



# Substance Advice For Everyone Day



Dear Parents/carers

## **Substance Advice For Everyone (SAFE) Day is March 4<sup>th</sup>.**

### **The children and young people**

On SAFE Day, March 4<sup>th</sup> all secondary schools across Richmond and Kingston will be delivering important education about substance use in age appropriate lessons to all children in Years 7-13. This project is in response to high levels of substance use locally and our knowledge that teenagers will undoubtedly come across substances as they navigate their teenage years. There have been deaths locally of young people as a result of substance use.

### **Parents and carers**

**On that day**, you will also receive some information in the form of a **short film** about local substance use, which **we ask you to watch on March 4<sup>th</sup>**. This will be texted to your mobile phone by school as a link. **Please set aside 10 minutes on the day to allow for you to watch this important short film, made especially for local parents/carers.** This is an emotive and sensitive film so do please ensure you are in a quiet place where you can watch it privately and with your full attention.

### **Talk about it**

Your children will be asked to talk to you after school on March 4<sup>th</sup> about the education they received and they will ask you if you have watched the film. We hope this will open up conversations between you that will be continued in your everyday chat. We know that talking to young people about drugs and alcohol is hugely protective and we hope SAFE Day will enable you to feel confident to begin this ongoing dialogue and remove the stigma of talking about drugs/alcohol with your teenagers. Young people can teach adults as much as adults can teach young people and we hope SAFE Day will begin a series of everyday conversations that will continue throughout their teen years and into early adulthood. Talking to your children about substances is protective and can help keep them safe. The information shared to children and parents/carers on SAFE day will help get you started on this journey.

### **Follow up online workshop for parents on 21 March**

We understand the content of the film may raise some questions and/or a need to find out more. **We would like to invite you to a follow up parents/carers substance misuse awareness workshop by webinar** led by drug educators from the drug education charity the Daniel Spargo-Mabbs Foundation. This will be held on **Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> March at 7.00-8.30pm**. (See the registration link at the bottom of this letter).

The world for young people is a very different place than it was for their parents, including in their vulnerability to risk from drugs and alcohol, with levels of exposure and access greater than ever before, partly thanks to social media. This workshop provides a great opportunity for you as a parent or carer to become more aware of what issues face your children, and what you can do to help them

stay safe. There is also the opportunity to ask confidential questions before the workshop via the online survey link you will receive, and during the workshop itself.

**The workshop will involve finding out about:**

- levels of young people's exposure to drugs and alcohol – what, where, when and how
- what young people, and their parents and carers, need to know about the risks of drugs and alcohol
- factors that affect young people's decisions about drugs and alcohol, including teenage brain development
- how to have effective conversations with your child, and practical suggestions for what you can do to support them to stay safe
- where to go for more information and support.

The DSM Foundation was set up by Fiona and Tim Spargo-Mabbs in 2014 after the tragic death of their 16-year-old son Daniel as a result of taking ecstasy ([www.dsmfoundation.org.uk](http://www.dsmfoundation.org.uk)). The aim of the charity is to support young people to make safe choices about drugs, and they work with students, teachers, parents/carers and professionals in schools, colleges and community organisations across the UK.

**Please click the link below to register for the event:**

[https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_2tJJ9z8GT62ajTB\\_BylRvw](https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_2tJJ9z8GT62ajTB_BylRvw)

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email from the Foundation containing information about joining the webinar and a link to a **short questionnaire**, which we would **very much like you to complete** to help us gauge the impact of this new approach to substance misuse education in Kingston and Richmond.

Thank you for engaging in Substance Advice For Everyone (SAFE) Education.

