

MAY 2024

Nova Training

SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER

QUARTER 1 - EDITION 2

SAFEGUARDING TEAM

VAPE SPIKING & MONEY MULING

STAYING SAFE ONLINE

SUPPORT

***WATCH OUT FOR STRANGERS
OFFERING YOU THEIR VAPE***

**VAPE SPIKING IS A WORRYING NEW TREND YOU
NEED TO BE AWARE OF.**



Welcome to Nova Training's first Safeguarding Newsletter. Our aim is to bring you all the latest, relevant help and advice on issues that we feel will be of importance to you. In this issue we feature the rise in youth vaping and how there is a worrying new trend in vapes being spiked. We also cover money muling and how to keep safe online when buying and selling personal items through social media platforms.

Oliver Preece - Editor

Safeguarding Team



Sue Hobson

Deputy Safeguarding Lead

07415 213 071

Sue.Hobson@novatraining.co.uk



Sam Palmer

Designated Safeguarding Lead

07534 486 890

Sam.Palmer@novatraining.co.uk



Deepa Freebury

Deputy Safeguarding Lead

07411 668 813

Deepa.Freebury@novatraining.co.uk

If you are worried about yourself or a friend we can help!

Worries might include:

- Personal safety
- Stress and anxiety
- Bullying
- Friendship
- Worries about homework
- Health and mental health issues

For help, please speak to your centre manager or contact a member of the designated safeguarding team in confidence

**NOVA TRAINING IS
COMMITTED TO THE
SAFETY AND
WELL-BEING OF
OUR LEARNERS
AND STAFF.**

Should your concern be urgent, please be responsible and contact the police on 999 or 101

Vape Spiking

Watch out for
strangers
offering you
their vape



Summer is in full swing and festival season has kicked off. A time when everyone should be embracing good vibes and making the most of summer. But, if you're fond of the occasional vape, take extra precaution when out and about, especially if you're at a festival this summer.

The Daily Mail have reported that one festival goer, who attended Isle of Wight Festival, lost consciousness and collapsed within minutes of puffing on a stranger's vape while queuing for food.



Chloe Hammerton, who was at the festival with partner Natasha Ward and brother William, were approached by a man who encouraged Chloe to try his vape. Natasha states that Chloe collapsed within a minute of taking a puff, and began to lose consciousness — leaving her unable to speak or move her body. Chloe also experienced a fit. While not much has been said around vape spiking, it's not the first time it's been reported. [Similar stories](#) of being spiked using a stranger's vape have arisen in

recent years as the alternative to cigarettes became more popular.

According to Stamp Out Spiking, drink spiking remains the highest form of spiking at 79%, but with the increased use of vapes, it would be no surprise if we see more and more cases of vapes being used to spike victims



What to do if you or someone else has been spiked

Whether spiked via alcohol or vape, seek medical assistance immediately if you notice any changes to your behaviour. If you suspect a drink or vape has been spiked, do not use it and report it to the police or bar/club staff.



Symptoms of being spiked may include:

- Confusion
- Nausea/vomiting
- Paranoia
- Hallucinations
- Poor coordination
- Unconsciousness
- Loss of ability to communicate properly

These symptoms may be similar to if you've had a few too many drinks, but if you feel more drunk or strange than you should be, seek medical help as soon as possible. If you or someone else has been spiked, alert staff members at the venue or police. If someone else is spiked, make sure you or someone stays with them and keeps talking to them, and don't let them go home or elsewhere. Call an ambulance if symptoms are severe or someone is unconscious.

Don't accept drinks or vapes off strangers, and don't leave them unattended. You never know who's lurking around waiting. If you're with friends, keep an eye out for each other and report any suspicious behaviour if you see something dodgy.



Money muling is for mugs

Storing and moving money for someone else can get you up to 14 years in jail*

*A money mule receives money and either takes it out as cash, or transfers it to someone else, keeping a small amount of commission. If caught, consequences include up to 14 years in jail. 62% of money mule cases this year have been linked to under 30's, often lured in by adverts offering a quick profit in return for laundering money.

What are the risks?

Legal Repercussions: The promise of quick easy money is very tempting but by doing so people become unwitting participants in activities that can have severe legal and even financial consequences. Under UK law this is a serious offence that can lead to imprisonment and fines.

Online Recruitment: Social media and gaming platforms are being used increasingly to recruit young or vulnerable people as potential money mules. Criminals can often deploy persuasive and deceptive tactics to gain the interest and trust of these people so that they can exploit them for money.

