

Secondary School Health Nurse Team Newsletter

Term 5 May 2017

Welcome to the Term 4 newsletter from the School Health Nurse (SHN). This newsletter aims to provide families and young people with some useful tips for keeping healthy. Childhood is an important time to instill healthy habits and learn crucial life skills. Establishing these habits early on will help to improve your child's quality of life in the future and enable them to reach their full potential educationally.

Further information about SHN can be found on our website: <http://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/children-and-young-people/oxon/school-health-nursing/>



Prevent young deaths by respecting the Wild Water Code - Fire and Rescue Service

Oxford's rivers have become a hotspot for accidental drownings, and many of these tragedies involve children and young people, cutting short lives and devastating families. Please help us stop this by educating your family and friends about the potential dangers posed by wild water.

The River Wild: If you have never swum in a river before don't just jump in thinking it will be like your local leisure pool; at any time of year the cold of wild water can have a dramatic effect on the body and there may also be strong currents and submerged hazards. The initial involuntary gasp reflex caused by the shock of the cold can instantly fill the lungs with water causing a fatal chain reaction within minutes. Learning to wild swim should be a gradual process and never a spur of the moment leap into the unknown.

Look Before You Leap: It's easy to jump in, but is there somewhere you can get out easily? Banks can be steep and slippery; only realising this after you get into difficulty will cause further panic and can mean the difference between life and death.

Don't Drink and Dive: Drownings often occur because the person is under the influence of drink or drugs. Mixing the desensitising effects of even small amounts of alcohol or other substances with the numbing effects of the cold can create a fatal cocktail.

Rock Bottom: Don't jump from the bridges in Oxford; the water is just too shallow and you are likely to be hit by a double whammy of being winded or injured because you hit the bottom and gasping because of the cold. Some risk in life is good but jumping from a bridge into shallow water is likely to end your life or change it for ever.

Flood Warning: Several people have drowned in the city after being swept into flooded rivers when trying to walk or cycle along partially submerged towpaths. River banks often subside under these conditions but such hazard will be invisible below the water. Even good swimmers will have little chance in a flooded river.

Can You/Your Family Swim? Learning to swim and respect for wild water should be considered basic life skills like learning to cross the road. Swimming is also a great way of keeping fit and great fun - **PROVIDING YOU DO IT SAFELY!**



Please contact your local leisure centre for details of swimming lessons available. There is a general number for Oxford which will connect you to the centre in your area: 0844 8933 222. The city council and its partner Fusion Lifestyles also offer a range of free swimming lessons for under 16s to families on a limited budget (see www.oxford.gov.uk/freeswim for more details).

There are also clubs that can provide training and information on wild swimming including: http://www.owsc.co.uk/OWSC/Open_Water_Swimming.html

All Year 13 students can now access a Meningitis ACWY immunisation from their GP. Book your appointment now

Plan ahead to ensure you and your family stay safe when travelling this summer



Before your Trip

Seek consultation with a travel medicine specialist at least four weeks before travel.

Ask about special vaccines that are recommended for specific destinations.

First aid and medical kit containing regular and special medication for the trip - carry in hand luggage.

Evacuation and travel insurance to cover health emergencies while abroad.

If fever develops during or after trip, seek medical help immediately. This advice has been reproduced from the International Society of Travel Medicine Website: www.istm.org/

During your Trip

Take precautions against malaria when you visit areas at risk. Prevent mosquito bites and take malaria pills as advised.

Road safety is important - wear safety belts in cars, helmets on bikes and avoid night time driving.

Abstain from casual sex or practice safe sex.

Verify and consume safe water and food. Have a supply of medicine for self-treatment of diarrhoea.

Excessive sun exposure should be minimized by the use of sunscreen. Sun can be more intense over water, snow and at altitude.

Leave animals alone. Animal bites or scratches can transmit rabies. Seek help if bitten.

Leaving school and moving on to College, Work, Apprenticeships and University

Year 11 and Year 13 students will be looking forward to leaving school and moving on to the next exciting chapter in their lives. This is an ideal time for them to become more responsible for their health, and learn how to access services they might require now or in the future. Students are invited to see their School Health Nurse to discuss their individual health needs and learn how to access ongoing support as a young adult before they leave school. Abingdon & Witney, Bicester, Banbury, City of Oxford and Henley all have a College Nurse service, which offer a confidential service to students and support with emotional, physical and sexual health advice. Further information is available from;

Sexual Health Services <http://www.sexualhealthoxfordshire.nhs.uk/>

Your GP/Family Doctor <http://www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/GP/LocationSearch/4>.

Dentist <http://www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/Dentists/LocationSearch/3>

CHECK OUT  for information for Young People in Oxfordshire.

The School Health Nurse for Gosford Hill School is Ruth Spencer who is usually available 9am - 3pm Monday to Friday

*If you would like to speak to your school nurse please contact:  Tel: 01869 604095/ M: 07733 300957
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