



SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER

APPS WITH HIDDEN VAULTS

Many social media apps have hidden vaults that are used to hide photos / content that your children may not want you to see. These can sometimes be hidden as clocks/calculators that are only accessible with a pin number. Parents/Carers will need to go into the app store, or app information on the device to see what is downloaded to ensure it is or isn't a hidden vault.

The Secret Snapchat Photo Vault (My Eyes Only):

Snapchat has a secret picture vault in their application so that children can hide pictures from their parents/carers. Children will often hide pictures and videos in the vault so that parents/carers can not see them. Drug photos, nude photos, party pictures, and much more can be hidden and locked away from parents/carers.

It's a good idea to find out what your children are keeping and hiding from you in their secret picture vault. You might be saving a life (your own child or someone else's child) by checking this vault. I have included some step-by-step instructions on how to get to the vault.

How to check your kid's Snapchat "secret" picture vault.

- 1) Open the Snapchat application on their phone (yellow icon with a white ghost). This will open up the main picture-taking page, you should see a live image ready to take a photo.
- 2) Beside the "take a picture button" (large circle at bottom of the screen) there is a small icon that looks like two playing cards. Press the two playing cards icon. You will be in their memories photos which are some of the photos they have taken with their Snapchat camera.
- 3) Along the top of the photos you should see some labels "SNAPS, CAMERA ROLL, MEMORIES, and MY EYES ONLY". Press the MY EYES ONLY BUTTON.
- 4) If the phone pops up with a PIN entry keypad you will need the code from your child. Standard answers when you ask your kid for their PIN is that they forgot or they never set it up. (see parental pin extraction techniques for further help if needed). If you are asked to set up a pin then your child has not set this up.
- 5) Once past the secret pin you will see the photos your kids usually don't want you to see. Understand you are still not seeing the private disappearing snap chat messages they send back and forth to each other.

AGE RESTRICTION GUIDANCE

With the ever-increasing number of social media apps available and trending, it is important to remember that they DO HAVE AGE RESTRICTIONS!

As a parent/carer, it is your responsibility to be aware of the current age restrictions in place on the apps that your children are using. In school we are finding an increasing amount of time is spent dealing with social media issues that are happening out of school hours. Issues such as online bullying within group chats or inappropriate pictures being sent/shared with the sole aim of causing hurt. A reminder that the age restriction for apps such as Snapchat, WhatsApp and TikTok is age 13+, yet we are dealing with issues from yr 7 and upwards. We ask that you are vigilant and continuously monitor your child's social media use and also the amount of screentime.

Please see guides showing the current age restrictions for all the popular social media apps and gaming trends – **Remember, there is an age restriction for a reason!**



YOUR SUMMER GUIDE TO POPULAR PLATFORMS

AN ONLINE SAFETY SHAREABLE

 **Messenger** 

An instant messaging app developed by Meta; popular for group chats, sharing images and videos. This app is also popular for playing games with friends. Can allow young people to connect with strangers, receive message requests from strangers and video call.

16+

 **Yubo** 

A live-streaming platform designed to help users "meet new people" from all around the world. There have been multiple reports of young people being harassed into sending sexualised or nude images and videos.

17+

 **WhatsApp** 



A popular messaging platform which allows group chats, video and audio calls. WhatsApp users have been subject to scams and malware spreading through the platform.

16+

 **Reddit** 

A platform which allows interactions through communities and discussion forums based on particular interests. There are no age verification systems for NSFW channels and can be easily bypassed to view inappropriate content. (NSFW forums are 18+)

13+

 **Kik** 



A mobile messaging app which allows one-to-one chatting, group chats and anonymous chats. Since Kik allows chatting with random strangers, it leaves children open to exploitation and grooming. Once messages are deleted, they cannot be retrieved.

16+

 **Telegram** 

A cross-platform messaging app which allows communication between individuals, small and large groups of up to 200,000 people. The ability to connect with others in the area may lead to young people to disclose locations and personal details that could lead to grooming or harassment in-person.

16+

 **Discord** 

An instant messaging social platform, in which people enter 'servers' so they are part of a group – commonly used for gaming communities. Some servers are NSFW (Not safe for work – often meaning inappropriate/adult content) and may have content age-inappropriate for younger users.

13+

 **Snapchat** 

A popular image sharing and messaging app that lets users exchange pictures and videos (snaps), with photo effects and filters, which disappear after a period of time. The 'disappearing snap' feature of Snapchat can lure young people into a false sense of security, and they may send images they would not normally send.

