TREES Newsletter

Together Reducing & Ending Exploitation in Shropshire

Issue 13 · Winter 2023-2024



QUICK LINKS

















BRANCH PROJECT

withyou



Welcome to the winter edition of the TREES Newsletter 2024

In the Local Authority, we have noted that approximately 30% of child exploitation referrals

establish itself between anti-social behaviour and exploitation and we've organised a week of Please see page 12 for a itinerary for what's on offer.

Despite these financially pressing times, there is more support than ever to directly support young people—so please continue to access the services to the left to get the right help.



Current patterns and emerging themes

Update from Clare Jervis, CE & Missing Operational Lead

During this quarter—males continue to make up the largest number of referrals into the local authority—and there has also been a noticeable uptick in the amount of re-referrals we are receiving overall. This is viewed as a positive as it evidences good oversight and reviewing of the CE process.

Within Shrewsbury, the Ditherington and Sundorne areas have consistently been highlighted through police intelligence, crime and schools concerns and increased resources are being targeted in these areas. Notably, there has been two new knife amnesty bins placed in these communities to try and reduce harm. We have seen a lot of intelligence relating to knives being found in children's bedrooms.

We're being more creative than ever in trying to reduce exploitation in Shropshire. West Mercia Police are increasing the use of specialist Court orders, such as Slavery and Trafficking Prevention Orders (STPO) and Slavery and Trafficking Risk Orders (STRO) which can give them increased prosecutable powers over adults who continue to exploit children.

There are significant efforts going into improving individual outcomes for young people through service engagement, auditing, review and pragmatic contextual planning. As such—there is a huge amount on offer from the Local Authority through consultations, training and support if professionals should require it.

This quarter has seen some examples of really complex CE/CSE. Notably out of area children going missing across borders, the exploitation not being picked up by external statutory agencies, and drug bondage meaning that some children are being trafficked within cities. Vapes continue to highlight a issue where children are being specifically targeted to sell these in schools by adult exploiters, and the line between CSE/CE and victim/perpetrator are becoming very blurred.

We've seen intel shared about 'running through' houses—i.e. where an individual or group of young people will 'bally up' (equip balaclavas), equip themselves with knifes/weapons and force themselves into a property where drug dealing is occurring, to 'send a message', or indeed collect debt.

Online harm/grooming continues to be an issue—especially more prevalent that ever with smartphone and apps becoming increasingly secure. Updates will always be shared via this newsletter—but we ask agencies to training such as the Brook Traffic Light Tool (accessible via Leap into Learning and provided for FREE by the LA) - use resources online such as CEOP (ThinkUKnow) and being professionally curious when asking about what apps young people are using—and especially how they're spending their time online.

Hot Spots of concern

Recent referrals and intel have identified the following areas of concern. Disruption tactics will be considered as part of regular multi-agency meetings, but if you hear about or witness anything concerning in these areas, please be alert and report any concerns as intel (please see <u>Page 3</u> for more information on how to do this)

Shrewsbury

Pubs in Castle Street, the graveyard by Old Chads Church, the bandstand in the quarry, 'stoner's corner' in the quarry, Ditherington, Sundorne, Meole Brace.

Other areas

Phone/vape shops throughout Shropshire—in particular Oswestry and Whitchurch. Myddle, Ellesmere town and Lidl car park in Whitchurch have been highlighted. Cae Glas Park in Oswestry. Travel to Birmingham, Wrexham, Staffordshire.





Reporting Intelligence



There may be behaviour that you witness in communities that cause you to be concerned that unknown children are being exploited, such as activity around associates, addresses or locations.

If you have information about any anti-social or criminal activity or behaviour (even where you do not know who is at risk or of concern) which indicates that child exploitation may be occurring, please ensure you pass this information to West Mercia Police as soon as possible to enable them to prevent and detect crime (s115 Crime and Disorder Act 1998). Please provide names if you are aware of them, and as much detail as possible—in particular children and young people who may already be known to children's services or the police.

The below methods can also be used for reporting concerns:

- Where you think there is an immediate risk to a person or you witness a crime taking place, phone 999 (or dial 55 if you are unable to talk).
- Report under the <u>"Tell Us About" section on the West Mercia Police website</u> or phone 101.
- Anonymously to Crimestoppers online at https://crimestoppers-uk.org or by calling 0800 555111.
- Children, their families and/or other members of the community may be worried about sharing
 information about crime with the police, but you can encourage them to do so anonymously by
 signposting them to Crimestoppers, or Fearless for young people www.fearless.org
- If you are a professional, please email the information directly to the Shropshire CE Team at: <u>CE-TeamShropshire@westmercia.police.uk</u> (please note that this inbox is only monitored on weekdays between 8am 4pm) or call the team on 01743 237413.

