



## St Anthony's Parents' Safeguarding & Wellbeing Newsletter Autumn 2 Edition 2025

Welcome to the Autumn 2 Edition of our Safeguarding & Wellbeing newsletter for parents. This term's focus is on screen time and recommendations for parents. Our wellbeing page offers advice on leaving children home alone, supporting children's immunity and domestic abuse.

**Together, we can keep our children safe online.**

As part of our ongoing commitment to safeguarding, we want to share some key information about screen time and how you can help keep your children safe online at home. While technology offers wonderful learning opportunities, it's important to be aware of the potential risks and health impacts of excessive screen time, especially as we head into a winter holiday.

Aside from the dangers of inappropriate or harmful content, the health impacts are becoming more and more acute:

**Physical health:** including eye strain, poor posture, disrupted sleep patterns and reduced physical activity

**Mental health & wellbeing:** low self-esteem and low mood can be indicators that a child is at risk of suffering abuse or exploitation online

**Social development:** reduced face-to-face interaction affects children's communication skills

**Academic performance:** difficulty concentrating and reduced time for reading

### Recommended Screen Time Guidelines

While every family is different, consider these general guidelines:

- **Ages 5-7:** Maximum 1 hour per day of quality content
- **Ages 8-11:** Maximum 1-2 hours per day, with regular breaks
- **All ages:** No screens at least 1 hour before bedtime

### Practical Steps to Manage Screen Time at Home

- 1) **Set clear boundaries:** establish screen-free times (eg meals and before bedtime). Create screen-free zones in your home (particularly bedrooms). Agree on daily time limits appropriate for your child's age and be consistent with rules across all devices.
- 2) **Use parental controls:** [Internet Matters](#) provides age-specific online safety checklists, guides on how to set parental controls and practical tips.
- 3) **Talk to your children:** have regular, open conversations about what they're doing online, discuss what to do if they see something that makes them feel uncomfortable and explain they can always come to you without fear of getting into trouble.
- 4) **Be a positive role model:** monitor your own screen time and device use. Put your phone away during family time and show children there are enjoyable activities beyond screens.
- 5) **Encourage alternative activities:** promote outdoor play and physical activity. Encourage reading, creative play and hobbies. Arrange playdates and social activities. Support involvement in clubs and sports.
- 6) **Know the warning signs:** be alert to changes in your child's behaviour that might indicate online safety concerns such as becoming secretive about online activities, changes in mood after using devices, withdrawal from family activities or changes in sleeping / eating patterns.

### Working Together - we're here to support you

Managing screen time isn't about eliminating technology - it's about helping children develop a healthy, balanced relationship with digital devices that will serve them well throughout their lives.



# Wellbeing Advice for St Anthony's Families

## WELCOME:

Welcome to our Christmas edition of the Wellbeing Newsletter.

Thank you for taking the time to read.



## Home Alone



Learning to be independent is an important part of growing up. Between work, appointments and Christmas commitments it can be tempting to start to think you could leave your child home alone.

You might wonder what age your child should be before they can be left alone at home. But there's no 'one-size-fits all' answer. Every child is different, so build up their independence at their pace - and check in with them to make sure they feel safe.

Please look at the NSPCC for further guidelines.

[Leaving Your Child Home Alone - Advice | NSPCC](#)

While domestic abuse happens all year round, Christmas is a time where the family are together for a sustained period of time, providing fewer opportunities to seek help and support if you need it. There also can be increased use of alcohol - which in itself does not cause domestic abuse - but can be a catalyst for more severe and frequent incidents if you are living with an abusive partner. Domestic abuse isn't always physical and can include things such as:

- \* Jealousy and possessiveness
- \* Control over what you or someone wears, where to go and who to see
- \* Control over finances or essential items such a mobile devices or medication
- \* Dramatic changes in mood, from kind and charming to abusive and aggressive
- \* Pressure to do things someone doesn't want to do.

There are many ways to seek support, including over Christmas.

Refuge: 0808 2000247

Remember, if you are in immediate danger, call the Police 999.

Christmas is a time for giving...



If you are on the receiving end of domestic abuse this Christmas, you can get help

## Children's Immunity

There has been a lot of media attention around "Super Flu" recently. Building and supporting children's immunity through a healthy diet, sleep and exercise is a good way to ensure that they are in the best shape to deal with the multitude of germs they will encounter.

## Safe Decorating

HOLIDAY SAFETY TIPS FOR CHILDREN AND PARENTS FROM THE INSTITUTE FOR CHILDHOOD PREPAREDNESS



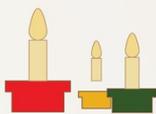
**MAKE SURE** all trimmings, tinsel, and artificial icicles are lead-free. Keep these items up high and out of reach of small children.



**ELIMINATE** decorations that are tiny or that have small parts, as they can cause choking in young children.



**BE AWARE** of singing holiday cards that contain button batteries. These batteries can cause damage to the esophagus if ingested by young children.



**CHOOSE LED** or flameless candles to avoid house fires.



Plants such as mistletoe and holly berries **ARE POISONOUS**. Keep them away and out of the reach of young children.

