health and wellbeing, it's best to go and see your GP. Depending on the seriousness of the comments, it might be advisable to file a police report. If you do take this step, make sure you keep some evidence that records what's happened and how it's affected them.

Social media as a positive

Although social media can present some risks, it's important to understand what the benefits are to give your child the guidance they need to make the best out of their social media use. Below are a few ways social media can be a source for good for children and young people.

Collaborative learning

Social media can broaden connection and understanding of the world which allows children to learn and appreciate different perspectives and worldviews to better understand the world around them and build up their knowledge on a range of topics. With so many ideas shared across a number of platforms, they can discover areas of interest and use the platforms in an educational capacity.

Mental Health

Social media can be place to seek support .It can open up opportunities to offer support to friends and family that may be experiencing a particular issue. On the flip side for some young people, it can be a place where they can seek support if they are going through something that they cannot talk to those close to them about.

Digital literacy

Social media can help children develop communication and technical skills . As social media is now a part of everyday life, it is important for children and young people to learn how to communicate online to prepare them for future opportunities in the workplace and support them in interacting with friends and family.

Helpful Apps :

- Hub of Hope
- Mindshift
- Smiling Mind

Other services :

- Childline (0800 1111)
- Bullying UK (0808 8002222)
- Young Minds (0808 802 5544)

SOCIAL PRESSURES LINKED TO 'LIKES'
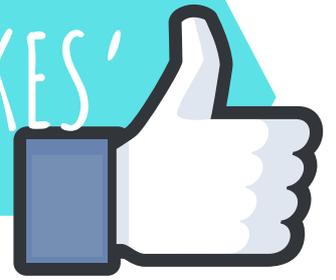
'Likes' are a simple way for users to show that they like a post on social media. This could be anything from photos and videos to status updates and comments. The feature is widely used on several social media platforms and is extremely popular on Instagram and Facebook. It is often used by children to measure the success of their social media post and gauge opinion. However, it can also bring a number of social pressures, particularly if users start to question their own levels of popularity.

DAMAGING TO SELF-ESTEEM

Your child may use likes to measure their own self-worth, with more likes instilling a greater level of confidence and acceptance amongst their friends and peers.However, children who only receive a small number may in turn feel a sense of rejection or low self-esteem issues, impacting them in other aspects of their life such as at school or in social settings.

AN ADDICTIVE FEATURE

Like features encourage children to stay online for longer. In doing so, your child is likely to engage with app's for longer periods than they otherwise would have wanted, checking their phone more frequently,including at night when they should be asleep. This could contribute towards screen addiction which can cause sleep deprivation and consequently a lack of focus during the next day at school.

COMPETITIVE CULTURE

Children will often compare the number of likes they receive for their post against their friends or followers, possibly evoking emotions of jealously or resentment. In a bid to increase their own status and receive more likes, this could lead to a competitive culture in which children try to better one another, potentially leading to them engaging in more and more riskier activities.

UNREAL VIEW OF THE WORLD

Your child may follow celebrities or other popular individuals on social media who receive millions of likes.Not everything on social media is a true reflection of the world and a child may feel pressured into behaving in a similar way in real life or posting similar material in order to feel popular and achieve a similar level of self-worth.

Safety tips for parents :

FOLLOW OR FRIEND YOUR CHILD ONLINE

Using the same social media sites as your child and connecting with them online will allow you to keep an eye on what their interests are and who may be influencing them. Following their likes will help you build a picture of what your child is being exposed to and what they find interesting

MONITOR MENTAL HEALTH

If your child does post on social media, it is important to monitor their feelings and emotions, supporting them and encouraging them to talk to you about what they may be experiencing. Explain to them that not everything online is real and that life is not dictated by how many likes a post may or may not get.

ENCOURAGE HOBBIES AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

Try to help reduce your child's screen time and need for social media through encouraging them do other things such as a sport or hobby or simply playing with friends outdoors. Supporting them to take up other activities that they enjoy can also help build self-esteem and increase confidence.

HELP BUILD SELF ESTEEM

Try to help build your child's self-esteem through positivity and praise and listening to them if they are struggling with the way they look or feel.Talk to them about the positive aspect of their personality and help them understand that looks aren't everything.Try not to criticise or blame your child which could compound any negative thoughts they are already feeling.

DISCUSS THE REAL WORLD

Talk to your child about online perceptions and about what they feel is and isn't important in their life.Try to establish an open and honest conversation and speak about what they feel is acceptable to post online and if they feel pressure to conform.