Related Crimes: Money Muling is often not on its own and is carried out in relation to other organised crime such as the drugs trade or human trafficking. This means that whilst money muling is a criminal offence by itself it can often expose people to harmful situations as well as potentially putting them in contact with some extremely dangerous individuals.

Financial Losses: If someone transfers funds that can be traced back to criminal activities even if they did not know this can cause significant financial losses, their bank accounts may be frozen, they can be held liable for any illegally obtained funds. People often then find themselves entangled with other forms of criminal financial exploitation and fraud.

“Hi Mum, I got the job...”



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In the long term involvement with money muling can have a major negative impact on someone's reputation, education and employment prospects and even place a strain on their family life. If they were convicted it could significantly damage their future opportunities: they could be blocked from opening a bank account, taking out a mortgage or securing a phone contract.

Advice

It is important that you educate and communicate with young or vulnerable people about the potential risks and consequences of money muling and the importance of making informed decisions and seeking guidance when they need it. If you create an open non-judgemental space it will help them to feel more comfortable with getting help. Stay informed of the methods and approaches that criminals are using to recruit people as money mules, these methods will often evolve to reflect the online landscape. Look at resources available from schools, law enforcement and financial organisations. The don't be fooled complaint at www.moneymules.co.uk has a lot of helpful information and advice. If you have any suspicions that someone you know has been recruited into a money muling operation then seek support and do not attempt to directly confront anyone.

Contact **Crimestoppers** anonymously on **0800 555 111**

Only a FOOL is a 'money mule'



Buying and Selling Personal Items



Considerations for Staying Safe Online

The advent of social media, smartphones, and various online platforms has significantly transformed the way we buy and sell personal items. Gone are the days of relying solely on car boot sales and local newspapers; now, we can effortlessly snap a photo of an unwanted item, post it online, and wait for potential buyers to show interest. The convenience of using apps and channels like Facebook Marketplace, eBay, Vinted, Schpock, Gumtree and Depop to sell our belongings cannot be denied.

However, it is crucial to recognise that online buying and selling can involve communicating with strangers and sharing personal information. Therefore, it is essential to be mindful of certain considerations to ensure appropriate safety and protection while using these platforms. Here are some guidelines to keep in mind:



Interacting with Strangers: Depending on the platform, you may have the opportunity to communicate with potential buyers or sellers. This feature allows individuals to request additional information about an item and coordinate the delivery or receipt of goods. While most interactions online are positive, it is important to approach them with caution, as some people may have malicious intentions, such as scams. Remember that you are under no obligation to communicate with individuals who behave offensively, intimidate you, or cause harm. Many apps have reporting and blocking features, so utilise them if necessary.

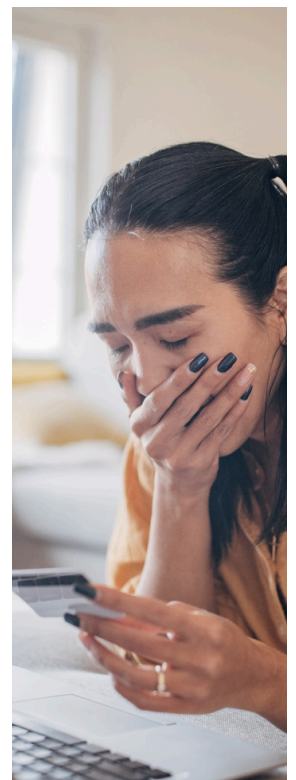
Sharing Personal Information: Depending on the person you're interacting with, you might be asked to share personal information such as your home address or bank details to facilitate the delivery or acceptance of items. Additionally, if you have created a profile on these apps, the information you provided, such as your username or bio, may be visible to others (depending on your privacy settings).

Sometimes, a username may include identifiable information like your name or date of birth, but you are not obliged to include such details if you don't feel comfortable doing so. While sharing certain information may be necessary to complete a transaction, always consider whether you are comfortable sharing these details with strangers. Never feel pressured to disclose anything you're not comfortable with.



Avoid Oversharing When Selling: Whether you're selling old clothes, garden furniture, or a brand-new microwave, it is important not to overshare and keep your listings focused and concise. Ensure that the photos you include only depict the item for sale and do not reveal any compromising information such as bank statements or personal photos. If someone requests additional information or photographs of the item, maintain appropriate boundaries and refrain from providing anything that is clearly unnecessary for the purpose of selling, such as a photo of yourself. Alternatively, you can use editing tools to conceal any parts of the photos you don't wish to share. If someone asks for anything inappropriate, remember to report behaviour through the appropriate channels.

