

## UAE South Bank: Safeguarding for Families – June Update

As we know there are some challenges for young people today. There have been a number of concerning stories in the media recently about self-harm and suicide. We know that for you as families, it can be a hard task to keep up with how to keep your children safe online.

Young people may well have watched a film on Netflix - 'Thirteen Reasons Why', concerning a secondary aged pupil engaged in an act of self-harm. The film has become controversial because of its explicit portrayal of the character's death. **In the UK there are strict guidelines about suicide in drama, but Netflix operates outside those rules.** There are other 'crazes' that some young people may be attracted to and these are also potentially equally concerning.

It is wise to regularly talk to your daughter or son about what they are doing online. We should celebrate the exciting things that the internet offers, but provide sensible advice as adults, caution and support if we become aware that our children are taking risks and report anything if concerned (please see CEOP or Safer Internet guidance on this).

The risks will always be there, but learning about risk and learning how to manage and mitigate risk is key to supporting our children in understanding what good mental health is. We have to help young people with these issues as well as raise concerns where a child is at risk, or may be potentially at risk, of harm and abuse.

### The most important message to young people about keeping safe online is:

- Follow the age restrictions e.g. Facebook is currently 13 years' old
- Have the passwords to all of the accounts that your child creates
- Inform your child that you will monitor their accounts sporadically for their own safety and for your peace of mind
- Put privacy settings on
- Advise your child not to post content that could harm themselves or other people.
- Inform your child that anything that they post or send digitally will become permanent and could be presented by recipients as evidence of 'malicious communication'
- Advise your child not to participate in anonymous 'chat'
- Advise your child to block, delete and report users or posts that worry them
- Ensure unpleasant or inappropriate communications are saved or screen- shot, and discussed with you, and if necessary brought to the attention of school or police.

### We also recommend that you:

- Regulate the amount of time that your child spends texting/speaking on the phone
- Observe your child's moods in connection with access to any devices
- Have regular conversations with your child about her friendships online and offline.

### Here are some useful resources:

Think U Know - How to...guides

NSPCC / Net Aware - Your guide to the social media & networks your kids use

Vodafone - 'Digital Parenting' magazine

ChildNet - 'Family Agreement' on use of the internet [www.childnet.com/blog/family-agreement](http://www.childnet.com/blog/family-agreement)

saferinternet – raising awareness of the latest trends in children's internet use

And: <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/parenting4digitalfuture/2015/12/16/what-parents-need-to-know-latest-trends-in-childrens-internet-use/>

Young Minds, Childline, Harmless, Kooth.com, Thinkuknow.com etc

**UAE South Bank website** - Support and advice can be found on the 'Safeguarding' tab.

'Live My Digital', is a video series and downloadable online safety factsheets to help parents help their children to stay safe online - [www.gdst.net/livemydigital](http://www.gdst.net/livemydigital). The series consists of six short films for parents and six matching films for children to empower families to use social media safely and responsibly, covering:

- Cyberbullying
- The digital footprint
- Identity and self-esteem
- Relationships and grooming
- Security and privacy
- Sexting