

SWANMORE Speaks



SWANMORE
Wellbeing

“
**I love how
summer just
wraps its arms
around you
like a warm
blanket.**

KELLIE ELMORE

Welcome to the 8th edition of Swanmore Speaks. We are so proud that our newsletter has been going for over a year now. We hope you enjoy it, share it with friends and family each half term and can find something to take away from it to help improve your mental health. Feedback is always welcome; if you'd like any special features or topics covered please just let us know.

✉ wellbeing@swamore-sec.hants.sch.uk

We also have lots of amazing resources on our website -
[Wellbeing - Swanmore College](#)



Follow us on our Well-Being
instagram page
[@Swanmore_Speaks](#) for weekly
tips on looking after your
well-being, and different ways
we can look after ourselves.

Week	Challenge	Action
25/4/22	Baking Bonanza	Make the bake featured in this newsletter and then bake something else you really like too - double the fun!
2/5/22	Be A-MAY-zing	Welcome in May be doing something amazing for yourself - what can you think of to celebrate fantastic you?
9/5/22	App-reciate art	Download a colouring app for your tablet or phone and get creative - try colorme, colorfly, colorbynumber or PicoToOns
16/5/22	Summer Stroll	Visit Exbury Gardens (see p6), Queen Elizabeth Country Park or Netley Country Park and stroll around in the sun.
23/5/22	Get creative for the Queen!	Create something which will help you celebrate the Queen's Jubilee- maybe a cake or pudding, or it could be some bunting or a banner.

A short term this half term, make sure you find time for you!

And don't forget there are two bank holidays in May half term for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee- Thursday 2nd June and Friday 3rd June.



Mood diary

Our mood diary is a practical way to keep track of how you're feeling each day.

When situations become too overwhelming, or those days when excitement is soaring, it's good to monitor the emotions you might experience. Use our template to note down how you feel, how intense the feeling was, and what was going on at that moment.



Give this a try - it is a great coping strategy for differing moods.

When? Day and time	What? How you were feeling	Intensity Scale 1 - 10	Notes What was going through your mind?

“A problem shared is a problem halved”, even when writing it down; you don't have to talk to somebody.

Thrive 365

Dragonfly: Impact Education



Did you know?

Your diet consists of more than simply what you eat. It also refers to what you watch, listen to, engage with and who you spend time with. Essentially, your 'diet' is anything you let past your boundaries that can have an impact on you physically, emotionally or mentally.

In a world that is designed to distract us, teenagers can focus on average for 65 seconds, whilst office workers can give focused attention for just three minutes. [1]

So, what can we do to protect our energy and attention?

[1] Dr R. Chatterjee Podcast: Feel Better, Live More #228

2 Engage senses

One of the problems with distraction culture is that it keeps you 'in your head'. This is a recipe for anxiety.

If you notice your mood dipping or signs of anxiety it can help to spend just two minutes sitting, with your eyes open, and focus in turn on some of your senses. Sight - what can you see? What does the texture look like? The colours and shades? Sounds - what's the furthest sound you can hear? What's the closest? And touch - feel your feet on the floor and the seat you're sitting in. Feel your stomach rise and fall as you breathe in and out.

1 Track moods

Sometimes, in the busy-ness of day-to-day life, it can be easy to miss the impact things have on our mood.

Whether it's emails pinging and interrupting your train of thought, a quick scroll through social media, or the Whatsapp group chat, be mindful of how you feel during and after engaging in a distracting activity. Score your mood out of five afterwards.

Over time, is it consistently bringing you down? Being aware of this is the first step in making a change.

3 Hit mute

There are practical things you can do to avoid distractions too - and this is important because the sense of 'flow' that comes from being absorbed in activity is important to wellbeing.

So, mute group chats, use your phone settings to stop notifications popping up on your phone from email or social media and set a time limit for usage on the apps you find most distracting. You can also set downtime on most phones, which means apps will be temporarily silenced during a certain period.

Our training: www.dragonflyimpact.com/link-tree

Email: info@dragonflyimpact.co.uk

@dragonflyimpact

We are always here to listen.

wellbeing@swamore-sec.hants.sch.uk



We are providing access to
free period products

Take what you need,
when you need it from:

- » Miss Smith (Welfare)
- » Mrs Deller (R Block)
- » Year Teams
- » Pupil Reception

#periodpositive
#periodequality

Creating period
equality for all.

