

HOLYHEAD SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER

July 2025

OUR SAFEGUARDING TEAM



At Holyhead School we endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We believe that all children should feel safe and be able to approach someone if they have a concern. The safety and wellbeing of our students is the most important aspect of our work as a school. If you have any concerns about your child's wellbeing or safety, or want to report a concern about another child, please ask to speak to one of the Designated Safeguarding Team.

In this month's issue we look at:

- Our Designated Safeguarding Leads
- Financially motivated extortion
- The school holidays
- Online toxic masculinity
- Staying safe online during the summer holidays

As we approach the end of the school year a lot of students will begin spending increased amounts of time online. This opens up an opportunity for them to potentially see harmful content that could put them at risk. This month we are looking at some of the dangers online and looking at ways students can stay safe during the summer holidays. If you have any concerns regarding the safety of a child then please contact the safeguarding team at Holyhead 0121 523 1960 or email lead DSL ddenny@holyhead.crst.org.uk or Senior DDSL dbeale@holyhead.crst.org.uk

Staying safe online during the summer holidays

With the summer holidays fast approaching children and young people will have more free time to spend with friends, family and online.

For some, this will be spent using the internet to keep in touch with friends, catch up with the latest apps and online trends, and play their favourite games.

Sit down together

For parents, the summer holidays are a great chance to sit down with your children. Together you can visit their favourite sites and play their favourite games, this is a great way to stay up to date with online lives and show them that you're interested in what they are doing.

The holidays are also a good opportunity to have positive conversations about the internet, so if something ever does upset your child online they would feel more confident in confiding in you. [Our conversation starters](#) are a great tool to help encourage an open dialogue with your child.

Social media and staying in touch

During the summer holidays, young people may want to keep in touch with their friends through social networking sites or games. It's a good time to ask them about what sites they use, and check any age requirements as many social media sites require users to be at least 13 years old

Encourage your children to use the privacy tools on the services they use, so that the content they post is only available to people they know and trust in real life. To help your children set these up, we have [a guide to the privacy settings on the different sites](#) . You can also download the UK Safer Internet Centre's [safety checklists for popular sites](#) such as Instagram, Snapchat and Facebook.

Talking about their time online

The holidays are also a good opportunity to talk to your children about their online friendships, the sites they use and encourage best practices online. Why not:

[Take the 'Be the change' quiz](#) and help 8 – 13 year olds to explore how children and young people share images and videos online

[Have an adventure with Kara, Winston and the SMART Crew](#) and help them to make SMART online decisions

[Watch Red and Murphy talk to Freddie and Alisha](#) about asking before they watch videos online

Sharing holiday pictures

Some children may want to share photos and videos of what they are getting up to in their summer holidays online. Talk to your children about what types of photos are appropriate to share, and who they are okay to share with. Photos can hold clues that give away personal information. For example, if you share a selfie of you and friends, are there any landmarks or street signs that give away your location?

This is true for photos you might share of your children too! It's always worth asking children if they are happy with an image you want to share online. [Our Safer Internet Day research](#) found that 2 in 5 (40%) of 8-17s said that in the last year their parents or carers have posted a photo of them that embarrassed them, rising from 34% of 8-12s to 46% of 13-17s.

Make a family agreement

[A family agreement](#) is a great way to start a conversation with your whole family about how you all use the internet and discuss together how to behave in a positive way when online at home, at school or at a friend's house.

The agreement involves generating promises, these are positive statements about how your family wants to look after each other online and how you should treat others online. The summer can be one of the best times to sit down as a family and agree these promises together.

Most importantly: enjoy the summer holidays!

Online toxic masculinity

What do we mean by misogyny and 'the manosphere'?

Misogyny is when someone hates or has an aversion to women, and shows prejudice towards women. Someone might mistreat women, or believe that women are not as important or capable as men.

The **manosphere** is a group of online communities where misogynistic views are shared. These groups discuss masculinity and promote anti-feminist and sexist beliefs. The communities also discuss everyday topics such as gaming, finance and politics.

A lot of these groups use jokes and memes (pictures) to share their views, so it might not be obvious at a glance that they're spreading hateful content.

According to a recent survey, **69% of boys aged 11 to 14** have seen misogynistic content online without searching for it, and **52%** of the boys surveyed had seen content from influencers linked to the manosphere.

Not everyone uses this type of language however, so it's important to also be alert to generalisations being made about women and men. For example, statements about how *all* women act, or comments highlighting that women and men are different species.

You can view The Key's [digital dictionary](#) for a longer list of terms.

Other vocabulary you might hear

Incel – short for involuntary celibate. This refers to a man who believes he is unable to form a romantic or sexual relationship with a woman, despite wanting to.

Red pill/Redpilled – those who have ‘taken the red pill’ have ‘seen the truth’ (i.e they now believe that society treats women too well, and other ideas that undermine equality and fairness between genders).

Pickup Artists (PUA) – people who persuade, force or trick women into having sex with them.

The 80/20 rule – a (fake scientific) theory that 80% of women are only attracted to the top 20% of men. This is used to blame women for men’s feelings of inadequacy and rejection.

Chad – A boy/man who is very popular, good-looking and successful with women/girls.

Stacey – A girl/woman who is very popular and good-looking, and will usually only be attracted to ‘Chads’.

