

HOLYHEAD SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER

June 2026

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. –Mrs D Denny Lead DSL. ddenny@holyhead.crst.org.uk

In this month's issue we look at:

- Dealing with anger in 11-18 year olds
- Spotting the signs of county lines and exploitation
- Managing the summer screen boundaries for your child
- Snapchat enhanced family tracking

Who to contact if you are concerned about a student at Holyhead school:

Mrs D Denny Lead DSL ddenny@holyhead.crst.org.uk
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Telephone the school on 0121 523 1960 to speak to any of the safeguarding team.

Dealing with anger in 11–18 year olds

Is it normal for a teenager to be angry all the time?

No two teenagers are the same. One may appear angrier than others including their siblings so as a parent you'll need to adapt your approach to individual needs. For all teenagers it's worth thinking about how they're sleeping and how much information they're being expected to process at a given moment.

Sleep

In addition to emotional triggers that affect everyone, teenagers need more sleep than children and adults. It allows their brains to develop. Not getting enough sleep can cause teenagers to become angry.

Information processing

Teenagers cannot store and process information as they could when they were a child. For example, if you're asking your teenage child to complete several tasks at once (clean their bedroom, do their homework and get a shower) they're unlikely to complete anything as their brain can't process the requests. This struggle with processing information can result in arguments and angry outbursts.

How to control adolescent anger?

Your aim is to help a teen control their behaviour when they feel angry. You can encourage positive and proactive self-reflection. When they're in a calm state of mind you can speak to them about what they think helps when they feel themselves becoming angry. They should know:

- They can learn to control their behaviour.
- Boundaries that are in place.
- What the consequences will be if they go over a boundary.

When your child is behaving angrily, as long as your child is not harming themselves or others, give them space. You can check in with them an hour or so later. If they're behaving angrily towards a sibling. It's important to talk to the sibling about their feelings and experience to make sure they also feel supported.

Finding ways to connect to your child is valuable, that might include gaming with them, eating food they like together or being aware of their friendship circle. Teens are often influenced by their peers so knowing who their friends are, what they do together, the music

Three steps of anger management

1. Recognise

Help a child recognise the early signs of anger.

They may experience:

- a faster heartbeat
- tense muscles
- racing thoughts
- a 'fuzzy' brain
- their stomach churning

By paying attention to these physical and emotional indicators, children can begin to identify when anger is building. It's important to help them understand that while these feelings are natural, the behaviours that follow can be managed.

Recognising these patterns gives them the power to pause, take control, and choose healthier, more constructive ways to express what they're feeling.

they like and games they play is a valuable way to stay connected.

If your child behaves violently, when things have calmed down, explain that abuse, physical harm or any damage to the property is not acceptable. Do not threaten your teenager with the Police or Children's Services unless you are willing to contact them for help. Otherwise, they will see this as an empty threat. Try to keep the conversation collaborative as you find healthy strategies to help them cope with expressing feelings of anger.

If you require support you can contact NSPCC for advice [NSPCC Helpline](#) | [NSPCC](#)

How to handle an argument

Try to stay calm even if you feel you are being goaded. If an argument feels like it's gone too far and you're both antagonising one another, explain you're going to walk away so you can take a break. Try speaking again when things feel calmer. Once an argument is over and resolved, do not revisit it at a later date, this is likely to cause further anger and resentment.



If you require support, Holyhead school can make a referral to Family Connect on your behalf.

- Mr Beale Senior DDSL dbeale@holyhead.crst.org.uk

2. Reflect

Once emotions have settled, take time to explore the situation with your child. Calm moments offer valuable opportunities to uncover the deeper feelings behind their anger.

Anger may stem from fear, confusion, sadness, or frustration. These underlying emotions can be linked to:

- Unmet needs
- Past experiences or trauma
- Ongoing stress or anxiety
- Unresolved conflicts
- Misunderstandings or distorted thinking

Reflection also involves accepting responsibility for any behaviour that occurred during moments of anger. What this looks like will vary depending on your child's age and level of understanding. Encouraging healthy self-reflection helps build self-awareness and empowers children to take ownership of their actions and reactions.

3. Respond

The third step is to respond to anger healthily and constructively.

Encourage the development of assertive communication skills, where they can express their needs and emotions confidently while still respecting others' boundaries.

Some helpful anger management strategies include:

- Deep breathing
- Mindfulness practices that help ground someone in the present (what can you see, hear and smell)
- Physical activities to release tension and calm the mind
- Regular self-care
- Building routines that include exercise, rest, hobbies, and relaxation

These habits reduce stress and make it easier to manage strong emotions before they escalate.