<https://www.phs.co.uk/periodequalitydfe/>

Funded by

Department
for Education

phs Group

P=RIOD
EQUALITY

Week Day	First Break 11-11:35	Second Break 13:35-14:00	Notes
Monday	Pom Poms	Puzzles Galore!	
Tuesday	Card Games Shoot the Breeze	Friendship Bracelets/Braided Keychains	(Shoot the Breeze group will be in PE space.)
Wednesday	Wellbeing Wednesday Swanpride	Wellbeing Wednesday	
Thursday	Lego	Mindful Colouring	
Friday	Zentangle Art Young Carers	It's a kind of Magic	

Come and join us in the Pupil Centre every break throughout the week. We have a large selection of clubs run by the Wellbeing Champions, Anti-Bullying Ambassadors and supported by members of the Staff Wellbeing team.

You can drop in for a one off session or come along every week, it is entirely up to you!

We hope you enjoyed our recent video promoting the Pupil Centre which you may have seen in assembly.



Podcast recommendation

You might think more money, a better job, or Instagram-worthy vacations would make you happy. You're dead wrong. In "The Happiness Lab" podcast, Yale professor Dr Laurie Santos will take you through the latest scientific research and share some surprising and inspiring stories that will forever alter the way you think about happiness. She's changed the lives of thousands of people through her class "Psychology and the Good Life," and she'll change yours, too. Are you ready to feel better?

Recommended Mental Health Apps

SAM - self-help anxiety management (Apple & Android)
 Worry Box - anxiety self-help (Android)
 What's Up (Android)
 MindShift (Apple & Android)
 Fear Tools - Anxiety Aid (Apple & Android)
 ThinkNinja (Apple & Android)– designed for 10 – 18 years old

GET OUTSIDE, BE AT ONE WITH NATURE

Regardless of whether or not gardening is 'your thing', Exbury is one of the most beautiful places to visit in Hampshire. Referred to as 'one of the finest woodland gardens in the county' each of the 200 acres is a pleasure to explore.

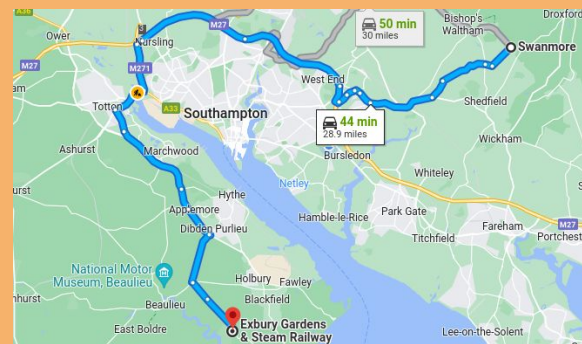
More than 100 years in the making, Exbury's glorious gardens, designed and curated by the de Rothschild family, have the power to delight and inspire in equal measure. This spectacular collection of landscaped woodland, herbaceous, contemporary, formal and wildflower gardens provide an ever-changing palette of colour that will entice you back to witness the seasons unfold.



Exbury House, a neoclassical mansion, was rebuilt starting in 1919 at Exbury Gardens, Hampshire. Credit: Alamy



Exbury Gardens, SO45 1AZ



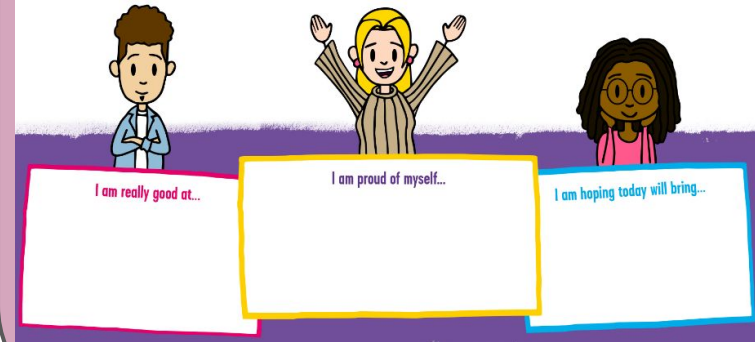
Worth
the
journey

WELLNESS WORKOUT

Create your own circuit training course at home - outside if you can - and challenge yourself, family and friends to complete it with you. You can write instruction cards to put out and also use equipment. If you have a skipping rope, football, cones, bucket or even younger siblings ball pit balls or trampolines then use them to create your own unique course. You can include burpees, tuck jumps, squats, lunges, running on the spot, high knees, lunges, half or full plank, jumping jacks and much more.



