



WHAT'S IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE:

- Smartphone Free Childhood
- Update on WhatsApp
- Parenting Support
- Top tips for parents who are separated.

Spotlight on Safeguarding

Dear Parents / Carers

Welcome to our June edition of our Safeguarding Newsletter. In this edition we are going to focus on updates and information to support you as parents at home.

WHATSAPP UPDATE



Whilst WhatsApp has an age rating of 13+ (recently lowered from 16), a BBC investigation has found that children as young as 9 have been added to WhatsApp groups and seen inappropriate content. If your child is using WhatsApp, check their group settings as by default, group privacy settings are set to 'everyone', which means anybody can add your child to a group without their approval. You can change this setting to 'My Contacts' so only contacts can add them to groups without their approval and if somebody who is not a contact wants to add them to a group then they will have to send them an invite.

You should talk to your child about the risks of joining groups and show them how to use reporting/blocking tools.

SMARTPHONE FREE CHILDHOOD

Smartphone Free Childhood is a parent-led movement whose mission is to protect children from the dangers of using smartphones too young.

The premise behind this movement is that all parents/carers of a class agree not to give their children smartphones (therefore the level of peer pressure is reduced) for a set time or until a specific age. Are you ready to join? Find out more here: <https://smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk>

You may feel that your child does need a phone, particularly if they are walking home by themselves but there are alternatives to the smartphone, including a watch, which are listed here: <https://smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk/alternatives>

If your child already has a smartphone then Internet Matters have a section on their website with advice on smartphone safety: <https://www.internetmatters.org/setupsafe/>





Parenting Support

Place2Be is a children's mental health charity that provides mental health support and training in UK schools. Place2Be Parenting Smart is a fantastic resource for parents. They offer a wide range of parenting advice and support for parents and carers of children aged 4-11. All of their content is created by Place2Be's parenting experts. It's based on evidence and their experiences working with children, young people and their families. Designed with busy parents in mind, the site has short videos and articles on topics from meltdowns to bullying, from sleeping difficulties to encouraging self-confidence.



Learn more at
parentingsmart.org.uk

Or scan me



There is no such thing
as a perfect parent. So
just be a real one.

SUE ATKINS

Separating Parents

Separation can be a difficult time for parents and children. However hard you try, it is very likely that your child will pick up any anxious, distressed or negative feelings that you experience. He or she may want to have a say in their future, especially if they are older, so take time to explain what is happening to their family and to listen to their views.

Listening to your child might be key to helping both them and you understand what is best for them. It is important to listen carefully but not to put any pressure on them to give their views, and not to ask them to choose between their parents. Listening to your child's needs, wishes and feelings will help you and the other parent to make better decisions about your child's future.

Cafcass is a service that advises the family courts about the welfare of the child and what is in their best interests. For every child whose current and future living arrangements are decided by the family courts, they seek to provide an exceptional experience, everywhere, and every time. Cafcass prioritise the children's safety and welfare, their voices and their unique needs, taking full account of their families and those connected to them.

TOP TIPS

for parents who are separated



The FJYPB members are children and young people with experience of family law proceedings. They have devised these top tips for parents to help them think about matters from their child's perspective.

'LISTEN TO YOUR CHILD'

You can find out more about the FJYPB at cafcass.gov.uk

1

•Remember I have the right to see both of my parents as long as it is safe for me.

2

•I can have a relationship with the partner of my other parent without this changing my love for you.

3

•Try to have good communication with my other parent because it will help me. Speak to them nicely.

4

•Keep my other parent updated about my needs and what is happening for me. I might need their help too.

5

•Don't say bad things about my other parent, especially if I can hear. Remember I can often overhear your conversations or see your social media comments.

6

•Remember it is ok for me to love and have a relationship with my other parent.

7

•Don't make me feel guilty about spending time with my other parent.

8

•Don't make permanent decisions about my life based on how you feel at the moment. Think about how I feel now and how I might feel in the future. My wishes might change.

9

•Be open to change, be flexible and compromise when agreeing arrangements for me.

10

•Its ok with me if my parents don't do things exactly the same. You are both different and that's alright with me.

11

•Don't be possessive over me and the things that belong to me. Make it easy for me to take the things I need when I spend time with my other parent, such as school work, PE kits, clothes, books, games, phone etc. Let me choose what I want to take with me.

12

•Keep me informed about any changes to my arrangements.

13

•Try not to feel hurt if I choose to spend time with my friends instead of seeing you. I am growing up!

14

•Remember that important dates (birthdays, celebrations, parents evening, sports day etc) are special to you, me and my other parent. I may want to share my time on those dates with each of you.

15

•Work out between you and my other parent who is responsible for the extra things I need, such as new school shoes and uniform, school trips, dinner money and the cost of my hobbies or after school activities. I don't want to be involved in this.

16

•Remember that I don't expect you or my other parent to be perfect, so I don't want you to expect my other parent to be perfect either. Accept mistakes and move on.

17

•Make sure I am not left out of key family events. Please compromise with my other parent so I can join in.

18

•Please don't stop me having contact with extended family members who are important to me. Ask me how I feel about them. Don't assume my feelings are the same as yours.

19

•Don't use me as a messenger between you and my other parent.

20

•Don't use my relationship with my other parent against me, or them.

21

•Don't ask me to lie to my other parent or other family members.

22

•Don't ask me to lie to professionals, or to say what you want me to say.

23

•Don't make me scared to say what I think about my arrangements for fear of being told off or treated badly by you if you don't agree.

24

•Remember that I might want something different to my brother or sister.

25

•Don't worry about how others see you or what they think. I am what matters.