Spotting the Signs of County Lines & Exploitation

As the weather warms up and teenagers spend more unsupervised time outside, criminal gangs often exploit this freedom to groom young people into **County Lines** networks (running drugs from cities to smaller towns).

Grooming is rarely obvious; it often looks like a sudden shift in behavior, new friendships, or unexpected lifestyle changes.

Behavioral Warning Signs

- **Going missing:** Disappearing for hours or days without explanation.
- **Secrecy:** Becoming highly defensive about where they are going or who they are meeting.
- **Truancy:** Skipping school or dropping out of usual extracurricular activities.
- **Sudden aggression:** Drastic mood swings or emotional outbursts at home.

Physical & Material Red Flags

- **Unexplained items:** Possession of expensive trainers, designer clothes, or luxury goods.
- **Excess cash:** Having large amounts of money without a logical source.
- **Multiple phones:** Carrying a second, often cheaper "burner" phone used for secret communication.
- **Unexplained travel:** Holding train tickets, bus passes, or receipts for towns they have no reason to visit.

Relationship & Social Changes

- **Older associates:** Spending time with significantly older adults or new, unknown peer groups.
- **Gifts or "debts":** Receiving free food, vapes, or lifts, which gangs later use as "debt-bondage" to force compliance.
- **Physical injuries:** Unexplained bruises, cuts, or signs of physical neglect.

Local Birmingham Support: County Lines & Exploitation

If you suspect a student or child in Birmingham is being criminally exploited, you can contact the dedicated teams at **Birmingham Children's Trust** for direct local support, advice, and referrals.

- **To Report a Concern:** Contact the **Children's Advice and Support Service (CASS)** on **0121 303 1888**.
 - *Hours:* Monday to Thursday (8:45 am – 5:15 pm) and Friday (8:45 am – 4:15 pm).
 - *Option:* Select Option 2, then Option 2 to speak directly with a safeguarding advisor.
- **Emergency Out-of-Hours:** If you need to report an urgent concern outside of standard office hours, call the **Emergency Duty Team** on **0121 675 4806**.
- **Dedicated Exploitation Support:** Parents, carers, or staff who have specific questions or concerns regarding local exploitation networks can email the Birmingham Children's Trust **EMPOWER U Hub** directly at EMPOWERU@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk.
- **Online Reporting:** Professionals and community members can also submit a formal digital referral by completing the [Birmingham Children's Trust Request for Support Form](#). Always cross-reference the local threshold frameworks found on the [Birmingham Safeguarding Children Partnership](#) page when submitting professional evidence.

Managing the "Summer Drop-Off": Screen Time & Digital Boundaries

As school routines pause for July and August, many households experience the "Summer Drop-Off"—a sharp spike in unmonitored screen time and a drop in digital boundaries. While devices keep teenagers entertained, unsupervised access exposes them to higher risks of online bullying, viral peer pressure, and exploitation.

The Holiday Risks

- **Unregulated Group Chats:** Disagreements in large WhatsApp or Snapchat groups frequently escalate over the summer, driving anxiety and school-gate conflicts in September.
- **Algorithmic Rabbit Holes:** Isolated students spending hours on TikTok or YouTube Shorts are highly vulnerable to extreme content or radicalisation algorithms.
- **Sleeplessness:** Late-night gaming or messaging disrupts sleep cycles, severely impacting mental health, mood, and emotional resilience.

Practical Boundaries for Parents

- **Agree on a "Digital Contract":** Sit down before the term ends to agree on daily limits. Clear expectations reduce arguments later.
- **Enforce Screen-Free Zones:** Keep devices out of bedrooms overnight to prevent midnight scrolling. Charge phones in a communal space downstairs.
- **Leverage Parental Controls:** Use built-in tools (like Apple Screen Time or Google Family Link) to automatically lock entertainment and social apps after a set hour.
- **Encourage "Digital Detox" Activities:** Balance screen time with offline alternatives. Plan family walks, local volunteering, library challenges, or sports camps

Snapchat: Enhanced Location & Family Tracking

Snapchat remains a dominant communication tool for teenagers, but its interactive mapping features present unique geographic risks.

- **The Risk:** The interactive "Snap Map" can inadvertently broadcast a student's live location to acquaintances, exposing them to unwanted physical encounters or stalking.
- **The Safety Control:** Encourage parents to set the account to **"Ghost Mode"**, which entirely hides the user's location from the map.
- **New Parental Safeguards:** Parents should utilise the [Snapchat Family Centre](#) tool. This allows adults to link accounts and see exactly who their teen is messaging without viewing the private chat content. It also features safety additions like **Arrival Notifications** (formerly "Home Safe"), allowing teens to trigger automatic alerts notifying trusted friends or family when they arrive at a safe destination