Don't forget to check in with yourself, review how you are feeling, congratulate yourself, praise yourself...



Watch how to plank properly
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ni2BxVc59fk>

Ingredients

- 400 g Milk/Dark Chocolate
- 125 g Golden Syrup
- 125 g Unsalted Butter
- 100 g Mini Marshmallows
- 150 g Digestives (chopped)
- 600-800 g Easter Chocolates
- 250 g White Chocolate



British Nutrition Foundation
Healthy Eating week
13-17 June 2022



Instructions

1. Line a 8/9" Square tin with Parchment paper and leave to the side.
2. In a Large bowl, add in the Chocolate, Golden Syrup, and Butter – melt on a low heat over a Double Boiler, or in the Microwave on short bursts until fully melted – stir till smooth! Be careful not to overheat the mixture!
3. Once it's melted and combined, add in the Marshmallows, chopped biscuits, Easter Chocolates (Apart from a handful) – fold together – pour into the tin and spread till its even.
4. Melt the white chocolate and pour over the top of the rocky road, and sprinkle over the last of the Easter Chocolates!
5. Refrigerate until set, chop up, and enjoy!



Easter Rocky Road

Recipe from Jane's Patisserie:

<https://www.janespatisserie.com/2016/03/11/easter-rocky-road/>

Have a go at and send Mrs Griffiths a photo of your bake!
mrsgriffiths1@swanmore-school.co.uk

Ten practical tips for supporting Mental Health

From parents who have gone through it

- 1** Above all, accept and try to understand your child's difficulties – educate yourself as much as possible about your child's mental health challenges.
- 2** Be kind to yourself. If you don't look after yourself first, you won't be able to look after your child.
- 3** Ask for and accept help from professionals, family members or support groups.
- 4** Until your child has the right help and support in place, remember that many of their everyday behaviours may be driven by their mental health needs.
- 5** There is no one right answer. It takes time to work out the best support and interventions that will work for your family. Be patient.
- 6** Find simple things to help you - meet a friend, play a sport, go for a walk. Giving yourself permission to take time out for yourself will help you care for your child.
- 7** Forgive yourself if you say or do the wrong thing. You will be learning alongside your child and doing the best that you can.
- 8** There are times when you need to trust your instinct – you know your child better than anyone and that you are a crucial part of their support team.
- 9** It's okay to feel however you feel - sad, angry, upset, numb. Go with it, but if the negative feelings last for too long, get help.
- 10** Hold on to hope, no matter how difficult things seem. Just being there, listening and offering hope is the most important thing you can do.

Charlie Waller Free Webinars

For parents, carers and educators presented by mental health trainers, speakers and guest speakers who come from a wide range of professions. The webinars explore strategies for maintaining positive mental health, paying attention to our own wellbeing and supporting those around us.



charliewaller.org/what-we-do/free-webinars



Routines can provide children with comfort and stability at a time when they are likely to feel worried or overwhelmed.

Over the last week or two, many of us will have been watching events in the news with a mixture of shock and horror, especially those of us from - or with friends and family from - the affected areas. Even without a direct personal connection to the conflict, it's natural that seeing all the footage coming out of Ukraine, whether on the news or on social media, can be distressing. It's important to recognise this, even if we are committed to paying attention, showing solidarity, or seeking to help the victims. It can be particularly hard to know how to talk to your child about what's going on. Experts share tips for talking to your young person about the events in Ukraine.

