

SPOTLIGHT ON SAFEGUARDING AND WELLBEING

»»» SPRING 2026 «««



Welcome to our latest Safeguarding & Wellbeing Newsletter. Inside, you'll find information on the newest online trends, apps to be aware of, and current concerns affecting young people. We've also included details of local support services to help you stay connected with your child's wellbeing as they navigate an ever-changing world.

EXPOSURE TO THE MANOSPHERE & INFLUENCER IMPACT

Recent documentaries and media attention have highlighted how young people, especially boys, are consuming content from extreme online influencers. These messages can affect attitudes toward gender, identity, and wellbeing.

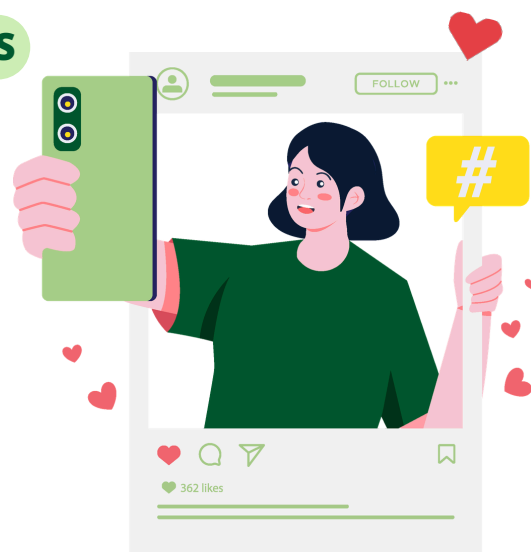
LOOKSMAXXING & APPEARANCE-BASED TRENDS

Many students are encountering appearance-focused content online encouraging them to "improve" or "optimise" their looks.

While some content appears harmless, it can:

- *Increase anxiety about appearance*
- *Promote unrealistic standards*
- *Lead to obsessive comparison*

Encourage conversations about body confidence and remind your child that much of the online content is edited, filtered or staged.



SELF-GENERATED SEXUAL IMAGERY & PRESSURE IN PRIVATE SPACES

The Internet Watch Foundation reports a rising trend in self-generated sexual content created in bedrooms, often under coercion or social pressure.

The concern is:

- *isolated young people online may be targeted by adults*
- *teens may feel pressured to share explicit content*
- *harmful content can be weaponised for bullying or blackmail*

Please continue to keep an eye on your child's online activity in a supportive and age-appropriate way. This doesn't mean invading their privacy, but staying curious about what platforms they use, who they talk to, and how they share images. Regular, calm conversations about online safety can make a huge difference and help children feel confident telling you if something doesn't feel right.

LATEST CRAZE: "SHOCK" CONTENT & VIRAL CHALLENGES

A number of platforms are pushing fast-paced, attention-grabbing content aimed at young people.

Current trends include:

- **Short shock-value clips** designed to surprise or startle
- **Viral "dares"** shared through group chats
- **AI-edited videos** that feel realistic or emotionally intense

These can cause anxiety, desensitisation or lead to unsafe peer pressure.

Advice:

Talk to your child about what they see online and remind them they can always talk to an adult if something unsettles them.

APPS PARENTS SHOULD BE AWARE OF

TIKTOK



Still hugely popular. Features fast-moving content, challenges, and at times inappropriate trends. Privacy settings need regular checking.

DISCORD



A voice and messaging app popular for gaming but also used for group chats. Some servers include unregulated content.

TELEGRAM



Encrypted messaging app. Known for private group chats where content may not be moderated.

YUBO



Marketed as "Tinder for teens." Based on live streaming and meeting new people. High risk due to chatting with strangers.

SUPPORT



KOOTH -

kooth FREE ONLINE MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Kooth is a **safe, accredited online platform** offering free counselling, wellbeing support, forums and self-help tools for children and young people.

Kooth provides:

- **1:1 chats with qualified counsellors**
- **Peer support forums (fully moderated)**
- **Articles written by young people**
- **Goal-setting and mood-tracking tools**

It's available **24/7**, with counsellors online at scheduled times.

Perfect for students who prefer digital support in a confidential environment.





NIGHT OWLS – OVERNIGHT CRISIS SUPPORT

Night Owls is a helpline for children, young people and parents/carers who need **emotional support overnight**.

It is ideal for:

- *Young people struggling with low mood, anxiety or stress*
- *Anyone feeling overwhelmed, scared or unable to sleep*
- *Parents needing advice about a distressed child*

Night Owls is open **8pm–8am**, providing a listening ear during the most difficult hours.

LOCAL SUPPORT IN BARNSLEY



BRANCHING MINDS BARNSLEY

A single point of contact for young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing support. They coordinate services including MHST and CAMHS.

Phone: 01226 107377



OPEN UP BARNSLEY

A comprehensive guide to youth services including mental health support, youth clubs, family services, LGBTQ+ support, bullying, and crisis help.

HOW PARENTS CAN SUPPORT

- *Keep communication open about online trends.*
- *Encourage critical thinking about content from influencers.*
- *Monitor emotional and behavioural changes.*
- *Contact school or local services early if concerns arise.*

If you have concerns about a student, Please reach out to the school's safeguarding team, Mrs Ola- Craig or Miss Fox via info@horizoncc.co.uk or studentwellbeing@horizoncc.co.uk.

