

February 2018 report for the Thredling Division from Cllr Matthew Hicks

Online safety among younger children improving in Suffolk, but support must be sustained

This year's annual Cybersurvey results show that more parents are delivering messages of online safety to their children from a young age. The survey, now in its tenth year, shows that parental influence is having an impact on risk-taking behaviour, with 62% of children (up from 57% in 2016) saying they always listen to their parent/carers advice and 80% taught about online safety at school. Since last year we have seen a 4% reduction in young people using chatrooms (17% less than 4 years ago) and a 2% reduction in young people meeting up with someone they knew only online. The Cybersurvey research has shown that a user can encounter risk in under half an hour online however time spent, or 'screen time' is not the only indicator of risk. Age, context, gender, vulnerability, emotional health and the content viewed online are all factors that contribute to their online experiences and their ability to be cope with what they encounter on the internet and in social media. The results show that parental influence has a huge impact on a child's online behaviour. The fact that more parents and carers are having conversations early with their child, is making a real difference in Suffolk. It is important to keep a close eye on what children are viewing online as well as the length of time they spend. SCC is striving to increase awareness about keeping children safe online and will continue to work closely with parents, education settings, and other partner organisations to improve online safety in the county. To read the Suffolk Cybersurvey visit www.esafersuffolk.org

Suffolk to use drone technology to help manage blue light service incidents

15 February 2018 marked the official launch of the use of two Small Unmanned Surveillance Aircrafts in Suffolk. The technology, commonly referred to as drones have been developed and funded by Suffolk Resilience Forum for use across the county. As part of a multi-agency Air Support Unit, the drones will be used by Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service, Suffolk Constabulary, Suffolk County Council and Suffolk Lowland Search and Rescue and Norfolk & Suffolk 4x4 Response. The drones will provide a range of aerial surveillance options to support emergency services and voluntary organisations across a wide range of incidents. By improving the ability to see and understand what is happening from the air, the drones will support emergency services and voluntary organisations to inform the decisions they make when dealing with an incident. They will also help to reduce risks to the public and emergency service workers. The drones and camera equipment cost around £42,500 and they are based at Woodbridge Fire and Police station, have 24/7 emergency response capability and can be used by 17 specially trained remote pilots. The drones will provide important visual information which will be used alongside experienced operational commanders to complete the decision-making picture and help resolve incidents as quickly and safely as possible. The drones have already been used a number of times, most recently at the fire at Saxmundham train station to not only provide pictures of fire spreading and possible collapse in areas that may not have been possible for firefighters to access or see, but also to assist the joint investigation team to determine the location and possible cause of the fire.

Suffolk Public Health chiefs urge people to take asthma seriously

Around 1 in 11 children in the UK are affected by asthma but not all children have their disease well managed. There is no cure for asthma yet but with the right treatment children can lead a normal and active life. Suffolk County Council, Public Health and the Clinical Commissioning Groups of GPs are launching a campaign to raise awareness of the seriousness of asthma. The aim is to encourage parents whose children have asthma to make sure their child has an asthma plan and regular reviews at the surgery. Practice nurses can help put together a plan and make sure that the child is using their inhaler correctly. Schools have an important part to play in keeping children with asthma safe, all children who have asthma should have a copy of their asthma plan and a spare reliever inhaler at their school. Posters highlighting this public health message will be sent to GP surgeries, children's centres, schools, nurseries, libraries, leisure centres and pharmacies. Whilst asthma is a common childhood condition we want to raise awareness of the importance of managing it well. For further information please visit: www.healthysuffolk.org.uk/advice-services/children/take-asthma-seriously

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