



Welcome

Welcome to the Summer 1 edition of the Borlase safeguarding newsletter. We hope that you find this information useful. If you would like to speak about this or any other concerns please use the email address below.

Online safety - Telegram

Telegram is marketed as a messenger app (similar to WhatsApp) with end-to-end encryption. As with any social media app, there are negative sides, including access to buying drugs and also enabling criminals to financially exploit teenagers.

In the last 2 months, Telegram has become part of 2 recent safeguarding incidents concerning students who attend Borlase.

Sextortion

Firstly, an incident of sextortion (financially motivated exploitation). The user was on TikTok and was groomed into moving over to Telegram to send nude images, and they were then told those images would be shared with their social media contacts and friends (unless they paid money).



If your child tells you that this has happened, please do the following:

- Reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling you
- Call the Police (101) and record this as a crime (or online at TVP)
- Don't delete any messages or images as you might need these to ensure those images are taken down, and the messages might be needed by the Police
- Block the contact immediately
- Ensure that all social media accounts are made private and change all passwords
- Look at the CEOP website, as they have even more information and advice for parents.
- Use the Take it Down website to ensure nude images are removed from online platforms
- Let us know - we can support you and your child moving forward





Drugs purchasing and use

A second incident involved the purchase of drugs, including class A drugs such as LSD and MDMA, and cannabis.

After joining a group chat by paying in cryptocurrency, the individual was then able to order drugs through the post (delivered to a private location). We have also been made aware of how easy it is to buy drugs via Snapchat, ordering the drugs, meeting a dealer in person and paying cash.

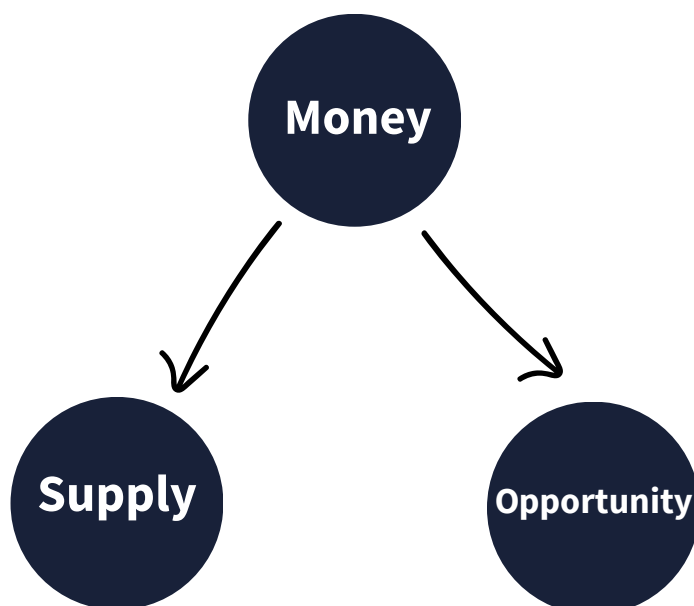
To help safeguard your child against this, there are 3 things that a teenager needs to be able to buy drugs. 1) Money (access to paying online that isn't monitored or cash), 2) someone to buy them from (most often Telegram or Snapchat, but could be someone they know in real life) and 3) the opportunity to use the drugs without getting caught.

We often hear about large birthday parties or gatherings in the community, and this is the most common time for teenagers to drink alcohol or experiment with drugs.



Things you can do;

- Keep checks on bank accounts and if they have access to cash
- Monitor their phone use (especially what apps they have). Keeping them safe trumps their privacy until they are 18
- Know where they are going and who with and consider checking on them
- Beware of the common thought of “my child wouldn't do that” Most parents of victims have not thought it possible.





The Media Literacy Parents' Study (2026) - YouGov

The Media Literacy Parents' Study (2026) highlighted a gap between parental confidence and the realities of children's online experiences. While most parents feel broadly informed, some might lack confidence in understanding content and risks. The findings reinforce the need for practical, accessible support and more open, everyday conversations about online life.

- 80% of parents know which platforms their child uses, but only 24% feel very confident about the content they see
- Many parents want simple, practical guidance rather than technical advice
- Children are often exposed to harmful content without actively searching for it

Download the study [here](#).

The Children's Commissioner, Dame Rachel de Souza, has published a guide to help parents and carers navigate the challenge of managing children's everyday online habits. Written with direct input from children and young people, including teenagers consulted in schools and the Commissioner's Youth Ambassadors. The guide is designed to make difficult conversations easier and more regular.

The guide covers setting boundaries around phone use, talking about harmful content, and building ongoing communication that goes beyond a one-off conversation. The voice of young people runs through it, including this from one teenager: "Don't be afraid to be firm... If you are worried your child is seeing harmful content and you don't know what they're watching and it's affecting their behaviour, just take it that you know best, they don't."

The downloads can be found [here](#)



Further online safety advice can be found at Internet Matters.



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Empower
Shape The Future*