



PSHE Takeaway Pack

STAYING SAFE FROM CRIME AND ADDICTION

November 2020

Crime

Most of us will know somebody who has been a victim of crime, at some point.

A 'crime' is an action which breaks the law and can include anything from antisocial behaviour and petty theft, to homicide (murder).

Although the Office of National Statistics reports that homicide has reduced in recent years, the incidents of credit card/identity fraud, 'County Lines' and knife crime has risen.

There is lots of information available to you about how to stay safe. Information and advice can be found on our school website under 'Personal Safety' and is continually updated. There are also links at the end of this booklet and you must always ask a trusted adult or teacher for advice, if you are ever unsure of something.

A word about.....safety online

We often discuss the importance of staying safe when using technology and, in your September PSHE takeaway pack, you learned a little about the laws surrounding 'sexting'.

Always remember to keep your personal information protected (this includes any photographs of yourself, along with your name, address, school and passwords). Aside from the risks to your personal safety and well-being, failure to protect your details could result in you becoming a victim of bank card or identity fraud. Always use trusted shopping sites and do not click any links which have not come directly from an official source.

A word about.....County Lines

Gangs or criminal networks are capable of transporting illegal drugs around the UK. To do this, they use dedicated mobile phone lines and seek to exploit children and vulnerable adults to help them. This is known as 'County Lines'.

Often, they choose young people who are less likely to appear suspicious or be caught. These young people feel trapped and unable to escape the situation, because they are often forced by violence, weapons and intimidation. In some cases, they do not even realise that they have been 'groomed'.

It's therefore very important to understand what County lines is and how to stay resilient to the dangers. Being responsible also means looking out for those around you and recognising the warning signs that others are being victimised by criminal gangs. Help and support is always available.



A word about.....Knife Crime

Did you know.....?

- Many young people incorrectly believe that others are carrying knives. This makes them less afraid of doing so themselves. In actual fact, 99% of 10-29 year olds do **not** carry a knife. Those who do say that they would prefer not to.
- Young people may also assume that there is no criminal charge for carrying a knife. However, a person can get up to 4 years in prison for possession of a knife, even if it is never used.
- Statistically, people who carry a weapon are **more likely to be hospitalised** with a violence-related injury, and in many cases their own weapon has been used against them.

Activity: Watch this clip and consider the reasons why young people choose to carry a knife. Importantly, also consider the reasons why they choose NOT to:

https://www.knifefree.co.uk/story/weare_knifefree/

Summary:

Mostly, criminals are opportunists. This means that they look for opportunities to commit their crimes.

The best way to avoid becoming a victim and stay safe is to reduce the opportunities criminals have to target you. This includes being aware of the signs and risks of crime and avoiding putting yourself in a situation where you could be vulnerable.

Addiction

Did you know that up to 1 in 3 people have an addiction?

The NHS defines addiction as *“not having control over doing, taking or using something to the point where it could be harmful to you.”*

Addiction is most often linked with gambling, drugs, and alcohol, but it's possible to be addicted to almost anything. Addictions can include (from www.nhs.uk):

- **work** – some people are obsessed with their work to the extent that they become physically exhausted; if your relationship, family and social life are affected and you never take holidays, you may be addicted to work
- **internet** – as computer and mobile phone use has increased, so too have computer and internet addictions; people may spend hours each day and night surfing the internet or gaming while neglecting other aspects of their lives
- **solvents** – volatile substance abuse is when you inhale substances such as glue, aerosols, petrol or lighter fuel to give you a feeling of intoxication
- **shopping** – shopping becomes an addiction when you buy things you don't need or want to achieve a buzz; this is quickly followed by feelings of guilt, shame or despair

Why might an addiction begin?

Addictions form because they make you feel good. For example, drugs or alcohol may give you a physical or mental ‘buzz’ and with gambling someone may like the ‘high’ they get from a big win. These feelings then develop into a habit which is hard to stop. Many people at risk from addiction have ‘impulsive’ behaviours. This means that they are tempted to act on impulse, before thinking through the consequences of their actions.

However, the feelings above are only temporary and can come with serious downsides. For example, drugs and alcohol damage your every day health and for every gambling win you may lose several times. Addictions can take your time and energy and damage your work and life relationships.

This is why it is important for you to understand what addictions are, how to recognise the signs and to know where to seek help.

Drugs

Drugs are substances which have a physiological effect when introduced into the body. This means they can have a physical impact on how your body works, or can affect your brain and mental processes. Drugs are commonly prescribed by doctors to be helpful where our bodies are not working properly, but they can also be used 'recreationally' for enjoyment, leading to addiction.

