

SchoolBeat

Issue 20

The latest information for teachers, parents and adults who care for children

In this issue:

- Drug in the spotlight: Lean
- Harmful online content
- Stalking



SchoolBeat.cymru

Police safeguarding the children of Wales through crime prevention education



Welcome COLLEAGUES

To the new look SchoolBeat magazine!

Our 20th EDITION is packed full of information, advice and news to help support you and your school. With young people being exposed to more time on the Internet, our special feature is on stalking.

There is also a feature on helping children to build resilience to online harmful content.

The drug in the spotlight is Lean.



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Special Feature...

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Talking about stalking!

Stalking has been recognised as a crime in the UK since 2012.

It can be experienced by males or females. It can occur where there is, or has been a relationship, or take place where there has been no relationship at all.

It can be someone known or unknown. It can happen online or offline. Most importantly, it can affect anyone and it is persistent unwelcome and unwanted behaviours.

“ **In a recent survey of 12,000 young people in the UK aged between 13-24 years of age, 1 in 4 did not know that stalking was a criminal offence.** ”

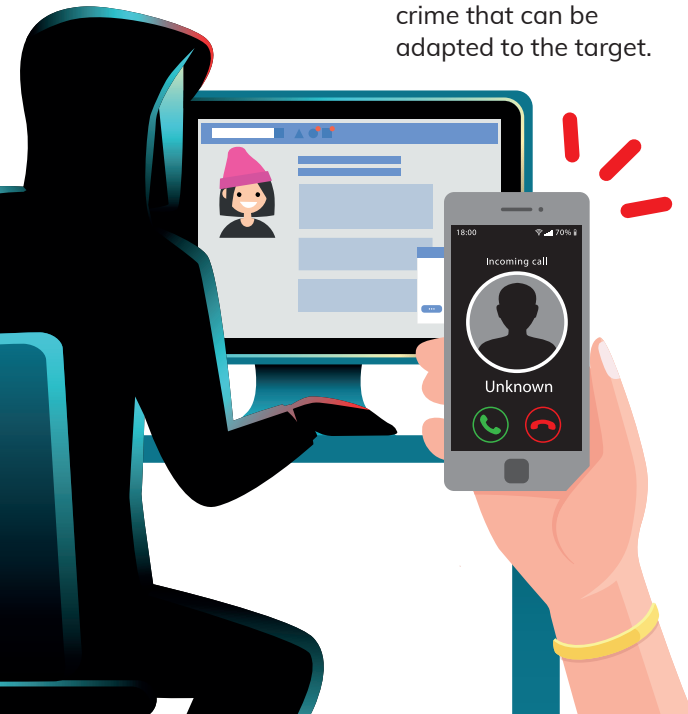
Vice UK, online magazine in partnership with Paladin

Stalking behaviours

There is no legal definition in place for stalking, as it is a diverse crime that can be adapted to the target.

Therefore, legislation lists some of the recognised behaviours as:

- following a person
- contacting, or attempting to contact, a person by any means
- publishing any statement or other material relating or purporting to relate to a person, or purporting to originate from a person
- monitoring the use by a person of the internet, email or any other form of electronic communication



- loitering in any place (whether public or private)
- interfering with any property in the possession of a person
- watching or spying on a person.

If it's **FIXATED, OBSESSIVE, UNWANTED and **REPEATED**, it could well be stalking.**

Stalking behaviour may involve one behaviour or a mix. There has to be at least **two occasions** when the behaviour happens. This is called a course of conduct. This basic form of stalking can be found under section 2A of the Protection of Harassment Act 1997.

Getting more serious!