[How To Talk To Your Child About The War In Ukraine | YoungMinds](#)



TALK LISTEN CHANGE LIVES

However you do it, start a conversation about mental health

✉ wellbeing@swanmore-sec.hants.sch.uk

🌐 www.swanmorecollege.co.uk/wellbeing

time to talk day

03/02/22



Mental Health Awareness- dates for our diaries

Children's Mental Health Week 7-13th Feb 2022

Schools, youth groups, organisations and individuals across the UK took part. This year's theme was **Growing Together**; it was about growing emotionally and finding ways to help each other grow. At Swanmore College pupils were encouraged to write a motivational message to a friend on a leaf (a real one or paper template) and these were shared.

Stress Awareness Month

April 2022

This month increases public awareness about the causes of stress and how to help combat it in this harried, modern-day life. Stress can filter in from various parts of life, from the workplace as well as personal relationships, and coping with and relieving it can certainly look different for each individual person. Learning about this month can certainly help anyone who struggles to cope with their stress and those may find themselves in need of guidance and advice. So get ready to get aware and involved with Stress Awareness Month!

Mental Health Awareness Week

Monday 9 May to Sunday 15 May 2022

*The official theme is **loneliness**.*

The week will raise awareness of the impact of loneliness on our mental wellbeing and the practical steps we can take to address it. Reducing loneliness is a major step towards a mentally healthy society.



Check out "Days of the year"
<https://www.daysoftheyear.com> for a more interesting focus on your day!

Swanpride

M&S launched same sex Colin The Caterpillar couple cake for Valentine's day.




For extra support and advice.

Breakout Youth: LGBTQ+ Support Hampshire & Isle of Wight

Homepage - Mermaids (mermaidsuk.org.uk)

LGBT+ - Y Services
<https://www.justlikeus.org/>
<https://www.stonewall.org.uk/>

Everyone's talking about Jamie. (12) on Amazon Prime. "Despite obstacle, 16-year-old Jamie has the courage to fabulously follow his unconventional dream in this inspiring true story turned musical sensation".



SWANPRIDE
LGBTQ+ CLUB

WEDNESDAYS / 1ST BREAK
THE PUPIL CENTRE

- Information, advice and guidance
- A welcoming, safe environment
- Support for all (not just LGBTQ+)

Any questions? Email us!
swanpride@swanmore-school.co.uk



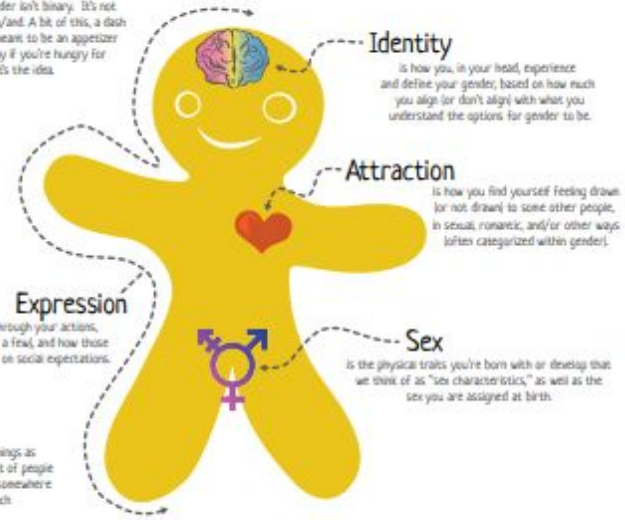
WINNER
BEST NEW MUSICAL
2018 WhatsOnStage Awards

THE TIMES | INDEPENDENT | TIME OUT
THE STAGE | WHATSONSTAGE | THEATRE | ATTITUDE

EVERYBODY'S TALKING ABOUT
JAMIE

The Genderbread Person by its pronounced METROsexual

Gender is one of those things everyone thinks they understand, but most people don't. Gender isn't binary. It's not either/or. In many cases it's both/and. A bit of this, a dash of that. This tasty little guide is meant to be an appetizer for gender understanding. It's okay if you're hungry for more after reading it. In fact, that's the idea.



We can think about all these things as existing on continuums, where a lot of people might see themselves as existing somewhere between 0 and 100 on each.



Identity ≠ Expression ≠ Sex
Gender ≠ Sexual Orientation

Sex Assigned At Birth
 Female Intersex Male

*Typically based solely on external genitalia present at birth (ignoring internal anatomy, biology, and change throughout life). Sex Assigned At Birth (SAB) is a key for distinguishing between the terms "transgender" (which SAB aligns with gender identity) and "cisgender" (where SAB aligns with gender identity).