Some emojis linked to incel culture are:



Where might your child see this content?

Manosphere content is shared by various influencers across many different online services including:

- Social media platforms such as TikTok, YouTube and Instagram
- Podcasting platforms
- Online messaging boards such as 4Chan and Reddit
- Live streaming gaming platforms such as Twitch

Well-known influencers include Andrew Tate, Hamza Ahmed, Adin Ross and Jordan Petersen, but there are many more.

Content from misogynistic influencers will often:

- Be combined with other, less controversial material including fitness and lifestyle advice, which can help attract a wider audience
- Include step-by-step instructions on how to improve social standing
- Showcase wealth, luxurious lifestyles and expensive possessions. This makes followers think they can have the same success if they adopt the same beliefs

How does this content affect children?

Children, and especially boys, might get involved in these online communities as it gives them a sense of self-worth, belonging and security.

They can be strongly influenced, and even radicalised, by what they see.

Manosphere content promotes ideas such as:

- Men are more important and more powerful than women
- Violence against women is acceptable

Following these beliefs can lead to violence against women and girls, such as female classmates.

This content also promotes unrealistic expectations that can lead to poor self-esteem and mental health issues. It preys on vulnerabilities of boys and young men, especially those related to feeling alone and being rejected by women and girls.

What can you do as parents/carers?

We're talking about online toxic masculinity in school, for example:

- At Holyhead school we are tackling misogyny and toxic masculinity through our work in PSHE, assembly and form time.

However, children are less likely to be vulnerable to this type of content if they are having similar conversations reinforced at home.

We recommend you:

1. **Read recent news articles** about toxic masculinity and the most famous influencers, if you're not already familiar with them (you can find some in the 'Sources' box below).
2. **Ask your child what they're getting up to online** – show genuine interest, don't judge them or tell them what they should and shouldn't be doing. Children are more likely to share if they feel you're interested, rather than trying to check up on them.
3. **Encourage your child to question what they see online** – a child who is naturally sceptical about what they see online is less likely to be influenced by things that aren't true. Have conversations about why they trust certain influencers and how they can double-check the information they're seeing.
4. **Have open discussions about toxic masculinity** – don't tell your child how to think, but question their thinking and understanding. Ask if they believe some of the views being shared, such as that women "belong" to men, and how that might make the women in their lives feel, or they themselves feel.
5. **Be role models** – encourage your child to be open with their emotions. Show respect for women and girls, and encourage your child to model this behaviour

Financially motivated sexual extortion

What is 'sextortion'?

Financially motivated sexual extortion (or 'sextortion') is a type of online blackmail. An adult (or group of adults) threatens to release nude or semi-nude images of a child unless they pay them money, or do something else to benefit them. It is a form of child sexual abuse.

Sextortion is often carried out by offenders in an organised crime group, and is motivated by profit.

Sometimes adults pose as children, to make contact with them. They might:

- Groom or coerce the child into sending nudes or semi-nudes and financially blackmail them
- Use images that have been stolen from the child, taken through hacking their account
- Use digitally manipulated images, including AI-generated images, of the child

Signs to look out for

If a child is a victim of sextortion, they might:

- Spend more time online, or more time offline – they might try to avoid mobile phones, laptops and tablets entirely, for example
- Complain of being tired because they were online all night, or have their phone going off a lot
- Have stronger emotional responses or outbursts to being online – they may get unusually angry, upset or distant after checking their phone or using their computer/tablet
- Be secretive about their use of the internet or a device – they may refuse to hand their phone in if they're asked to do so by a teacher, or refuse to tell you what they get up to online
- Show signs of self-harm or suicidal thoughts. They might also show signs of hopelessness

How to protect yourself and your child from sextortion

- Encourage your child to be careful with the information they share online, and remind them that it's important to tell you if they're ever a victim of sextortion or other online abuse
- Review your child's privacy settings on any accounts they use, so it's harder for strangers to contact them
- Use strong passwords for each account you use online, so it's harder for criminals to break in and get information about you

What to do if you think your child is a victim

Do:

- Reassure them that it's not their fault, and that you'll support them to handle the situation
- Contact the police – you can make a report via the Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) website (<https://www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre/>)
- Use Childline's Report Remove service – this helps young people confidentially report sexual images/videos of themselves, remove them from the internet, and access specialist support (<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/report-remove/>)
- If your child agrees to it, speak to our school's designated safeguarding lead (DSL) Mrs Denny or email her on ddenny@holyhead.crst.org.uk

Don't:

- Blame your child – criminals use sophisticated methods to trick young people
- Pay the person asking for money – instead, make sure your child stops engaging with them
- Delete any images, messages or videos, since they can be used by the police as evidence

If your child or you know a child who is concerned that they may be a victim of sexual extortion please contact the DSL team at Holyhead school and we can support.

The school holidays

The school holidays can be a busy time, even though school is closed the safeguarding team are still here to support you. If you have any concerns about a child during the summer holidays please contact ddenny@holyhead.crst.org.uk or dbeale@holyhead.crst.org.uk and we will be happy to help you. Alternatively you can contact the school via the Holyhead helpline. If you feel a child is in immediate danger contact the police on 999 or to report a concern please contact Birmingham Children's Trust 0121 303 1888.