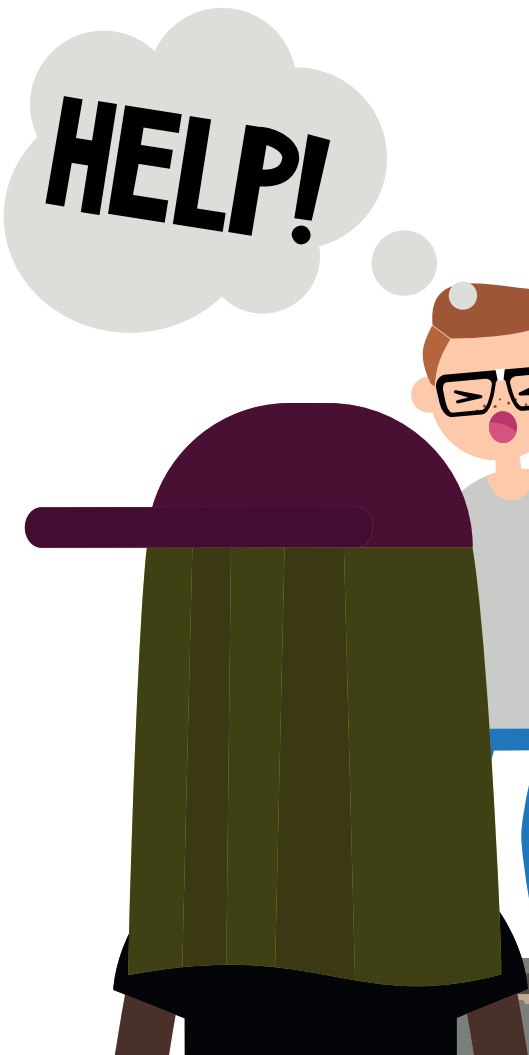
A more severe form of stalking behaviour; resulting in higher penalties if convicted, is behaviour that causes the target to be made to fear on two or more occasions. It involves:

1. A target being made to feel that violence will be used against them.
2. Secondly, causing the target serious alarm or distresses. This could be evidenced as simply as, a young person not wanting to attend school or avoiding a certain route home.

Stalking is different from **harassment** as it considers the **impact** that the **persistent behaviour** has had upon the target. This can take, what appears to be harassment; which is another criminal offence, one step further to stalking.

Spotting stalking behaviours

- Repeatedly messaging or calling someone and making them fear for their safety
- Showing up unannounced in places where the target is going or lives
- Sending unwanted gifts or items to someone
- Spending a long time online or offline, following someone's posts and movements.



Practical advice

Things you can do if you think you are experiencing harassment or stalking include:

- Keep a diary of events. Write down the date, time, location and details of what happens. It's also a good idea to include information about any other witnesses who can confirm what happened
- Keep copies of letters, text messages and emails, and taking screenshots of other online messages (e.g. on social media platforms)
- Report behaviours to the Police at the earliest opportunity.

Report stalking behaviours to these organisations:



Live Fear Free Helpline
0808 80 10 800
gov.wales/live-fear-free



paladin
National Stalking Advocacy Service



www.fearless.org

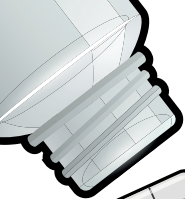


childline

ONLINE, ON THE PHONE, ANYTIME

Call Childline on 0800 1111
or visit childline.org.uk/kids





Drug in the spotlight

LEAN (also known as purple drank)

There have been recent reports around some areas of Wales about the use of 'LEAN' being used by young people.

Lean is an illicit substance made with Codeine cough syrup, Sprite, and sweets.

Young people mix the syrup with Sprite, colored sweets and Promethazine to create a dangerous high. A cough syrup that contains opioids is being bought by young people who use it to make a potent cocktail, nicknamed "purple drank".

The syrup, codeine linctus, is taken to treat tickly coughs but is no longer routinely stocked by high street chemists because there are better and safer alternatives. Opioids are highly addictive and carry the risk of overdose.

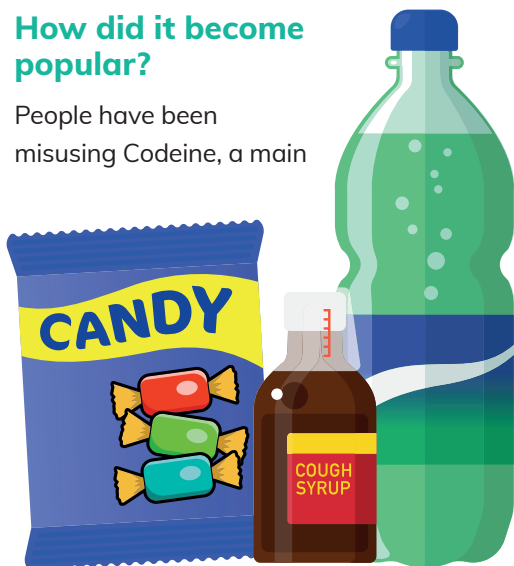
Signs to look for: Large quantities of Codeine cough mixture being bought and consumed. Look out for: Empty foam cups or bottles of cough Codeine, Drowsiness or lack of energy, Lack of motivation, Disinterest in normal hobbies, Changes in appearance and Frequent and sudden trips to the bathroom.

Abusing purple drank can also affect teenagers' academic success. Using the drug affects memory, which can inhibit the ability to learn and cause grades to drop.