What to do once your child has raised a Gender Identity issue

- Stay calm at all times.
- Give yourself time to talk; don't rush the conversation.
- Be prepared to listen and acknowledge the young person's emotions and thoughts.
- Let your young person know you want to understand, help and support them.
- Let them know that you will seek extra support and advice when they are ready. Let your GP know with the agreement of your child.

- In the first instance, GPs should be able to support and refer to a Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) or to the highly specialist Gender Identity Development Service (GIDS) at the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust who will work with the whole family.

- Seek support and information from Mermaids UK: www.mermaidsuk.org.uk
- Seek out a local support group for parents and trans youngsters. Both you and your child will benefit enormously by meeting others.
- When the time is right, notify your child's school; do so via the head teacher or a senior member of staff.

REMEMBER IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT: YOU HAVE NOT CAUSED THE GENDER IDENTITY ISSUE. However, family reactions and emotions need to be sensitively handled.



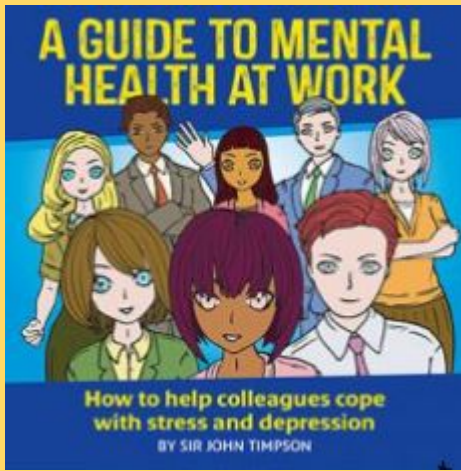
SWANMORE
LGBTQ+



Your child may be experiencing some or all of these:

- Nervous, anxious, terrified, lonely, vulnerable, unhappy.
- Why is this happening to me?
- What does the future hold for me? Will these feelings ruin my future?
- Everyone will ridicule me. I feel suicidal.
- What I feel isn't right according to other people. Is it sinful?
- Am I the only person to feel this way? I don't know anyone else like this.
- How do I tell my family and friends about these feelings? Other things to be mindful of:
- Remind your child that you love and care about them; that you will get through difficulties together.
- Tell them you understand that they may be distressed and that you recognise that their emotional struggle is very real.
- Take care of yourself; have "you" time.
- Do not trust all you read on the web. In particular, many of the anti-trans articles and statistics are untrue.

**TIPS FOR PARENTS
AND PROFESSIONALS**



"We all have mental health and it can fluctuate between thriving, struggling and feeling unwell. If all of us are more aware of our own and other's mental health much can be done to improve well-being at work."

"There is a limit to how much work anyone can do, but some people still force themselves to do even more!"

"Many of those with stress feel they are surrounded by happy people who can all cope with life without a care in the world."

"The first step on the road to recovery is to pluck up the courage to tell someone things aren't okay."

Swanmore Staff Wellbeing

Sir John Timpson has written a range of books around mental health, one being for staff and "a guide for mental health at work". It is worth popping into a Timpson's store near you and seeing if you can get yourself a free copy. There is lots of information which is useful inside these little books.



Looking for support?

We all have mental health. Sometimes this is positive and at times not so easy. It is important to remember that it is our individual and personal responsibility to seek help and advice when needed.

Staff Football

When? Fridays after school
Where? MUGA (if dry), Sports Hall (if raining)
For more details, please email Dave Hedicker.

Staff Yoga

When? Tuesdays, 4.15 - 5.15 pm
Where? The Performing Arts Building
For more details, please email Sarah Dufty.

Helplines

Mind

Call 0300 123 3393
or text 86463

Mind offers advice, support and information to people experiencing a mental health difficulty and their family and friends.

Rethink

Call 0300 5000 927

Provides expert advice and information to people with mental health problems and those who care for them, as well as giving help to health professionals, employers and staff.

Samaritans

Call 116 123

Samaritans is a registered charity aimed at providing emotional support to anyone in emotional distress, struggling to cope, or at risk of suicide.