Please note: Where you have child specific information which suggests that a child is at risk of or experiencing harm as a result of exploitation, you must follow the Child Exploitation Pathway and pass information related to criminal activity or behaviour posing a risk to West Mercia Police.

What is classed as intelligence?

Both information and intelligence are welcome, here is a useful summary to describe each:

Information: Something that is learned or provided about something or someone. Information is defined as knowledge gained through experience or study; facts or knowledge provided or learned; knowledge of specific and timely events or situations, news. Information can relate to all forms of processed data and can include intelligence.

Intelligence: The analytics (interpretation of meaningful patterns) of information gathered from many sources. This is information that has been compiled, analysed, and/or disseminated to anticipate, prevent, or monitor criminal activity. It is information that has been subject to a defined evaluation and risk assessment process in order to assist with police decision making. This is to supply robust, verifiable information which can be evaluated, assessed for risk and then acted upon.



Help us, help you

A request from Detective Sergeant Jon Statham West Mercia Police



The success of the child exploitation police team's central intelligence inbox (CETeamShropshire@westmercia.police.uk) continues to provide a great way for professionals to submit vital intelligence to help protect our communities.

However, please can professionals continue to <u>ONLY</u> submit intelligence as defined on page 3 of this newsletter. This continues to be critically important to manage our finite resources.

A earnest reminder to consider what you're submitting—do you think a crime has been committed, is this intelligence, or just information sharing? This makes a big difference in the way we respond and sometimes can delay important decisions around safeguarding and policing. Life/death or a crime taking place right now—999. Non-urgent crimes need to be reported to 101 or via www.westmerciapolice.uk (you can use the quick links on the front page!)

We have seen an increase in crimes being recorded on Child Exploitation Risk Assessments submitted to the Local Authority —please make a note of crime that you are referring to in your assessments (including the crime reference number) when you report it.

A friendly reminder to all persons, professionals, schools and agencies;

Under the Indecent photographs, Protection of Children Act 1978 S.1;

"It is an offence for a person;

- To take, or permit to be taken or to make, any indecent photograph or pseudo photograph of a child. Or,
- To distribute or show such an indecent photograph or pseudo photograph. Or,
- To have in their possession such indecent photographs or pseudo photograph, view a view to them being distributed or shown by himself or others".

In brief, if someone takes pictures of breasts / genitals and send them to someone else or receive them from someone else (usually stored on phones) - this will be investigated by police and remain on their local police record. (This is also relevant to referrers sharing images on CE Risk Assessments).

Thankyou for you cooperation—we really appreciate it.

Substance Highlight;

THC Vapes

Following the unexcepted success of nicotene based vapes—THC vapes are now rapidly increasingly in popularity—and it appears this trend shows no signs of decelerating.

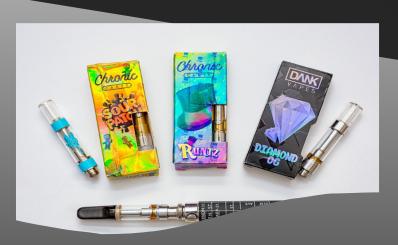


THC is one of the main components in cannabis and is responsible for the 'high' users feels shortly after inhaling.

THC vapes are illegal and considered a Class B substance. However—most are sold as looking very legitimate and often are linked to CBD based oils, vapes and alternative therapies which are legal in certain quantities. There are various websites online which offer these products and use creative language to get around this.

THC vapes are not regulated and therefore you have no guarantee of what you're vaping. There is little visual distinction between cannabis oil and synthesised cannabinoid SCRA (like 'spice' or 'mamba').





Shropshire's public health vaping website offers further information on where to get support if you suspect a child is using a THC vape.
See Youth vaping | Shropshire Council or contact george.r.davies@shropshire.gov.uk

Emerging trends in Shropshire

Following a popular trend in urban areas—Shropshire has now been targeted by new QR code style stickers which direct substance users to a website, or secure app, to directly purchase substances.

We ask these are either removed and disposed of—or reported to the local authority for further awareness.





