

Spotlight on..... Sexual violence and harassment

Reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment involving young people are growing. In order to raise awareness of these types of crime, here is some definitions worth knowing.

We know this isn't something we want to think about in relation to young people, but it is important to understand what these terms mean and the support available should they experience anything like this. At College we always listen to our learners, taking any disclosures seriously and provide the best pastoral support to ensure learners feel listened to and supported. We work closely with a range of services and agencies and will work with families to ensure access to appropriate services is offered.

What is sexual violence?

Sexual violence is the general term we use to describe any kind of unwanted sexual act or activity, including rape, sexual assault, sexual abuse, and many others.

What is sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment is any unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature that makes you feel distressed, intimidated or humiliated. It can take lots of different forms. It can include or be called sexualised bullying. You don't have to have objected to a certain kind of behaviour in the past for it to be unwanted and constitute harassment.

Sexual harassment can include:

- someone making sexually degrading comments or gestures
- your body being stared or leered at
- being subjected to sexual jokes or propositions
- e-mails or text messages with sexual content
- physical behaviour, including unwelcome sexual advances and touching
- someone displaying sexually explicit pictures in your space or a shared space, like at work
- offers of rewards in return for sexual favours

What is sexual assault?

Sexual or indecent assault is any physical, psychological and emotional violation in the form of a sexual act, inflicted on someone without their consent.

Sexual assault can involve forcing or manipulating someone to witness or participate in sexual activity.

Sexual assault doesn't have to involve other physical violence or weapons. Just because someone doesn't have visible injuries, doesn't mean they weren't sexually assaulted.

What to do if you have a concern about sexual violence and / harassment:

- **Speak to a member of the Safeguarding Team, who can provide advice on next steps**
- **If a crime has occurred then you can be supported to report to the Police (111)**
- **If someone is at immediate risk then call the Police on 999**
- **NSPCC helpline number is 0800 136 663.**

You can email our Safeguarding Team using this email address Safeguarding@rnn.ac.uk to report any concerns or to access support.



All our learners can register with Togetherall, our online mental health community, using your college email address. It is anonymous and the email is purely to access this purchased support. Visit www.togetherall.com to find out more.

The great thing about Togetherall is that it can be accessed at any hour of the day. The Wall Guides (professional support staff) are available to interact with, as well as many other community members. We have found it helpful for our learners to be able to share their thoughts with other people who might be feeling the same. There is lots of self-help advice and self-assessments our learners can access for free. If your young person hasn't registered yet, encourage them to do so.

10 tips for young people to stay safe online

With what seems like our whole lives moving online over the past 14 months its important to have regular conversations with your young people about keeping themselves safe on line. Here are the tips we have shared with them, have a chat and see what they already do to keep themselves safe, ask if they had thought of these or whether they can think of any more.

1. STRANGER DANGER

Remember the old saying “Stranger Danger”? Just as you wouldn’t talk to, share photos with or give out personal information to a stranger on the street, the same applies online. You never know who is really typing those messages, however convincing they may seem! Always tell a parent or teacher straight away if messages or images you see or receive online make you feel uncomfortable

2. CHECK YOUR PRIVACY SETTINGS

It’s easy to set up a social media account, but make sure you take your time to choose the highest privacy settings. Or, go back now and check them! Google yourself and see what information and images come up in the results – this is your ‘digital footprint’. You may be surprised and find your profiles and photos aren’t as hidden as you thought.

3. REMEMBER, POSTING IS PERMANENT

Many people think that deleting something online means removing it from the internet forever. Sadly, that’s not true. After posting something online, anyone can save, download and re-use it! Think twice before posting something you may regret later – remember employers often check social profiles when hiring. Posting something in the heat of the moment or an inappropriate photo can make or break your future. Just think about all the recent scandals around the uncovering of old, inappropriate tweets by a host of now infamous YouTubers!

4. CREATE STRONG PASSWORDS

When it comes to passwords, your birthday just won’t cut it! Keeping your accounts safe online starts with choosing secure passwords with a mix of symbols, numbers and capital letters. Never share your passwords with anyone, even friends.