SHOUT

Text SHOUT to 85258

A free, confidential, 24/7 text messaging support service for anyone who is struggling to cope.

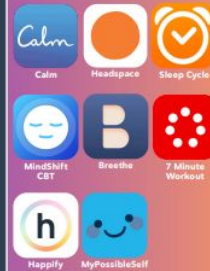
Employee Assistance Programme

Freephone 0800 030 5182 healthassured.eap.co.uk

24 hour a day, 365 day a year free, confidential telephone advice and information line covering a wide range of issues including work, personal and family related, available all staff and their immediate family members.

Useful Apps

Free apps available for download to help you manage your mental health and wellbeing.



Unions

NASUWT
www.nasuw.org.uk

NEU
neu.org.uk

NUT
www.teachers.org.uk

Unison
www.unison.org.uk

Who to talk to if you're feeling low

If you are struggling and need to talk to someone in school, please speak to your Line Manager.

Alternatively, speak to a member of the Wellbeing Team. (You can spot them around College by their yellow lanyards!)

FREE Fruit

Collect a free piece of fruit EVERY DAY from the catering team in the Swan Cafe between 7 am - 8:30 am. The fruit available are as follows:

Apples, Pears, Bananas, Plums, Satsumas

Seasonal Affective Disorder

What is seasonal affective disorder?

Although seasonal affective disorder is very common, it's not something you hear talked about enough. It is similar to depression, except it comes and goes in a seasonal pattern, with the symptoms usually being mainly present during the winter. These symptoms include low mood, a lack of energy, a loss of pleasure in activities you would normally enjoy, and feelings of irritability. Over the years of experiencing seasonal affective disorder, I have found a plethora of coping mechanisms that every winter I try to implement in my life. I want to share these with you in case they help. You don't have to implement every coping mechanism I mention here; I know the motivation isn't always there to try and get better. Some days you just want to curl up and have a duvet day, and that is perfectly valid. These are just some techniques that have helped me cope with my feelings.

I have found that even if I try one of the following coping mechanisms, it brings me one step closer to feeling that little bit better.

Sunlight and walking

This has to be one of my main coping strategies on days I'm feeling very low. Even if my brain is telling me to just stay in bed, I get up and go for an hour-long walk. It doesn't even have to be that long - ten minutes walking with the sun shining on my face and I always feel better. Spending some time in the sun provides us with Vitamin D and can help us produce serotonin, both of which have been linked to improvements in mood. Getting some exposure to sunlight in the morning can also help our bodies regulate the release of melatonin, a hormone known to affect our sleep. This means that a bit of sunlight in the morning can help feelings of lethargy and sleepiness subside (at least for a little while) and help us sleep better at night.

Ten minutes walking with the sun shining on my face and I always feel better.

Stop scrolling in the mornings

One of the most important things I have implemented in my life is to stop scrolling on social media in the mornings and instead just get up straight away.

By doing this, I stop myself from two things: a) from staying in bed all day feeling low and depressed with no energy, and b) comparing myself to the highlight reel that is shown on social media, which tends to only make my mood worse and sets a bad tone for the rest of the day. By getting up straight away without going on my phone, the day already seems brighter.

Journaling

I find it really helpful when I'm feeling low to get my thoughts and feelings down in my diary. Most of us think about how we're feeling, but never either say it out loud or write it down. By writing it down, you take those thoughts that are going around and around in your mind and get them out, which can feel really good when you're down. If you don't have a physical diary, write it in a word doc! You will find your mind is that bit emptier of those constant negative thoughts.

By writing it down, you take those thoughts that are going around and around in your mind and get them out, which can feel really good when you're down.

Creating a routine and planning my days

Having a routine and planning my days has been essential over the years for managing low mood. When I'm feeling low, sometimes I feel no motivation to do anything. While this is completely valid, I have personally found that the feeling of productivity I get from doing things on my 'to do' list (when I'm able to) makes the days when I can't manage anything feel less bad.

When I talk about a routine, this doesn't have to include anything big. Adding things to my daily routine such as waking up early, making my bed every day, reading my favourite book and journaling have made such an impact on how I feel day to day. Those things may not seem like a lot, but they add up.