In some cases, addictions come from the *mental* enjoyment or relaxation they provide and people want to keep experiencing these feelings; in other cases, the addiction becomes *physical* and you begin to feel physically unwell if you do not take the drug repeatedly.

Drugs include a wide range of substances, including:

- Caffeine (found in tea, coffee and chocolate). This is a stimulant, making your heart beat faster and giving you a feeling of being more awake
- Nicotine (found in cigarettes and vaping devices)
- Alcohol (found in beer, wine and spirits)
- Heroin and cocaine (not found in anything you can legally buy in the UK).

You will notice that some of these drugs are legal and can even be found in a supermarket. This is because their sensible and controlled use is very unlikely to be harmful. Other drugs may be legal, but age-restricted by law, for example alcohol. However, some drugs are illegal, carrying heavy penalties for possession (owning them) or use, including prison sentences. These drugs include cocaine and heroin.

One of the most dangerous things about drugs is that they are rarely 'pure'. They are 'cut' or mixed with other substances and chemicals to help bulk them out and form the drugs into tablets. This means that you can never be sure exactly how strong the drugs actually are, or what has gone into them. **There is no such thing as a safe level of drug use.**

Cannabis:

Cannabis is a plant, the leaves of which can be smoked, eaten or vaped. It is the most widely used **illegal** drug in the UK.

Smoking cannabis can affect your ability to breathe properly, especially if you have a condition like asthma. In the long term, it may increase your risk of lung cancer. In terms of your mental health and the physical effects on your body, cannabis may also:

- Increase your heart rate and blood pressure, affecting the health of your heart;
- Increase your risk of fertility problems by suppressing ovulation or (in men) reducing sperm;
- Affect your energy and motivation;
- Affect your ability to drive, leading to a serious crash;
- Impair your memory, so you can't perform well in exams or at work;
- Disturb your sleep, making you tired, panicky and depressed;
- Give you disturbing hallucinations (seeing and hearing things which are not there);
- Increase your long term chance of a serious mental illness, like schizophrenia.

Cannabis is a 'Class B drug' in the UK. Although it falls into a lower category than 'Class A' (for example, heroin or cocaine), it is still **illegal to have for yourself, to give away to others, or to sell**. If you are found in possession of cannabis **you can be sentenced to 5 years in prison**, plus an unlimited fine. If you are giving it to someone else, **your sentence could increase to 14 years**.

A note about legal highs:

'Legal highs' are substances such as glue and aerosols, which can have the same effects as drugs if used improperly. For example, using an aerosol sensibly as a deodorant is perfectly fine, but breathing it in too deeply can be harmful. You can get in trouble with the law if such things are used -or sold- with the wrong intentions.

It is also possible to become addicted or unwell when using a medicine purchased 'over the counter' (this means that you can buy it without a prescription). For example, painkillers or even mild sleeping pills can become a problem if not taken according to advice. Always read the labels on medicines and ask your doctor or parents if unsure.

A note about advertising:

In 2003, cigarette and tobacco advertisements were banned in the UK. Before this, you would often see cigarettes advertised on large billboards, or sponsoring sporting events. The ban was put in place to keep people safe, as it was seen as unfair to attract people to something which has such proven harmful effects on health and well-being. Later, shops were ordered to cover the shelves containing cigarettes with a black screen, so that not even the colourful packets were visible to customers. Increasingly, cigarette companies are now printing shocking images on their packaging (for example, rotten teeth or pictures of damaged lungs), to try and help people understand how significant the risks can be. The World Health Organisation estimates that these measures have been effective in protecting people – in particular young people- from the harmful effects of tobacco addiction.

The advertising of alcohol is still permitted, but where and when these advertisements appear is tightly controlled by law.

Activity: Watch this clip featuring Chloe's story: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/pshe-ks3--gcse-addiction-chloes-story/zhjv7nb>

Now answer these questions:

- What problems do you think started Chloe's addiction?
- What parts of life was Chloe unable to enjoy because of her addiction?
- How did her addiction affect her physical health?
- How did Chloe seek help?

Staying safe from drug addiction:

There is much support available to help you stay resilient against drug use, but also to support you if you or somebody you know is having problems with drugs. Sometimes you may want to use the support sources just to ask questions.

To build your resilience to drugs, you could:

- Try to understand more about what drugs are and where they might be found;
- You should also be aware of the basic legal framework surrounding drug possession and use, along with the risks to your physical and mental health;
- Surround yourself with supportive people and take care of your physical and mental health.
- Remember that you're not alone. The vast majority of your peers (and the population in general) do not use drugs.
- Work out where you stand on issues like sex, drugs and alcohol. Knowing your own mind makes it easier to stay true to yourself.
- Prepare yourself. Think about how you'd like to respond when someone offers you drugs so you know what to say.
- Know where to get support, if you need it.