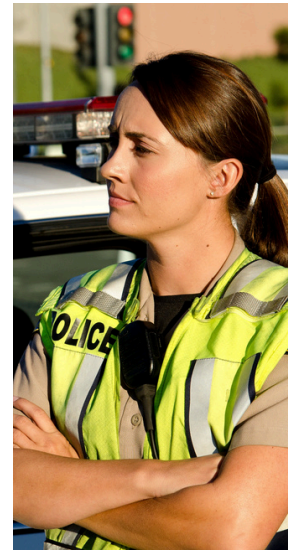
Beware of Scams: While many items listed for sale online accurately represent what you'll receive, it is important to be prepared for instances where something might seem too good to be true or when false information or hidden damages are involved. Unfortunately, scams are prevalent on online selling platforms, and it is our responsibility to critically evaluate and determine what is safe to engage with. Try to verify the credibility of the seller by checking for reviews and assessing the coherence, information, and detail provided in the write-up and photography. Additionally be aware of the use of stock photography, and clickbait headlines and consider whether the price is reasonable compared to similar listings. You can always research the item's value through separate channels. Most importantly, ensure that the platform has mechanisms in place to report violations and seek refunds if necessary, as may be outlined in the terms and conditions. If available, explore any payment protections or assurances that can provide added security.





Choosing Meeting Locations: When engaging in selling items, it becomes necessary to arrange for the delivery of goods, and different individuals employ various approaches to ensure a smooth transaction. If you have concerns about sharing your home address, rest assured that alternative options are available. When buying or selling an item, you may find it more comforting to suggest meeting in a public place or inviting a friend or family member to accompany you. If these alternatives are not feasible, inform a trusted person about the time and location of your meeting. However, if you ever feel unsafe or face immediate danger, do not hesitate to contact the police on 999.

Resolving Issues and Follow-ups: Typically, after a transaction is completed, communication between the buyer and seller comes to an end. However, problems can arise, leading some individuals to lodge complaints or request refunds. In such cases, it is advisable to seek support from the platform where the transaction took place and utilise any available measures to protect yourself from being misled or safeguard buyers and sellers against unwarranted complaints, harassment, or intimidation. Platform support often includes reporting functions and complaint procedures designed to assist in resolving such issues. Remember, if you ever find yourself in an unsafe situation or facing immediate danger, contact the police immediately on 999.



Age Restrictions: Many of the online selling platforms will have age restrictions in place ranging from 13 to 18+ so it's important for parental involvement to be in place for any young person who uses permitted sites.



Reporting on Apps and Platforms

Take a look below at some of the most established online selling platforms and familiarise yourself with their age restrictions for holding accounts and what features they have to support individuals online with reporting and blocking.

- Facebook Marketplace (18+) (Blocking Members)
- eBay (18+) (Blocking Members)
- Vinted (18+ – Underage accounts available with adult supervision) (Blocking Members)
- Schpock (18+ – Parental permission required for accounts 14+) (Blocking Members)
- Depop (13+)
- Gumtree (18+) (Blocking Members)

May



This May is Stroke Awareness Month which seeks to raise awareness around the world for strokes and their dangers. The hope is to make more people aware of the symptoms and the signs to look for and help the people who are likely to have strokes the help they need as early as possible.

It is national walking month this month. This year Living Streets is seeking to highlight the benefits of walking and how they can affect your health and happiness. Not only just walking but remaining inclusive they also focus on wheeling so that everyone can be included and so that all people can reap the benefits **#MagicOfWalking**



May 2024, Key Dates and Events

- May 5th - International Family Equality Day
- May 6th - 12th - Deaf awareness week
- May 8th - World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day
- May 13th - 19th - Coeliac UK awareness week
- May 15th - International day of families
- May 16th - Global accessibility awareness day
- May 17th - International day against homophobia, transphobia and biphobia
- May 21st - World day for cultural diversity for dialogue and development
- May 21st - 22nd - TUC's disabled workers' conference
- May 22nd - International day for biological diversity
- May 24th - Pansexual Visibility Day

June



Motor Neurone Disease Awareness Month

In June it is Motor Neurone Disease Awareness Month which sets out to raise awareness about motor neurone disease and how it can affect people. The hope is with awareness raised people affected by Motor Neurone disease can get the help that and support that they need from other agencies.