Therapy

I know lots of people suggest counselling if you are struggling with your mental health. But it is something that I can honestly say has changed my life and the way I see the world. Talking to someone professional who not only has a different perspective, but who I can be completely honest with, has been game-changing. Because of the confidentiality you have with a therapist, I felt completely safe to express my emotions fully. Therapy also helped me find the coping mechanisms I've mentioned here.

Talking to someone professional who not only has a different perspective, but who I can be completely honest with, has been game-changing.

Finally, just know that while it may feel like your feelings are never-ending and things will never get better, they will. Whether this is a new thing for you or you have been struggling for years, things will get better. You are not alone in this I promise you.

I hope that, even if you try just one of these coping mechanisms, it will help you feel more yourself again.

ANTI-BULLYING

The Anti-Bullying Committee are pleased to be extending their numbers and have welcomed applications from Year 7 pupils to become part of the Year 7 Anti-Bullying Forum. The Committee are currently looking through the application forms ready to launch the forum in the summer term. The Year 7 Forum will give pupils an opportunity to work with our Anti-Bullying Committee on upcoming projects with a view to becoming part of the full committee in September.

We have also launched a competition to all Year 7 Tutor groups to design a brand new Year 7 Anti-Bullying Forum badge. The closing date for designs is Thursday 7th April and designs should be handed to tutors. The committee are really looking forward to judging the competition and choosing a new badge for the Year 7 Forum members to wear.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

"Repeated, negative behaviour that is intended to make others feel upset, uncomfortable or unsafe."

V	I	P
VERBAL	INDIRECT	PHYSICAL
Harsh words, offensive language, teasing, discriminatory language	Excluding someone, rumours, spreading someone's secrets, cyber-bullying, damaging, taking someone's property and physical intimidation	Hurting someone intentionally, hitting, punching, pushing, getting, snatching

Are you experiencing or witnessing any of these forms of behaviour?
If so - **IT IS BULLYING**

Please report it to:

- Anti-Bullying Committee member (Ambassador)
- Any member of staff
- Your "Go To" Adult
- Email antibullying@swanmore-sec.hants.sch.uk

DIANA AWARD CRISIS MESSENGER

TEXT OR CALL TO 85258 FOR CALF SUPPORT



What parents need to know about Yubo

With an estimated user-base of 50 million, Yubo (previously known as Yellow) might be the biggest social media platform you've never heard of. Unless, of course, you caught last month's *Sunday Times* investigation – in which an undercover journalist posed as a 15-year-old girl on the app, receiving requests for hook-ups, demands for nude images and threats of sexual violence.

As if that were not alarming enough, Yubo also enables strangers to watch children's live video streams – while granting the app access to their device's GPS tracker reveals a young person's exact location. Our #WakeUpWednesday guide this week has a thorough breakdown of everything that trusted adults ought to know about Yubo.

✉ wellbeing@swanmore-sec.hants.sch.uk



SAFEGUARDING
AT SWANMORE

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about YUBO

AGE LIMIT
13+

Yubo is a social networking platform where users can chat and livestream with up to 10 friends at once. People can connect with others based on location, with a Tinder-style 'swiping' mechanism to accept or reject someone based on their profile pictures. The app has approximately 50 million users worldwide – but despite its popularity, Yubo has not been free from controversy. While the app claims to monitor inappropriate content, a newspaper investigation in early 2022 found young users being exposed to sexual harassment, racism, bullying and conversations with adult themes.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

FLIMSY AGE GATES

Yubo states it is only for over 13s, but there is no credible age-gate to prevent even young teens joining the platform. An undercover journalist investigating dangerous content reported spending 10 days posing as a 15-year-old on the app, without any age verification. This flaw, and the fact that it's impossible to verify a user's true identity on Yubo, raises serious concerns over potential grooming.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Yubo has experienced problems with inappropriate content being displayed to children and teens. Although the app's developers claim to monitor profiles and messages for adult themes or unsuitable material, a *Sunday Times* investigation found young users being exposed to sexual harassment, racism and bullying, with many girls referencing self-harm, suicide and drug use.

LIVESTREAM RISKS

Due to Yubo's live app verification, children are able to launch live video streams which anyone can view and interact with via real-time text chat. Not only is the chat open to strangers watching children's livestreams, but they're also able to establish the child's location. Live text chats might result in a young person disclosing personal information.

