Safeguarding
Newsletter

ENCOMPASS SAFEGUARDING

AI is already impacting children in our schools

(and not just with how they get their homework done!)

I have already spoken with a school who have had to support a 12 year old, who was devastated when naked images of them were being shared amongst the students. Unfortunately many schools have increasingly had to deal with self generated CSAM (child sexual abuse material) being shared BUT this time, the images were created by other students through an AI program.

There are a huge number of apps and websites that have popped up already, trying to legitimise their clothing removal tools but with no mention or consideration of the impact on the adults OR the children who have no control over these images that they never consented to.

Advice For Parents

- Share with parents that these AI apps are freely available

- Encourage parents to check what apps their children have downloaded or what they are accessing on their laptops

- Support conversations around the impact of shame and embarrassment, especially for teenagers

- Risk and recklessness are common teenage traits, as their brains develop and we need to support them to be accountable for their actions and the possible consequences.

Advice For Students

- If you have been targeted, you have nothing to be ashamed of - this needs to be reiterated many times.

- Tell a trusted adult so that they can support you (who could that be?).

- If students create inappropriate images of another student then the school will need to follow their child on child abuse and their bullying policies, as well as contact local police (if applicable).

- Healthy relationships, consent and digital responsibility are all essential lessons students need.

Advice For Schools

I will optimistically say 'If' (not 'when') an issue like this arises at your school, it is likely that it will be very upsetting and emotive for everyone involved; students, staff and parents. And we know that in very emotional situations, there is a lot of pressure to either minimise the issue or to make an example of those involved.

The path is very likely to be somewhere in the middle depending on many factors such as risk, impact, context, evidence and internal / external thresholds. However, the best advice is going to be to start addressing this issue now, within your existing lessons around wellbeing, healthy relationships and digital responsibility. This is going to be essential to try and minimise current and future risk and the harm for all students.

If you are struggling with this or any other Safeguarding or
Child Protection issue, please reach out we are always here
to support and help!

Testimonial

"My school hired Sian as a Child Safeguarding Consultant and we were very impressed by the service she provided. Her guidance, advice and ability to walk us through a challenging situation was exactly what we needed. It was very refreshing to work with someone who has such a huge passion for children's welfare and safety. Sian's background in being a counselor enabled her to see the situation from many different angles and ensured we offered the right support to all parties involved. I was very fortunate to learn from Sian and can highly recommend her."

Sarah, TIS