

1. Exam help

June 2017

Voice box, Childline's weekly video chat features revision guru Eve Bennett sharing her tips on how to do well in exams and have a social life.

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eLe43tUgGkA>

2. NSPCC research into children's views on social media sites

The NSPCC has released figures from research looking at the views of children and young people on their confidence, knowledge and understanding of online safety. Findings from a survey of 1,696 children and young people across the UK include: 1,380 (4 out of 5) said social media sites need to do more to protect them from inappropriate or harmful content; ASKfm, Omegle, IMVU, and Facebook were rated as some of the most risky sites; children reported coming across pornography, self-harm, and bullying and hatred on social media sites. The findings have informed the development of the updated Net Aware guide for parents and carers.

Link: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-we-do/news-opinion/social-media-sites-failing-protect-children>

2. Duty of care in sport

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) has published the independent report by Baroness Grey-Thompson into the duty of care sport has towards its participants in the UK. Recommendations include: setting up a sports ombudsman with the power to hold national governing bodies to account for the duty of care they provide; a review of the definition of 'positions of trust' under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, to bring sports coaches into line with teachers and other professions in prohibiting sexual activity with children under 18 in their care; a prevalence study, looking at the rates of abuse of children and adults in sport, is conducted to gather up to date information; mandatory reporting of any suspected abuse.

Link:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/610130/Duty_of_Care_Review_-_April_2017__2.pdf

2. Mental health checks for children entering care

Children & Young People Now reports that the Department for Education (DfE) has said that plans to carry out mental health assessments of children entering care in 10 pilot areas in England have been placed on hold.

Link: <http://www.cypnow.co.uk/cyp/news/2003541/dfe-delays-mental-health-check-pilots-for-children-entering-care>

June 2017

3. School holiday hunger

1. The extent of hunger amongst children during school holidays

Up to an estimated three million children risk being hungry in the school holidays. This group comprises over a million children growing up in poverty who receive free school meals during term time, as well as an estimated two million who are disqualified from free school meals because their parents work for their poverty. The increase in the number of families with children relying on food banks during school holidays, compared with other parts of the year, demonstrates that there are particular difficulties that arise at those times of the year which restrict families' ability to afford food. The survey data submitted to the inquiry suggest that a significant proportion of teachers and school staff notice children returning to school hungry on the first day after the holidays. Hunger amongst children during school holidays is one of Britain's hidden costs of poverty. It is a cost paid by children. Those individuals and organisations who are actively trying to address the problem report it to be a significant one that affects growing numbers of children.

2. The different forms of hunger amongst children during school holidays

The hunger that sneaks up on children and, in many cases, their parents during school holidays shows itself in four different forms: ☐ There is, for some children, the occasional or persistent hunger that results from a total absence of meals when the cupboards at home are bare and there is no money for them to buy food. ☐ There is also the hunger that some parents put themselves through in a last ditch attempt to ensure their children can eat something, anything, each day. For those families that are managing to scrape together enough money for a filling, stodgy diet to stave off immediate hunger, the poor quality of the food that has been bought to fill hungry stomachs often brings malnutrition into play. The daily struggle with hunger, for some families, rules out any chance they might otherwise have of going out and enjoying themselves, or even sticking to any kind of routine, in the holidays. Hunger and malnutrition seem to thrive in those families that have been softened up by inactivity, isolation and loneliness.

3. The causes of hunger amongst children during school holidays

There is, of course, a whole series of underlying trends not only in Britain, but across all advanced Western economies, that give rise to families' vulnerability to hunger during school holidays. Looking only at those factors that are unique to the holidays themselves, rather than the rest of the year, leads us to conclude that it is the additional demands placed on the budgets of families on low incomes – most notably from food, fuel, activities, and childcare – at those times of year that lower children into the clutches of hunger. In some cases, this horror is compounded by parents' lack of confidence or a shortage of skills to cook and shop on a budget.

Link: <http://www.frankfield.com/upload/docs/Hungry%20Holidays.pdf>