13+

 **Instagram** 

An image and video sharing app. Users can share content that followers can interact with by viewing, liking and commenting. Instagram may push a narrative of a 'perfect world' to young people, and they may feel pressured to post perfect, polished images of themselves.

13+

 **YouTube** 

A popular video sharing and social media platform. Videos can be commented on, liked and shared. Cyberbullying can occur through YouTube comments and age-inappropriate content may slip through moderation strategies deployed.

18+

 **TikTok** 





A free video sharing app which allows users to capture short video clips, share them and watch other user's videos or live streams. Age-inappropriate content which can be accessed through public feeds, especially any live streams. This may be unsuitable for young people and can be the origin of bullying trends.

13+

 **BeReal** 

A once-a-day photo sharing app – Users are given a 2-minute window to share a photo of themselves and their surroundings to their friends. If young people accept contacts they don't know, it is easy to build up a picture of routines in daily life, for example, school uniforms, bus stops and regular locations.

13+

 <p>Twitch</p> <p>Twitch is a live streaming video platform which allows creators to broadcast and users to watch content, usually about games. Including esports. Twitch streams are often live and are therefore difficult to moderate.</p> <p>13+</p>	 <p>Streaming services which often involve paid subscriptions which offers a variety of TV shows, movies, gaming streams and more.</p> <p>Netflix shows such as 'Squid Game' and '13 Reasons Why' went viral and attracted the attention of young people, despite not being appropriate for under 18s. Parental controls which restrict access to age-inappropriate content e.g. profile PIN codes.</p> <p>13+ 16+ 18+</p>	 <p>Vault Apps (Decoys)</p> <p>Apps which allow users to secretly hide photos, videos and files behind the premise of another app, for example a calculator which can only be accessed through a numeric pin code. Can become dangerous 'stashes' of youth produced sexual imagery.</p> <p>17+</p>		
 <p>ineqe www.ineqe.co.uk info@ineqe.co.uk June 2022 @ineqegroup LTD2022</p>	 <p>Messaging and Community Platforms</p>	 <p>Image and Video Sharing Platforms</p>	 <p>Streaming Platforms</p>	 <p>Vault Apps</p>

YOUTH VAPING - THE RISING TREND

Vaping appears to be everywhere nowadays. It seems you can't walk anywhere without seeing colourful advertising or catching a sickly-sweet smell in the air. While vapes (e-cigarettes) are meant to be used as a 'quit-tool' for smokers rather than a new method for non-smokers, one trend has been slowly on the rise in the last few years – youth vaping.

Ineqe have received reports across their Safer Schools community that children as young as 8 years old have been found vaping at schools across the UK. It also follows concerns from healthcare officials that youth vaping is gradually on the rise in the UK, despite selling vapes to under 18s is illegal. Online safety experts have taken a more in depth look at youth vaping and you can find more information on the potential risks and helpful tips that will help you to better understand the issue and how it might impact the young people in your care.

Vaping Fast Facts

- Vapes come in many shapes and sizes. Some might look like everyday items such as pens or flash drives or even hoody drawstrings!
- These 'e-cigarettes' use a heated metal coil within a covering to create inhalable vapour from a liquid form of nicotine called 'e-liquid'.
- E-liquid ('e-juice' or 'vape juice') is a formula composed of nicotine and other chemical ingredients.
- The UK government has recently called for evidence into youth vaping.



Red flags

Vaping can be a lot more discrete than smoking, and may be happening without a parent, carer, or teacher noticing it. There are various signs to be aware of with youth vaping, such as:

- An unexplained cough, wheeze, or shortness of breath.
- Empty disposable vapes, plastic cartridges, containers, or bottles.
- Irritable behaviour if unable to go outside or have a break.
- Sudden mood swings, frustrations, paranoia, or anxiety.
- Lingering scents that are fruity or sweet smelling.

Vaping:

High lead and nickel found in illegal vapes

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-65614078>

The Dangers of Vaping

What are E- Cigarettes?

- E-cigarettes are electronic devices that heat a liquid and produce an aerosol, or mix of small particles in the air.
- E-cigarettes come in many shapes and sizes. Most have a battery, a heating element, and a place to hold a liquid.
- Some e-cigarettes look like regular cigarettes, cigars, or pipes. Some look like USB flash drives, pens, and other everyday items. Larger devices such as tank systems, or “mods,” do not look like other tobacco products.
- E-cigarettes are known by many different names. They are sometimes called “e-cigs,” “e-hookahs,” “mods,” “vape pens,” “vapes,” “tank systems,” and “electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS).”
- Using an e-cigarette is sometimes called “vaping.”



Some e-cigarettes look like regular cigarettes, cigars, or pipes.