Courtesy of West Mercia Police

A large number of prescription meds imported into the UK from places like Pakistan and India. Across the Force area—we have recently had packages intercepted that contained 1000's of tablets/pills.

These are usually tablets such as gabapentin, pregabalins, zopiclone, alprazolam (Xanax) and diazepam (Valium).

Many of these are counterfeit medications and have been prepared in conditions that would not be accepted here in the UK. It is also unknown what is in these tablets.

Alprazolam, or Xanax, has quite a large illicit market and is regularly traded. It is unknown if these are legitimate or counterfeit medications. Illicit Xanax has been found to contain all manner of drugs – www.wedinos.org is a good source to see what tablets have been purchased as, and then what they actually are once they have been tested.

Nitrous Oxide (n2o, NOS, Laughing Gas, balloons, smart whips) was made illegal and classified to a Class C substance in November. There is a backlog of offences related to this substances so that it likely a number of young people may receive some interventions around this.









Public Health Nursing Service 0-19 (0-25 SEND)



Our aim is to deliver a highquality preventative service to improve the health and wellbeing of children, young people and their families by making sure every contact counts.



PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING SERVICE - SHROPSHIRE

The Public Health Nursing service consists of health visitors, school nurses, family nurse partnership and skilled practitioners and administrative staff to support the healthy child programme delivery.

The Healthy Child Programme offers every family an evidence-base programme of interventions, including screening tests, immunisations, developmental reviews, and information and guidance to support parenting and healthy choices.

It also outlines all services that children and families need to receive if they are to achieve their optimum health and wellbeing.



HEALTH VISITING O-5 YEAR:



SCHOOL NURSING



NURSE PARTNERSHIP



HEALTH VISITING

The Health Visiting service aims to achieve the best health and wellbeing for children from birth to 5 years of age, by identifying health needs and promoting healthy lifestyles. This includes delivery of health and development reviews, health promotion and parenting guidance tailored to individual families. In the health visiting team you will find; SCPHN Health Visitors, Staff Nurses, Healthy Child Practitioners & Support Workers.

WHAT WE DO ...

- - antenatal, new birth, 6-8 weeks, 9-12month & 2 2 1/2
 - Open access clinics & Telephone/ text service to support familie
 - Home visits & clinic appointments to support families with individual needs e.g.
 health needs, maternal/paternal mental health, sleep and behaviour support
 - Targeted support for families with identified needs & safeguarding concerns
 - Multi agency working to provide all children with the best start in life

SCHOOL NURSING

School Nurses offer services to school aged children between the ages of 5 to 19 years old and children 5-25 with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). In the school nursing team you will find; SCPHN School Nurses, Staff Nurses, Healthy Child Practitioners & Support Workers.

WHAT WE DO ...

- Provide advice on specific issues such as continence, sleep or healthy eating
- Supporting pupils with long term health conditions or disabilities such as asthma and anaphylaxis
- Health screening, such as the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) in Reception and Year 6
- · Working with schools, children and young people to address smoking, vaping, alcohol or drugs.
- Confidential Health Advice for Teens (CHAT) in secondary schools and via text.
- Primary school and community drop-in's
- Protection of vulnerable children to improve their health outcomes
- Sexual health services and relationship advice for teens





The Family Nurse Partnership (FNP) is an intensive home visiting service; for mums who are 19 or under and expecting their first baby.

The specially trained Family Nurse will help young mums understand all about their pregnancy and how to care for themselves and their baby. The Family Nurse will visit regularly during pregnancy and then after the birth until the baby is between one and two years old.

WHAT WE DO ...



By focusing on their strengths FNP enables young parents to:

- -Develop good relationships with their child understanding their needs.
- -Make choices to give their child the best possible start in life.
- -Self efficacy to achieve their potential.
- -Model the positive relationship they have with their FN with others.

Visits are weekly, fortnightly and monthly, depending on the age of the child. The visits allow families to focus on the following areas: personal health, maternal role, environment, family and friends and health services. The Family Nurse will also focus on many aspects with the young parent including attachment, breastfeeding, immunisation, child development and school readiness.