We realise that drugs can be a hard subject to discuss, especially if you find conversations with friends and family difficult.

If a friend tells you about their problem, try to stay open-minded and remember that, with the right help and support, most people overcome their use before any serious harm is caused. Listen carefully to them and do not be judgmental. They need your help and talking this through is an important first step.

If you believe that somebody has taken drugs and is seriously unwell, this should be treated as an emergency. Dial 999 and tell the operator as much as you can about what has been taken. When the ambulance crew arrives, give them any of the drugs which are left over. This could help them to work out the best treatment and save a person's life. The ambulance crew will not tell the Police.

One excellent source of help and advice is Talk to FRANK. Check out their website: <https://www.talktofrank.com/>

There are further sources of support listed at the end of this booklet and on the Personal Safety section of the Newlands website. You can also talk to a trusted adult or teacher, if unsure.



Gambling

When you take a gamble on something, you place money (or something else of value) on a game or activity, hoping to achieve a particular result. For example, you may place £5 on a horse, hoping that it will win a race. If your horse does win, you will make money. However, if it loses, you will not get your £5 back and you will have lost the gamble. This is sometimes known as 'betting' or 'gaming'. It is also possible to gamble or 'bet' on card games, or things like bingo.

Why is gambling attractive to some people?

Overall, whilst gambling can provide some fun and even win you some money, it can be a risky activity, because you have no control over the outcome. Sometimes, people can become addicted to gambling and will keep placing losing bets hoping to make their money back. This is why **gambling is strictly controlled in UK law and is an illegal activity if you are under the age of 18.**

Gambling companies use advertising in clever-and sometimes unfair- ways. For example, they make gambling look glamorous and may subtly exploit people's vulnerabilities. Frequently, gambling websites may use cookies to target customers, or store your personal details in apps or email spamming systems. Have you ever seen a football game on television and noticed those flashing signs round the edge of the pitch? This is all advertising!

The recent Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown have increased the number of people having to seek help for gambling problems. Perhaps they have lost their job and are desperate to make some money; in other cases, gambling online may have relieved their boredom. Being stuck in the house has created a 'captive' audience for some gaming companies.

Because of the strict laws surrounding gambling, it is illegal for gambling advertisements to target an audience who are under the age of 18, or to appear in media typically used by young people.

What can I do to stay safe?

Firstly, you should be aware of the risks of gambling and the warning signs that gambling is becoming a problem for someone. You can then build resilience by:

- understanding the legalities surrounding gaming
- seeing an advertisement for gambling and having to the confidence to ask yourself "is this really as good as it seems?"
- knowing where to seek trusted help.

There are many sources of support on offer, some of which are listed at the back of this booklet. Many feature the well-known slogan "When the fun stops, STOP". Addiction to gambling can be successfully treated, allowing people to recover and enjoy life to the full once again.

Activity: Read the scenario below.

- What has attracted Clayton to gamble in the first place?
- What are the dangers if he continues to be impulsive?
- What are Clayton's options moving forward? Which do YOU think he should do?

Clayton is bored at home one night and sees an advert on his social media feed advertising a new betting site which is giving away free bets.

To play, he needs to enter a credit card number. He takes his brother's card, justifying his decision as doing no harm as he only intends to use the free bets and not pay anything on the card. Clayton plays for half an hour and really enjoys it, thinking of ways to spend his winnings if he gets any.

At one point he is out of free play but is very close to the jackpot. He is tempted to pay to carry on playing.

Summary:

Now that you have reached the end of this takeaway pack, take time to reflect on the following questions:

- ✓ What is crime and how is crime in the UK changing?
- ✓ What do you understand about County Lines and knife crime? How can you reduce the opportunities there are for you to fall victim to a crime?
- ✓ What do you understand addiction to be? How can you recognise the risks and signs? How can you build resilience to addiction?
- ✓ What have you discovered about drugs and gambling? How can you protect yourself and others from the problems caused by addiction to these things?

Useful Links

Childline 0800 1111 or www.childline.org.uk offers a range of ways to talk to a trained counsellor, including via email and an online chat service. Calls are free from a landline or mobile.

BeGambleAware: www.BeGambleAware.org offers free and confidential information, advice and support for anyone who is worried about theirs or someone else's gambling.

#knifefree website - www.knifefree.co.uk

Fearless (crime stoppers) – www.fearless.org

Victim support – www.victimsupport.org.uk

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/addiction-what-is-it/> contains lots of useful information regarding addiction and can take you to some further sources of help and information.