DISCOURAGE USE

We don't often advise totally avoiding an app, but due to the concerns that Yubo has generated of late (the February 2022 *Sunday Times* exposé and recent allegations on the platform), you may wish to tell a teenage girl through the app) and the fact that inappropriate content has been exposed to her, you may wish to advise that the safest option is to dissuade your child from downloading it altogether.

STAY AWARE

It's important to stay attuned to how your child is using social media, if they only access Yubo in private, for example, you might reasonably question what they're potentially using it for. It's also important to watch for morning sickness, as this may be over-using the app; prioritising it over everyday routines like meals and homework; for instance, or showing signs of irritability and a lack of concentration.

MEET OUR EXPERT

Carly Popple is an experienced technology journalist with a track record of more than 10 years in the industry. Previously the editor of TechTabloid The Inquirer, Carly is now a freelance technology journalist, editor and consultant.

ADVICE FOR PARENTS & CARERS

DISCUSS IN ADVANCE

If your child is absolutely determined to join Yubo (perhaps their friends all use the platform, for instance), then it's essential to talk to them about the dangers of this type of app before they install it. It's vital they understand not to disclose personal information to people they don't know, for example, and that they're warned about the type of mature content they may be exposed to on the app.

ALTER THE SETTINGS

After the recent high-profile controversies surrounding the app, Yubo's developers have increased its security controls. Users can now choose to block profiles, screen out nudity in live streams, and block anyone who has blocked them. There is also an option to report inappropriate content, so make sure your child knows that they can now flag up anything they find disturbing via the app's Safety Centre.

BULLYING POTENTIAL

Yubo users 'swipe' to accept or decline the chance to talk with each other. These decisions are entirely based on someone's profile picture, raising the potential for children to be left with low self-esteem if declined repeatedly. Negative feedback about their appearance can extremely damage a child's emotional wellbeing, causing a loss of confidence in how they look or how interesting they are.

EXTENSIVE ACCESS

Users of Yubo, no matter what their age, are required to grant access to their device's microphone and GPS. This means they are potentially revealing highly sensitive information, including their exact location. In addition, new users of the app are asked to provide personal details such as their name, date of birth and phone number, which – in the case of young people – represents a clear risk.

GATEWAY EFFECT

Yubo's swiping system (right for 'yes', left for 'no') works much like Tinder's swiping system. This could lead to children exploring similarly designed apps that were not intended for young audiences. Users can also link their Yubo account to social media such as Snapchat and Instagram, making it easier for a stranger to track them down on various platforms.

PROFILES

PCS

USER NAMES

LOCATIONS

NOS

National Online Safety

#WakeUpWednesday

www.nationalonlinesafety.com [@nationalonlinesafety](https://twitter.com/nationalonlinesafety) [NationalOnlineSafety](https://www.facebook.com/NationalOnlineSafety) [@nationalonlinesafety](https://www.instagram.com/nationalonlinesafety)

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 08.03.2022



<https://www.safe4me.co.uk/>

<https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>

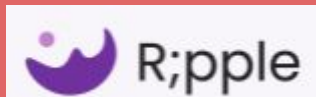
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<https://www.mind.org.uk>

<https://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/>

<https://www.thecalmzone.net/>

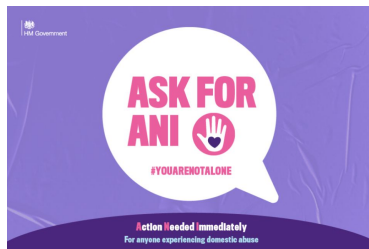
<https://www.annafreud.org/on-my-mind/self-care/>



Discretely intercepting harmful searches and providing signposting to 24/7, free mental health support at a time when you are most vulnerable.

To find out more:

<https://www.ripplesuicideprevention.com/>



Helplines:

Anxiety UK:
support@anxietyuk.org.uk
08444775774

MIND:
info@mind.org.uk
03001233393

No Panic:
admin@nopanic.org.uk
08449674848

Nightline:
Nightline.ac.uk

Samaritans:
jo@samaritans.org
116123 (freephone)

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-abuse-how-to-get-help>