HOW TO CONTACT US

HEALTH VISITING & SCHOOL NURSING SINGLE POINT OF ACCESS (SPOA):

0333 358 3654

HEALTH VISITING TEXT:

07520 635212

SCHOOL NURSING TEXT:

FNP TEAM:

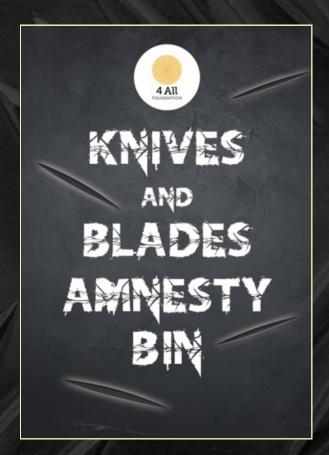
SERVICE LEAD: KAREN POUNTNEY

4 All Foundation Launches Knife and Blades Amnesty Bin at Ditherington Community Centre in Shrewsbury

4 All Foundation, in collaboration with Shropshire Council and Shrewsbury Town Council, announces the launch of a Knife and Blades Amnesty Bin at the Ditherington Community Centre in Shrewsbury. This initiative aims to address knife crime and promote community safety by providing a safe and anonymous way for individuals to surrender knives and blades.

The launch of the Knife and Blades Amnesty Bin reflects the collective commitment of the 4 All Foundation, Shropshire Council, and Shrewsbury Town Council to fostering a safer and more secure community for all residents. Together, we are taking proactive steps to address knife crime and build a brighter future for our community.

For more information about the Knife and Blades Amnesty Bin, please email info@4all.foundation.





The Children's Society

Steer Clear

across West Mercia who are



communities for everyone.



The service is free of charge, and anyone can make a referral. If you're concerned about a young person, get in touch today. You could help keep them safe from harm – today and tomorrow.

For more information or to make a referral, contact us at steer.clear@childrenssociety.org.uk

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The Children's Society

CE Awareness Week

18th - 22nd March 2024

To coincide with the STOP CE Awareness Day on 18th March, Shropshire Council's TREES (Together Reducing & Ending Exploitation in Shropshire) Team are joining forces with We Are With You, Steer Clear, Branch Project, Climb, The Clewer Initiative & Targeted Early Help to provide a week of drop-in sessions to school students, and online training sessions. To receive a link to join any of the online sessions, please email amy.amber@shropshire.gov.uk.

Monday 18th March Tuesday 19th March Wednesday 20th March Thursday 21st March Friday 22nd March 9.30am - 12.00pm 9.30am - 11.30am 9.30am - 11.45am 9.30am - 11.30am 12.00pm - 12.45pm Steer Clear & Branch Project We Are With You drop-in We Are With You drop-in We Are With You drop-in Improving engagement with drop-in morning for morning for Meole Brace morning for Grove School morning for Shrewsbury young people & families **Shrewsbury Academy students** School students students **Academy students** Online session for professionals from Stafford Mason, Targeted 1.00pm - 2.00pm 10.30am - 1.30pm 10.00am - 11.00am 1.00pm - 3.00pm Early Help We Are With You & Branch Steer Clear school drop-in Climb drop-in afternoon for Substance misuse training Project drop-in afternoon for morning for TMBSS Sundorne Shrewsbury Academy students 3.00pm - 3.45pm Training session for professionals, **Priory School students** students **CE Emerging Trends - THC** to book please visit: 4.00pm - 5.00pm vapes, AI and apps/games https://shropshire.learningpool.com/ 3.30pm - 4.15pm 3.00pm - 4.30pm **Understanding County Lines** course/view.php?id=1006 Online session for professionals Completing effective CE for Parents, Grandparents & **Effective Return Home Interviews** from George Davies, TREES risk assessments Guardians 12.00pm - 1.00pm Online session for social care & Online session for professionals Online session from the Clewer Serious Youth Violence & Early Help professionals from Clare from Donna Richards, TREES Initiative, to book please visit: the Steer Clear service Jervis, TREES https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/ Online session for professionals e/862321495807?aff=oddtdtcreator from Rachel Barry, Steer Clear 3.00pm - 3.45pm Working with young people in addressing CE & the importance of appropriate language



The NRM and Transition into Adulthood



Child victims and gathering consent for the NRN



Online session for professionals from Stafford Mason, Targeted

Early Help

7 Minute **Briefing**

NRM Support

eparing young people for

Services that can offer assistance

NATIONAL COUNTER TRAFFICKING CENTRE (Click here) SALVATION ARMY (MSVCC) (Click here) THE CHILDREN'S SOCIETY NRM TRANSITIONS BRIEFING (Click here) BRIDGING THE GAP to TRANSITIONAL SAFEGUARDING (Click here) The Modern Slavery ACT (2015) (Click here) National referral mechanis Home Office (Click here)