How did it become popular?

People have been misusing Codeine, a main

“Teens make 'purple drank' legal high from £4 cough syrup”



ingredient in Lean, for ages, but Lean's prominence in pop culture has made it more popular than ever.

Rappers have been singing its praises in songs - and having seizures or sometimes even dying from it since the late 1990s (though it seems to have first appeared in the '70s or '80s).

- Bow Wow recently opened up about almost dying as a result of his addiction to Lean.
- The late Mac Miller also described dealing with an addiction to Lean in 2013.
- Rapper 2 Chainz was arrested at an airport for possessing Promethazine, a key lean ingredient.

Effects

Lean creates a feeling of euphoria and relaxation that makes you feel dreamy, almost like you're floating away from your body. It acts on your central nervous system (CNS) and slows your brain activity has a sedating effect.

While some people may enjoy the euphoric effect of Lean, it can also produce other less than desirable, and even downright dangerous, effects in high doses, including:

- hallucinations
- extreme sedation
- loss of coordination
- high body temperature
- nausea and vomiting
- itchy skin
- severe constipation
- changes in heart rhythms
- respiratory depression
- dizziness
- seizures
- loss of consciousness

Combining alcohol enhances the effects of the codeine and DXM (Dextromethorphan) which already exists in the cough syrup. While it may seem like a good way to get higher, it's not a great idea.

Short-term effects of adding Alcohol to Lean include:

- trouble breathing
- drowsiness or sleepiness
- delayed motor skills or reaction time
- poor judgment
- brain fog

Plus, your chances of overdosing are a lot higher when you combine Alcohol with Codeine. The most serious potential effect of mixing even a small amount of Alcohol with cough syrup is respiratory depression. This reduces the amount of oxygen to your brain.

It can lead to organ damage, coma, or death.

Building children's resilience to online harmful content



Threats



Imperso

In simple terms, harmful content is anything online which causes a person distress or harm, it may also be an illegal or criminal act.

This encompasses a huge amount of content and can be very subjective depending on who is doing the viewing. Children are especially vulnerable to harm as a result of accessing a wide range of potentially harmful content, to include information, images or videos that can be upsetting, misleading, promote dangerous behaviours or are directed at adults. **This includes:**

- Violent content (for example, graphic images or videos depicting animal or people cruelty, murder or sexual offences)
- Pornographic content
- Online abuse (Bullying, threats or harassment)
- Child Sexual Abuse imagery
- Communications intended to criminally or sexually exploit a child
- Hate - for example, promotion of extreme views or hate towards groups
- Non-consensual sharing (for example, private adult images or videos being shared with a wide audience)
- Malicious software (for example, links or pop-up adverts that pose a security risk)
- Inaccurate news/false reports or conspiracy theories intended to create fear and anxiety.
- Misinformation (for example, misleading or dangerous information that can promote harmful behaviours such as self-harm and suicide)

Ways to support and help children recover from harmful online content:

- Don't express shock about what they tell you they have seen online. If they think you are shocked it will close them down from telling you everything that has happened.
- Listen to them. Find out exactly what is most distressing to them about what they have seen. This might be disturbing to the adult listener too. It helps not to ask things like, 'Why would you watch something like this?' or other judgements on their actions. You need you to listen without showing disgust, or they may interpret that as disgust with them.



nation



Bullying and Harassment



Self-harm or Suicide Content



Online Abuse



Violent Content



Unwanted Sexual Advances



Pornographic Content

- Find out exactly what it is that is causing them the greatest upset. Maybe it's the actual content, other times it's the feeling of shame or embarrassment from seeing something harmful.
- Actively listen to the child and be prepared to explain aspects of what they are distressed or confused about. That may mean having to acknowledge the reality of criminal behaviours that are frightening, like rape, abuse or murder. Be prepared to have an open and frank discussion.
- Don't use the occasion to judge, punish or criticise their actions. Commend them for having the courage to talk to you about it. They are demonstrating trust in you.
- Don't totally prohibit any further internet use as this might have an even greater negative impact on their self-esteem and social lives. It will have the opposite effect to building trust.
- Have an open and honest discussion about safer internet use in general, as it will empower children to be able to make their own decisions about what they view online. If this is a younger child then ensure safe internet settings are installed on all devices.

Children may come across harmful content by accident through innocent searches, downloading apps or clicking on links sent by others. Sometimes they may seek this content out of curiosity.