Some look like USB flash drives, pens, and other everyday items.

How do E-cigarettes work?

- E-cigarettes produce an aerosol by heating a liquid that usually contains nicotine, flavourings, and other chemicals that help to make the aerosol.
- The liquid used in e-cigarettes often contains nicotine and flavourings. This liquid is sometimes called “e-juice,” “e-liquid,” “vape juice,” or “vape liquid.”
- Users inhale e-cigarette aerosol into their lungs. Bystanders can also breathe in this aerosol when the user exhales it into the air.
- E-cigarette devices can be used to deliver marijuana and other drugs.

Why is Nicotine unsafe or children, teens & young adults?

- Most e-cigarettes (vapes) contain nicotine—the addictive drug in regular cigarettes, cigars, and other tobacco products.
- Some vape product labels do not disclose that they contain nicotine, and some vape liquids marketed as containing 0% nicotine have been found to contain nicotine.
- Nicotine can harm the developing adolescent brain. The brain keeps developing until about age 25.
- Using nicotine in adolescence can harm the parts of the brain that control attention, learning, mood, and impulse control.
- Each time a new memory is created or a new skill is learned, stronger connections— or synapses – are built between brain cells. Young people’s brains build synapses faster than adult brains. Nicotine changes the way these synapses are formed.
- Using nicotine in adolescence may also increase risk for future addiction to other drugs.



How does nicotine addiction affect youth mental health?

- When a person is dependent on (or addicted to) nicotine and stops using it, their body and brain have to get used to not having nicotine. This can result in temporary symptoms of nicotine withdrawal.
- [Nicotine withdrawal symptoms](#) include irritability, restlessness, feeling anxious or depressed, trouble sleeping, problems concentrating, and craving nicotine.³ People may keep using tobacco products to help relieve these symptoms.
- Youth may turn to vaping to try to deal with stress or anxiety, creating a cycle of nicotine dependence. But nicotine addiction can be a source of stress.

- What may start as social experimentation can become an addiction.
 - * The most common reason that high school students give for *trying* an e-cigarette is “a friend used them.”
 - * The most common reason youth give for *continuing* to use e-cigarettes is “I am feeling anxious, stressed, or depressed.”
- Youth e-cigarette and cigarette use have been associated with mental health symptoms such as depression.

What are the other risks of E-cigarettes for children, teens and young adults?

- Scientists are still learning about the long-term health effects of e-cigarettes.
- Some of the ingredients in e-cigarette aerosol could also be harmful to the lungs in the long-term. For example, some e-cigarette flavourings may be safe to eat but not to inhale because the gut can process more substances than the lungs.
- Defective e-cigarette batteries have caused some fires and explosions, a few of which have resulted in serious injuries.
- Children and adults have been poisoned by swallowing, breathing, or absorbing e-cigarette liquid through their skin or eyes. Nationally, approximately 50% of calls to poison control centres for e-cigarettes are for kids 5 years of age or younger.

What can I do to prevent my child from using E-cigarettes or to help them stop?

- Set a good example by being tobacco-free and ensure that your child is not exposed to the second hand emissions from any tobacco products, including e-cigarettes.
- If you use tobacco, it’s never too late to quit.
- Talk to your child or teen about why e-cigarettes are harmful for them.
- Start the conversation early with children about why e-cigarettes are harmful for them. Let your child know that you want them to stay away from all tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, because they are not safe for them. Seek help and get involved.

Health Risks of Vaping



LOSS OF ABILITY TO FIGHT INFECTIONS

Vaping can be harmful to your genes and your immune system. Studies show that people who use e-cigarettes have lower activity in cells of genes that fight infection.



MASKED FORMALDEHYDE

Within the vapor of e-cigarettes is a chemical known as formaldehyde. This chemical is a known carcinogen. Prolonged exposure to masked formaldehyde can contribute to lung cancer.



E-CIGARETTES CAN EXPLODE

E-cigarettes do come with a unique health risk: they can unexpectedly blow up. Since these devices typically use lithium-ion batteries, there is always going to be a potential for explosions to occur, especially when improperly mixed with high temperatures.



VAPING AND NICOTINE

You can control how much nicotine you ingest while vaping, but any amount of nicotine can be harmful. Nicotine can worsen heart disease, affect your blood vessels, increase risk of heart attack, and harm reproductive health.



VAPING CHEMICALS STILL HARMFUL

Researchers have discovered acetyl propionyl and acetoin in many of the most popular e-cigarette flavors. These chemicals have been known to cause lung and brain damage. Another chemical, diacetyl, is known to cause Popcorn Lung, which is when the lungs' smallest airways are destroyed.