The NRM and preparing young people for adulthood

For young people who have experienced exploitation and modern slavery in their childhood, in instances where local authority support ceases, the authority is responsible for coordinating with the Single Competent Authority (SCA) to ensure they can access support via the (NRM). Those who were recognised as victims with a positive Reasonable Ground or Conclusive Grounds decision in their youth

Reflective questions

How well does your agency understand the NRM and what the MSVCC brings to young people transitioning to adulthood? What does your organisation need to support understanding and awareness, how will you address learning gaps?

address teaming space. What practice is in place in your area that ensures that young people with NRM Reasonable and Conclusive Grounds Decisions are supported to make informed decisions as they move in to adulthood? How can your organisation strengthen existin transitions pathways to address the issues?

Shropshire

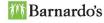
wadem states of which are considered to the state of the

Conversations should happen in advance taking place within meetings and visits as well as during the planning for transition and case closure preparations. If the NRM process remains ongoing, the case note history should include a clear recording of the conversation, along with a well-defined plan that has been agreed detailing how consent for the (NRM) will be gathered after the young persons 18th Birthday.



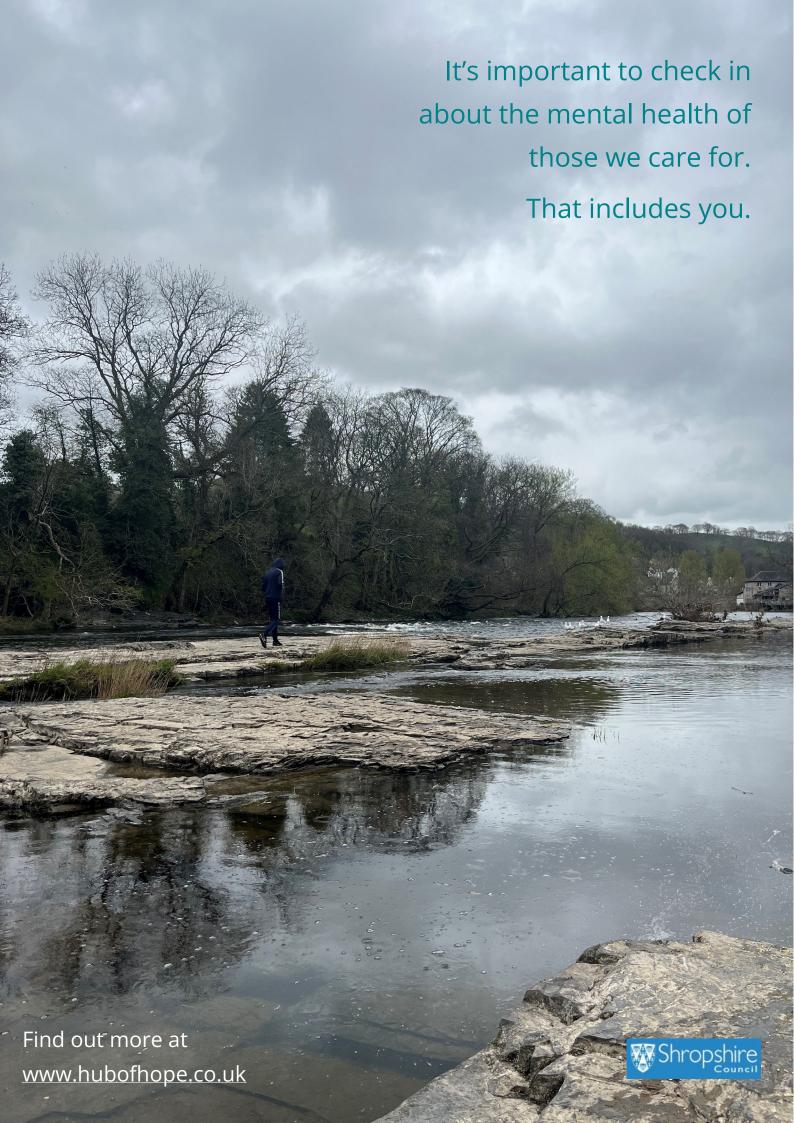














Every child deserves to feel safe, secure, and hopeful. But right now, thousands of children across the country are in danger.