5. NEVER REVEAL PERSONAL INFORMATION

Anyone that knows you well, will never need to ask for personal information like your address or school online. Never give out this information and be wary of who is asking for it – always tell a parent or College Tutor.

6. BE AWARE OF FAKE NEWS

Fake news has been on everyone’s lips during the past year or so. Normally, if something sounds too good to be true, it is! If you were wondering, understanding how to stay safe online doesn’t stop with social media. It’s also about picking up on spam emails. Never open links or attachments from an unknown sender, they could unleash a virus on your computer. And never pass on personal information, such as online banking details, when requested by email – your bank or other trusted organisations will never ask for this over email.

7. BE RESPECTFUL TO OTHERS

It’s easy to type something when you’re hiding behind a screen. But remember, there’s also a real person at the other side of the screen, so be respectful and polite to others online. Despite all the interaction, social media can feel like a very lonely place to be.

8. REMEMBER OUR LIVES ON SOCIAL MEDIA AREN’T THE FULL STORY

Recent studies have shown the effect social media can have on how young people feel about themselves and their lives. In a world of impeccable Instagram feeds and seemingly beautiful YouTubers, it’s really important to remember that the lifestyles portrayed on social media are only part of the story. Despite how it looks from the outside, nobody’s life is perfect and follower counts don’t define your meaningful offline relationships.

9. KNOW HOW TO BLOCK OR REPORT CONTENT

Part of Safer Internet Day is about taking responsibility for making the internet a better place to be. Knowing how to block and report inappropriate content or instances of cyber-bullying helps shape the community.

10. RECOGNISE WHEN IT’S TIME TO LOG OFF

And finally, using the internet safely is not just about what you get up to online, it’s about how much time you’re spending doing it. The internet is a great tool for keeping in touch with friends and being creative, but being online for excessive amounts of time can have a negative impact on other areas of life, such as school and sleep. It’s really important to know when it’s time to unplug and spend some time away from screens, especially our smartphones.

Our learners, while using their college google account can report anything that they don’t feel happy it about by using the safeguarding 24 app.

Understanding the threat

Currently the UK National Threat Level is SUBSTANTIAL, meaning a terrorist attack in the UK is likely.

The UK's terrorism threat level was downgraded on 8th February 2021 from "severe" to "substantial". Home Secretary Priti Patel said the move followed a "significant reduction" in the momentum of attacks in Europe - since those seen in Austria and France between September and November 2020.

Critical	An attack is highly likely in the near future
Severe	An attack is highly likely
Substantial	An attack is likely
Moderate	An attack is possible, but not likely
Low	An attack is highly unlikely

Our current terrorist threats come from:

- Online extremism
- Self-Initiating Terrorists
- Islamist Terrorism & Extremism
- Right- Wing Terrorism & Extremism

Report Suspicious Activity

If you've seen or heard something that could potentially be related to terrorism, trust your instincts and report it. Your actions could save lives.

Report Online <https://act.campaign.gov.uk/>

It only takes a moment to make a report online.

In an emergency, or if you need urgent police assistance, you should always dial 999.

You can also report suspicious activity by contacting the police in confidence on 0800 789 321.

Every year thousands of reports from the public help the police keep communities safe from terrorism.

Be safe when out and about

We talk a lot about staying safe online, but want to share some tips on staying safe when out and about too, even though the longer days are here, young people still need to be aware of the risks out there and make good choices to keep themselves safe.

5 top tips

1. Have your mobile phone charged and with you in case you need to make an emergency call.
2. Let someone (maybe a parent) know where you will be and whom you are with. Update them if plans change.
3. Walk in well-lit public areas at night.
4. Keep headphones at a low volume if you wear them while walking or jogging.
5. Don't text and walk or drive. Remind friends to put down their phones while driving.

Different schemes have been set up to support members of the public who feel uncomfortable or in need of help, like the ask for Angela or ask for ANI campaigns. If you are in town, you can pop into any shop and ask for help or report concerns to the non-emergency Police number 111, if you are in immediate danger call 999.



You can always speak to a member of the College Wellbeing Team if you have need advice and guidance on how to keep safe.