

NEWS BULLETIN

**Riverside
College**
Widnes & Runcorn

**CRANTON
SIXTHFORM
COLLEGE**

WELLBEING

Welcome To Our Spring News Bulletin

Our Spring Newsletter offers a small insight into the ongoing work we are doing to support our students' wellbeing. We understand how vital good mental health and wellbeing is for our students to thrive and achieve their goals.

The Wellbeing Team offers ongoing support across a range of topics and we also have a range of resources on the Wellbeing Solar page. For this term's newsletter, we have selected a snapshot of the topics that are currently prevalent and important to us. Each topic covered includes a link to further resources and support, whether you are a young person, adult student or student parent.

Samaritans

Free, confidential emotional support:



Shout

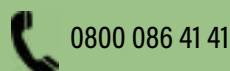
Free, confidential 24/7 text messaging support:



Text 'SHOUT' to 85258

Papyrus

Free confidential support if you are 35 and under and struggling with suicidal thoughts or are supporting someone who is:



NHS urgent mental health helpline





On Friday 2nd May at 10am, we are holding our annual run to raise money for Cancer Research UK.

This is a fantastic event, called Race for Hope, is always uplifting bringing together students and staff to raise much needed funds for a charity that is close to our hearts.

If you need help with this, contact the Wellbeing Team Programme Management in college.

Staff can sign up using **this link**.

Students can sign up **here**.

Raising Awareness: Ketamine

Our students have opportunities to learn about the risks of drugs, alcohol and vaping in Aspire sessions and we are committed to ensuring that our students can make informed decisions that keep them safe. Sadly, Ketamine use is on the increase, both nationally and locally in Halton and the surrounding areas. Subsequently, our students have had sessions about the risks of Ketamine recently and we have received some great feedback about their informative and impactful content and delivery. Our commitment to raising awareness continues:

What is it?

Ketamine (ketamine hydrochloride) is a dissociative general anaesthetic. Doctors and vets use this drug because it produces pain relief and amnesia.

Ketamine may commonly be called:

'Vitamin K' (not to be mistaken for the actual vitamin found in vegetables), 'Special K', 'Super K', 'K', 'Green', 'Donkey Dust', 'Ket' or 'Wonk.'

What does it do?

Ketamine produces a feeling of detachment from the body and the external world. It does this by reducing or blocking signals to the conscious mind from other parts of the brain, such as the senses - sight, sound, taste, touch and smell. The short-term effects of ketamine include a sense of euphoria, hallucinations, a sense of floating, drowsiness, amnesia, slurred speech, nausea, vomiting and dissociation.

There is **no** safe level of drug use.

The facts...

1. When used as a medicine, ketamine looks like a clear liquid. When used recreationally, it can come in powder or tablet form.

2. Ketamine is likely to be cut with other substances to increase the sellers profits; this can increase the risk of adverse reactions and overdose.

3. When people use ketamine, they may enter an 'emergent state' which starts with feelings of being unable to move, this can be terrifying.

4. Some people may experience a "K-hole" which is a trip-like experience. During this, they may feel like their mind and body has separated which can be scary.

Symptoms of ketamine overdose include loss of consciousness, extremely slow heart rate, low blood pressure, seizure, coma and can be fatal.

5. The risk of overdose with ketamine is always there but is higher if people use other alcohol, and/or other drugs at the same time, including prescription antidepressants.

6. Ketamine reduces the brain's ability to feel pain, which can increase the risk of injury when under the influence and could be fatal.

7. Ketamine can cause mental health issues, such as psychotic symptoms (delusions, hallucinations, disturbing thoughts), anxiety, panic attacks and paranoia. It can also make other pre-existing mental health conditions worse.

8. Long term use of ketamine can result in physical harm such as painful urination, stomach cramps, urinary urgency, permanent incontinence, organ damage including bladder, brain and kidneys. It can also have lasting effects on mental health, memory, attention and decision making.

If you have used ketamine and you're feeling unwell or notice someone else is unwell whilst using, after using or after stopping using ketamine, then seek medical attention urgently. Contact 111 for urgent medical advice or 999 in an emergency.

Need further support?

Catch22 Young People's Substance Misuse services offer free and confidential advice and support to young people aged between 11 and 25.

Talk to Frank Ketamine | Effects of Ketamine | FRANK

Podcast for Parents BBC Radio 4 - Woman's Hour - Ketamine: What parents need to know

You can also contact the wellbeing team in college:

SafeSpace@riversidecollege.ac.uk

Healthy Relationships

Healthy relationships are essential in life, that includes the relationship we have with ourselves, friends and partners. Sometimes it can be difficult to recognise when a relationship is unhealthy and it's always helpful to step away emotionally a little and assess how things really are. There is a lot of support available to help you to do this:

For you...

Tips for Dating and Building Healthy Relationships

YoungMinds

Healthy and unhealthy relationships

Childline

Maintaining healthy relationships and mental wellbeing

NHS

To support your child, visit:

Healthy relationships | NSPCC

Artificial Intelligence: Chatbots

Did you know that according to research (see the The Mix link) young people are twice as likely to say they are lonely than those over 70? Young people especially, are increasingly turning to AI Chatbots for support and guidance but how safe is it? A chatbot, such as the one available on Snapchat, feels very much like interaction with a human and some young people are using them for emotional support. However, initial research does suggest that it is potentially exposing users to references to risk taking behaviour. Chatbots are problematic in terms of monitoring due to their sentient nature and users should be cautious about what information they are sharing with it.

Find some more information and support below:

Artificial
intelligence safety
tips for parents
NSPCC

AI Chatbots
The Do's and
Don'ts
The Mix

Learn how to be happier

Action For Happiness is a brilliant movement of people, aiming to create a happier, kinder world. Their website contains free resources, including a calendar full of daily wellbeing activities, which encourages us to be more mindful about our own wellbeing – a must for busy lives of all ages. They also offer a fantastic, free online program to boost your wellbeing, through daily actions for happier living. It is designed for challenging times, based on the latest research from positive psychology, neuroscience, and behavioural science.

You can sign up below at 10 Days of Happiness



Enjoy the better weather (it is getting better, honestly) and have a lovely Easter break,

The Wellbeing Team