At Climb, we work to empower young people, intervening early to reduce the risks they're facing and prevent them from being exploited.

For the last three years, we have been working across West Mercia to support 10-to 17-year-olds who are at risk of exploitation. We offer one-to-one support and positive diversionary activities that are tailored to young people's individual interests and needs and open up new opportunities.



Climb is delivered in partnership with the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner.

For more information or to refer a young person to Climb, please visit our website at

childrenssociety.org.uk/climb or email climb@childrenssociety.org.uk.





The Children's Society





Raising awareness of exploitation and vulnerability

FREE training funded by John Campion, Police & Crime Commissioner

Free training sessions are available to anyone who requires a raising awareness of vulnerability and exploitation. The sessions are 2 hours long and are interactive with the use of Slido, and are hosted either face-to-face or online via Zoom or MS Teams. The course is certificated and enhances safeguarding training, and is free to access - any number of sessions can be booked.

On completion of this course you will be able to:

- Identify the vulnerability factors and adverse childhood experiences, understanding the grooming cycle used to draw those into exploitation
- Explain what the various forms of modern day slavery are and how the NRM can support those identified as being exploited
- Recognise the signs, symptoms and indicators of exploitation for adults and children
- Understand how it impacts on a young person and on adults
- Know how to respond, record and report concerns

If you are interested in this free training offer, please email: trainersWDBC@westmercia.police.uk

Other info/updates



Please continue to refer as needed—we are consistently expanding our services and provision.



For further information or booking enquiries please visit www.purpleleaf.org.uk or contact us on enquiries@purpleleaf.org.uk or 01905 677444.



To make a referral to The Branch Project, please visit: www.wmrsasc.org.uk/referrals



Child Exploitation Consultation Sessions

We are here to support you

Do you have a particular young person who you would like to discuss in more depth? If so, we are offering monthly consultations on the first Tuesday of each month, between 2pm – 4pm.

The following professionals will be on hand to offer advice and support regarding all CCE, CSE and substance misuse queries:

- Clare Jervis, Exploitation & Missing Operational Lead
- George Davies, Young Persons Substance Misuse Advisor
- Stafford Mason, Exploitation Lead for Early Help
- Jo Smith, Education Access Service
- Sonya Jones, We Are With You
- Carrie O'Keefe, Branch Project

To book your ½ hour slot, please email amy.amber@shropshire.gov.uk







Useful Links

Child Exploitation Risk Assessment Tool

To be completed if you have concerns about a particular young person (parental consent required): https://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/local-content/4cjN/exploitation-tools-and-pathways/?b=Shropshire

Reporting Intelligence

Professionals are welcome to email non-urgent information directly to the police CE Team at: CETeamShropshire@westmercia.police.uk For full guidance on Intelligence Reporting please visit: https://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/local-content/4cjN/exploitation-tools-and-pathways/?b=Shropshire

Child Exploitation Leaflets

A leaflet has been produced to provide an overview of CE, and Shropshire's CE Pathway for parents & carers, there is also a similar leaflet available for local communities:

https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/media/24227/ce-in-shropshire-leaflet-for-parents-carers.pdf https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/media/24226/ce-in-shropshire-leaflet-for-local-communities.pdf

Child Exploitation Directory

Designed to outline the support available to children and young people in Shropshire who are victims of, or at risk of CE, as well as their families and the professionals who support them:

https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/media/21754/ce-directory.pdf

Smarter Screening Tool

To be completed if you have concerns regarding a young person's use of substances: https://shropshire.gov.uk/media/21573/with-you-smarter-screening-tool-vnov21.doc

Partner Organisations

Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership - <u>www.safeguardingshropshireschildren.org.uk</u>

Early Help - www.shropshire.gov.uk/early-help

West Mercia Police - www.westmercia.police.uk

West Mercia Youth Justice Service - <u>www.westmerciayouthjustice.org.uk</u>

We Are With You - <u>www.wearewithyou.org.uk/services/shropshire</u>

Branch Project - www.wmrsasc.org.uk/the-branch-project

Purple Leaf - <u>www.purpleleaf.org.uk</u>

Climb - <u>www.childrenssociety.org.uk/climb</u>

NWG - www.nwgnetwork.org

For support or advice, or to be added to the mailing list for this newsletter, please contact clare.jervis@shropshire.gov.uk

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