



Inside Kingshurst



Good Luck to our Year 11 and Year 13 Students!

Unbelievably, another year has raced through and we find ourselves already having started the 'exam season' with our first GCSE, BTEC and A Level examinations having started this week and set to continue through the following four weeks.

As an Academy, we wanted to wish ALL of our amazing students, the very best for their examinations off which they have worked and prepared so hard for, and as such, provide some additional information in support of trying to support your own child in addition to offering sage advice from the team at [Youngminds](#) as how to keep your 'cool' during the period that requires students to look after themselves as they revise and prepare for each challenge. You **CAN** do it! [Why not pause and take a deep breath? Click to follow the link!](#)

Things that can help your child during exams

- Encourage your child to take revision breaks and find a balance between studying and doing things they find enjoyable and relaxing.
- Make sure they are eating and drinking at regular intervals.
- Encourage them to take some time after revising to wind down.
- Reassure them – reinforce that you are and will be proud of them no matter what happens.
- Plan a treat or an activity together to mark the end of the exams.
- Set aside time so that they can talk to you about any worries.
- Let them know their feelings are valid and normal, but also offer support and solutions where possible.
- Anxiety is often worst at night and this means it is useful to encourage a good bedtime routine.
- If anxiety and stress start impacting their day-to-day life, seek help from your GP.
- Remain positive and hopeful!

Ref: [Youngminds.org.uk](#)

Fun Fact! Ancient Egyptians counted in 12s



In honour of **National Numeracy Day** on 17th May, our fun fact relates to maths! (for details of how to support your child with maths, [click here](#).)

The Egyptians both counted (and measured things) in 12s. Sundials, made by the Egyptians 3,500 years ago were shown to have divided the day into 12 parts. Egyptian astronomers observed that the Moon had 12 cycles over the course of a year and that 12 stars rose at regular intervals during the night. As a result of this, it led them to divide the night also up into 12 parts. When we use a 24-hour clock, this comes directly from the Egyptian system of splitting night and day into two sets of 12 hours!

T G A K SPORT

Last week saw our Year 7 and Year 8 dancers to take part within a Street Dance competition that features as part of the Schools Games and took place at the Core Theatre in Solihull Town Centre.

In addition to the incredible opportunity to perform on stage at such a wonderful venue, we were extremely proud of Mr Venson's group for achieving 2nd Place for their performances.

The group have put in a massive amount of practice and this came through during their confident performances to songs including "Me Too" by Meghan Trainor and "Lose My Breath" by Destiny's Child.



National Online Safety: In this week's edition of the advice and guide refers to managing device stress and anxiety. We can access new music and movies in seconds. We can get products delivered to our door the very next day. We can chat or play games with people on the other side of the planet. For all of the remarkable benefits the digital age has brought us, it has also presented us with a whole new raft of pressures and anxieties that we're all still learning to cope with. The guide on the second page provides further support related to this subject matter.

Helping children and young people with MANAGING DEVICE STRESS AND ANXIETY

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

The internet and advances in the capability of digital devices have afforded us arguably the fastest period of technological and social evolution in living memory: creating opportunities for us to interact with people anywhere in the world, 24 hours a day. It's also, however, blurred safety boundaries and added new stresses for young people, who are often less aware of the hidden hazards. With almost half of 10–15-year-olds experiencing bullying online and algorithms pushing content in front of our children every day, it's important to know how to address some of these challenges.

LIVING ONLINE

The internet is awash with sophisticated algorithms that learn from our online behaviour and try to predict our wants and needs. That's very helpful in some respects, but it can make the online world difficult for children and young people to negotiate. Content can be brought to them at any time – it may not always be appropriate, and children may not have the ability or the support to deal with it.

PUSHY NOTIFICATIONS

Content is also directed at us through notifications from our apps: letting us know we have a new message or social post to read, for example. While that's useful in some circumstances, it conditions us to keep going back online (and is designed to do so) and can be a near-constant demand on your child's attention. As such alerts become more common, are we experiencing an 'attack of the pings'?

BLURRED BOUNDARIES

There are now so many ways we can communicate online in real time (like instant messaging apps) or with a delay (such as on social media) that it's possible to be constantly in conversation. Young people often prefer quickfire exchanges of text – but using fewer words can cause distressing miscommunications through the lack of non-verbal cues like facial expressions or tone of voice.

DIGITAL DEPENDENCY

As devices allow access to immediate external help in challenging situations, it's a concern that children may not be developing the inner confidence to work things out for themselves. Likewise, group membership is hugely important to young people – both in digital and 'real' life – and being excluded from online conversations can cause damaging feelings of loneliness and isolation.

DISGUISED DISTRESS

Children often haven't yet developed the emotional resources to deal with many of the setbacks of everyday life, so identifying when it's specifically something online that's worried them can be tricky. A certain level of stress is a normal response to a problem: it spurs us into action to keep ourselves safe. If the stress is excessive, though, it can feel overwhelming and potentially lead to anxiety or depression.

ANTI-SOCIAL SOCIALS

Social media can bring people together in hugely positive ways. Sadly, it does also have a darker side, including 'flame war' arguments which can escalate quickly and have hurtful consequences. With so many people looking on, 'group shaming' situations are also common – while there are continual opportunities for young people to compare themselves negatively with other social media users.

Advice for Parents & Carers

LEARN THE BASICS

It's impossible to keep up with every online change or every new app. The best option is to make yourself aware of the fundamentals of how the internet operates, so you can help your child to grasp how – and why – content reaches them. Devices and the digital world can be confusing, so learning to understand them better will give you the confidence to talk to your child about them.

TALK IT OUT

If a child mentions a comment that's been directed at them in a text chat or on social media, it may sound minor but can actually have a much bigger effect than we realise. In our evolved brains, any perceived threat can get internalised while our body reacts as if we were in physical danger – raising stress levels. It's always worth encouraging your child to get any concerns out in the open.

PUSH DISTRACTIONS AWAY

Notifications to our phones and tablets can be helpful, but they sometimes make one wonder who's really in charge: the person or the device? Checking our phone as soon as it goes off is an easy habit to fall into – especially for young people. Try switching off non-essential alerts on your devices and encourage your child to do the same: you should both feel less triggered and more in control.

LOOK FOR THE SIGNS

This is tricky – and may depend on the child's age – but any sudden change in behaviour is worth looking out for. If your child seems to be checking their phone or tablet more, doesn't want to be parted from them, or appears unusually secretive, anxious or withdrawn, it could be a sign that something is amiss in relation to their device – and, possibly, that they're in need of extra support.

KEEP CHECKING IN

Healthy emotional regulation balances three systems: threat, drive and grounding. Down the various rabbit holes of the internet, however, that balance can easily slip away – so it's important to help your child manage their emotions when they're online. Check in with them regularly when they're on their device, and remember that 'distraction' and 'relaxation' aren't always the same thing.

BE KIND: UNWIND

Be kind to yourselves as parents and carers. Remember that we're all in the same boat, trying to safely guide our children through this complex, fast-moving digital environment. Getting into the habit of having natural, relaxed conversations with your child about their online life (and yours) can level the playing field and make it far easier for them to open up to you about any concerns.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Carole Francis-Smith is an experienced counselling psychologist who specialises in promoting safe and ethical online communications. She consults with and offers bespoke training to businesses and organisations, supporting positive and effective online communications – often by considering some of the more hidden aspects of the various mediums.



National
Online
Safety

#WakeUpWednesday

Source: <https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/report/the-big-ask-big-answers/>
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