This month is stillbirth and Neonatal Death Awareness Month which helps to raise awareness about families that have lost a baby due to stillbirth and neonatal death. It hopes to increase the understanding of this and how it can affect parents. The aim of this is to get improvements in the bereavement care and the support services for them.



Scleroderma is a relatively unknown condition that affects many people in different ways. This month seeks to encourage conversations and raise awareness for them to help improve diagnosis, treatments and quality of life and to hopefully improve the lives of everyone affected.

Finally, in June it is LGBTQ+ Pride month where all members of the LGBTQ+ community come together to celebrate their history, achievements and ongoing struggle for equality. There are parades up and down the country and brings together everyone from individuals to organisations to celebrate.



June

June 2024, Key Dates and Events

- June 4th - International day of innocent children victims of aggression
- June 8th - Global wellness day
- June 9th - Race unity day
- June 10th - 16th - Men's health week
- June 12th - World day against child labour
- June 15th - World elder abuse awareness day
- June 17th - 23rd - Refugee week
- June 18th - Autistic pride day
- June 20th - World refugee day
- June 20th - Summer solstice
- June 22nd - UK Windrush day
- June 24th - 28th - School diversity week
- June 27th - 28th - TUC's LGBT+ conference

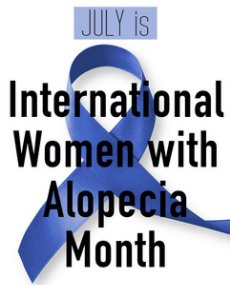


July

UV Safety Awareness Month

As summer gets into full swing this month, July is UV safety awareness month which seeks to raise awareness for the risks associated with too much sun exposure and to make sure that everyone is taking the right precautions to keep them safe from sunlight and be outdoors safely.





International women with alopecia month

The most common form of hair loss in women is Alopecia and this month's goal is to raise awareness about this and help everyone to gain an understanding of the causes of this and hopefully to normalise it and make it more common knowledge.

Globally it is disability pride month which is a month to accept and honour everyone's uniqueness and to promote visibility of all kinds of disabilities. For people in the disabled community it encourages self-acceptance and to embrace all kinds of disabilities including their own. This should kick start conversations about disability experiences and issues.



July 2024, Key Dates and Events

- July 14th - International non-binary people's day
- July 18th - Nelson Mandela international day
- July 18th - August 17th - South Asian heritage month
- July 28th - World hepatitis day

Conclusion and Key Contacts

Thank you for taking the time to read this quarter's newsletter and we hope that the information in here will prove to be useful and will make everyone feel a little safer and that it has brought to light some of the dangers of money muling, vaping spiking and buying and selling items online. If you or someone that you know does have a safeguarding concern please do not hesitate to contact the safeguarding team as detailed on the first page of this newsletter or contact any of the below contacts if necessary.





Young Minds - the UK's leading charity fighting for children and young people's mental health. Young minds want to see a world where no young person feels alone with their mental health, and all young people get the mental health support they need when they need it no matter what. - www.youngminds.org.uk



Shout 85258 - Shout is a free, confidential, 24/7 text message service for anyone in need of support in the UK. their trained shout volunteers can help with issues including anxiety, depression, suicidal thoughts, relationship problems, sexuality, money worries. Text SHOUT to 85258.

Papyrus - prevention of young suicide is a UK charity dedicated to the prevention of suicide and the promotion of positive mental health and emotional well-being in young people. www.papyrus-uk.org



Childline - Childline is always available to help anyone under 19 in the UK with any issues they may be going through. They can talk about anything whether it is big or small. It is free, confidential and available at any time. - 0800 1111 - www.childline.org.uk

Kooth - An online mental well-being community with free, safe and anonymous support - www.kooth.com



NSPCC - For over 100 years the NSPCC has helped make children safer from abuse with their campaigns and services they strive to make a difference in everything they do between 2016 and 2021 they helped 6.6 Million children. - 0808 800 5000



Mind - poor mental well-being can make it more difficult to cope with daily life. If you need non urgent information about mental health support and services call - 0300 123 3393



Samaritans - no matter what you are going through a samaritan is always available to talk to 24 hours a day 365 days a year - Call 116 123 or email jo@samaritans.org

Talk to Frank - For everything that you need to know about drugs, their effects and the law. Talk to Frank for facts, support and advice 24 hours a day and 7 days a week - 0300 123 6600 or text 82111



Beat - The UK's eating disorder charity aims to end the suffering and pain caused by eating disorders. 0808 801 0677 or help@beateatingdisorders.org.uk

