

A message from your Safer Neighbourhood Team

Back to school newsletter…

After a long separation from school friends, we know how exciting it is for children to finally be back together again at school. We hope that they have all settled back in well and are working hard in lessons.

Telford & Wrekin is a safe place for children and young people, but there are always ways in which we can improve our personal safety.

Now that children have returned to school, and will naturally have found some time away from home again, now may be an ideal opportunity to talk to them about their personal safety and how to be safe while away from home.

How can I improve my safety while I'm away from home?

- Listen to your instincts – if something doesn't feel safe, move to a busier/ safer area.
- Know your route and avoid badly lit streets/ alleyways. Keep to populated areas.
- Always try and tell someone where you are going and what time you will arrive.
- Be discreet – keep your valuables out of sight.
- Stay alert – don't let headphones block out traffic noise, other people or potential trouble.
- If you use a bike or scooter to travel to school, make sure it is secured during school time and that you use lights and wear reflective clothing if you travel in the dark.
- Walk or cycle with another person if you are able to do so (check up to date Covid Regulations).

- **The above advice can be used by any person while out in public, not just children.**

What should you do if you feel in danger?

- Be observant, look around, who is there, what do they look like, are there any escape routes?
- If you think that you are in danger, try to get away from the situation. You could always enter a shop and ask for help.
- If you are worried or frightened you could call someone. It can be reassuring to hear a friendly voice and listen to their advice.
- If you think that you may be in danger, you can call us on 999. This is why it is important to know the route, so you can tell us where you are.
- Download the Hollie Guard mobile phone app. It's free and is available from your mobile phone 'App Store'. It is a personal safety app that can alert an emergency contact if you are in danger. **This app can also be useful for adults… not just children.**

Bullying:

Nobody deserves to be bullied, but we know that some young people will be worried about returning to school because of this. For advice about what children can do if they are being bullied, or if they are concerned that their own behaviour could be described as bullying please visit www.bullying.co.uk. They can also speak to you as their parent/ carer, or they can talk to a teacher at school.

Mental Health:

The Covid pandemic has been overwhelming for a lot of us.
'BEAM' is an emotional health and well-being drop in centre for young people under 25 who are registered with a GP in Shropshire or Telford & Wrekin. Their team of experienced well-being practitioners and volunteers will listen to whatever is troubling young people.
If you feel that your child may need some further emotional support, guidance or reassurance, visit BEAM at https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/information/young-people/well-being/services/beam-shropshire-telford-wrekin.

Parking outside of schools:

If you are going to be driving children to and from school, please remember how congested the streets outside schools can get at peak times. We ask that you park considerately and allow a few extra minutes so you can park at a quieter spot and then walk the last bit of the way to school. Do not park on double yellow lines, school zig zags, or pedestrian crossings. Likewise, do not cause any obstruction by blocking pavements or driveways. We conduct joint 'Safer Outside Schools' patrols with the Neighbourhood Enforcement Officers from Telford & Wrekin Council and we will enforce any parking infringements. The restrictions are in place to help keep your children safe.

Help us spread the word:

We all have a role to play in keeping our children and young people safe. Even if you don't have any children of school age yourself, please help us by forwarding this to anyone you think will find it useful.