Signs that a young person may be troubled or traumatised by something they have accessed online:

- Being withdrawn and uncommunicative
- Talking at great length online with their friends to make sense of it all
- Bragging about what they have seen to friends at school and encouraging them to look at the content too, so they feel less isolated
- Having nightmares
- Being fearful or anxious about things they were previously not
- Changes in mood such as being more angry or sad than usual.



REPORT HARMFUL CONTENT

reportharmfulcontent.com

Youth produced sexual imagery

Guidance for schools

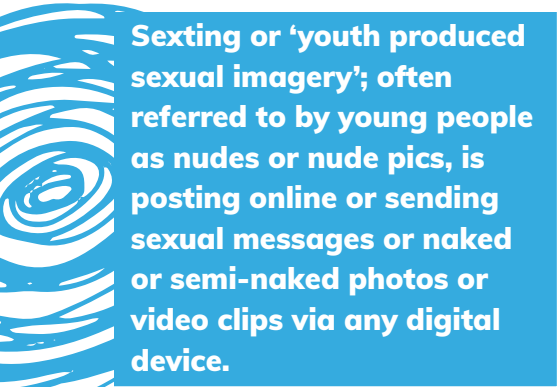
The Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) reported that 2020 was the worst year on record for the amount of child sexual abuse material identified online and removed.

The IWF figures show that 44% of the child sexual abuse content dealt with by the organisation last year involved self-generated material, compared with 29% in 2019.

With so many more children than ever, posting or sending sexualised selfies or films. Possibly, as the consequence of grooming or exploitation is some cases, it is essential that schools have robust policies and procedures in place to help manage such incidents if they occur.

“What was already a recognised phenomenon has now cemented into a grave and widespread threat to our children.”

IWF chief executive
Susie Hargreaves



Sexting or ‘youth produced sexual imagery’; often referred to by young people as nudes or nude pics, is posting online or sending sexual messages or naked or semi-naked photos or video clips via any digital device.



Sharing nudes and semi nudes: Responding to incidents and safeguarding children and young people document, is the best practice approach guidance for schools, colleges and other educational settings in Wales. It helps schools to know how to deal with youth-produced sexual images. It is published by the UK Council for Internet Safety.

The advice covers the sharing of sexual imagery by young people. Creating and sharing sexual photos and videos of under-18s is illegal and therefore causes the greatest complexity for schools and other agencies when responding.

It also presents a range of risks which need careful management.

Help from your School Police Officer

You can arrange inputs around this topic from your School's Officer. Available now, 'Risky Pics', suitable for learners aged 11-14 years old.



Coming soon, 'Zac's story', an input about misusing digital devices and online harmful behaviour, for learners aged 10-11 years old.

The guidance covers:

- Responding to disclosures
- Handling devices and imagery
- Risk assessing situations
- Reporting incidents
- Supporting parents and carers
- Involving other agencies, including escalation to the police and children's social care
- Preventative education
- Helplines



“ Posting and sharing such images poses psychological harm to children, including feelings of distress and embarrassment. ”

Home Office minister
Victoria Atkins



Benzodiazepines and other ‘Prescription Drugs’

There have been recent concerns about the misuse of illicit prescription drugs amongst young people.

Benzodiazepines (often referred to as “street benzos”) have been found to contain some very harmful substances and are increasingly reported to be causing hospitalisations and deaths in the UK.

They are often available in blister packs or pharmacy tubs to make them appear to be genuine medicines. The packaging might say pills contain a certain dose of Siazepam (Valium) or Alprazolam (Xanax) but they may not actually contain any of those substances at all.

Instead they may contain other high-potency benzodiazepines, or other dangerous substances not for medical use.

The prescription drugs include the following:

Alprazolam	Diazepam	Xanax
Benzos	Temazepam	Rohypnol
Valium	Downers	Roofies
Blues	Etizolam	Vallies

Polydrug use

Since the strength and ingredients of these tablets and capsules varies widely, people who use “street benzos” cannot be sure how strong they are or what they are taking.

Alcohol and some drugs depress the central nervous system, which affects a person’s breathing.

This means that using any combination of these types of drugs with or without Alcohol increases

the risk of overdose and death.

Benzodiazepine use can negatively affect mental health and increase the risk of suicidal thoughts, particularly in young adults and those who are Alcohol or opioid dependent.

Key messages for young people:

- Never use other people’s medicines
- Never buy ‘prescription drugs’ over the internet - they could be fakes.
- Do not use mix with any other drugs

Two different groups of people appear to be increasingly using illicit benzos: dependent opioid users, and teenagers and young adults

Guardian 2020