Vaping: High lead and nickel found in illegal vapes

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-65614078>

Support for Children & Families

HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES AND FOOD PROGRAMME

The Holiday Activities and Food programme (HAF) provides healthy food and enriching activities to children and young people, with free places available for those who receive free school meals. It's available during the Summer, Easter, and Christmas school holidays.

School holidays can be a particularly difficult time for some families. This free holiday club programme helps children to enjoy active and healthy school holidays, where they can experience new activities, meet friends, and eat healthy meals.

For information, please contact your local council. [Find out more here](#)

CHILDCARE OFFERS FOR PARENTS

The Childcare Choices campaign aims to raise awareness and understanding of the support available from the government with the costs of childcare.

With school holidays upon us, it is more important than ever that parents and carers are able to access the financial support they qualify. You could be entitled to:

- Up to £2,000 a year of Tax-Free Childcare per child
- Help with up to 85% of their childcare costs for children up to 16 with Universal Credit.
- 30 hours of free childcare for 3 and 4 year olds

More information please see below: childcarechoices.gov.uk



Stay Safe Online

Purple Drank: Information for Parents & Guardians

June 2021

What is Purple Drank?

Purple Drank also known as Barre, Sizzurp, Syrup, Lean is a drink made from cough syrup containing mostly codeine and promethazine. Dextromethorphan (DMX) is also found in some cough and cold medicines.

The syrup is mixed with a fizzy drink to cover up the taste and make a purple cocktail.

What are we worried about?

This is marketed to young people and may have harmful health effects.

This is likely to be used in a social environment with effects starting within 30-60 minutes, lasting for about six hours. Adding alcohol increases the risk of overdose and may result in poisoning.

Long term use of codeine may require increased amounts to get the same effect. Cravings may be experienced when someone stops taking it. They can get feelings of withdrawals such as cold sweats, sickness, throwing up and not being able to sleep.

Regular users of DXM also develop tolerance. Some users may have cravings and feels of withdrawals. Longer term use can lead to psychosis and damage to thinking and memory skills.

Many over the counter medicines also contain paracetamol which can be very dangerous if you take too much. Overdose from paracetamol can cause permanent liver damage and can kill.

Displayed side effects may include

- Mild energy lift initially
- Mild hallucinations
- Dissociative
- Drowsy

What can you do?

Advise your child(ren) about these risks.

Please be mindful of the medical needs should a child be present with symptoms, or if you suspect they have consumed a drug-infused substance. In a medical emergency call 999.

If you have any local information or intelligence please share it with: Crimestoppers, Fearless.org, Staffordshire Police 101, via facebook or the website.

Codeine is an opiate drug often taken for pain relief and it is also taken as a cough medicine and to stop diarrhoea. When you take codeine your body breaks it down into morphine, which is what gives it its pain-relieving effects and also what can possibly poison or kill you. Not everyone breaks down codeine to morphine at the same level so a dose that could be safe for one person could be very dangerous for someone else. It is a Class B drug and is normally only legally available on prescription, however some weaker codeine medicines are available from chemists without a prescription.



Dextromethorphan (DXM) is found in some cough and cold medicines. It is a dissociative drug, and when people take too much it can make them psychotic (when they're not sure what's real) and paranoid and they can trip out. DXM can make you sleepy, put you into a coma and you can even stop breathing. People can feel like they need more and more of it and some people can have withdrawal symptoms. It is available without prescription in over the counter products.

Promethazine was first prescribed to treat allergies but is now mostly used to help people sleep, or to stop them feeling or being sick. On its own it is a mild depressant, but at higher doses it has been linked to hallucinations. It is thought to make opioid drugs like codeine, morphine and heroin feel stronger.

Local support Services

Stoke on Trent Community Drug & Alcohol service (CDAS)

01782 221090

referrals@sotcdas.org.uk

T3 stars (Covering all areas of Staffordshire; Newcastle-Under-Lyme, Staffordshire Moorlands, Stafford & Stone, Rugeley, Cannock & Burntwood, East Staffordshire & South Staffordshire) Excluding Stoke-on-Trent

Suite 1, 7-8 Mill Street, Stafford ST162AJ

01785 241393

t3stars.stafford@humankindcharity.org.uk

Websites:

The following websites are really helpful sources of information for children, young people and their guardians: Talk to FRANK – the government's drug advice website/helpline and their specific page on cannabis –

<https://www.talktofrank.com/drug/cannabis>

For friendly, confidential advice, Talk to FRANK on 0300 1236600.