

New campaign to tackle violence against girls in schools

The *Evening Standard* has launched the Show Respect campaign to address violence against girls in schools. The campaign will fund workshops on healthy relationships in schools across deprived areas of London, with the aim of reducing youth violence. The initiative follows an investigation by the paper that revealed the daily occurrence of sexual harassment, access to pornography by young boys, and the sharing of inappropriate images of schoolgirls. Violence reduction guru Jon Yates recommended healthy relationships workshops as an effective intervention, with studies showing a potential reduction of at least 17% in violence against girls. The government has not acted on this recommendation, prompting the *Standard* to take the lead. The campaign will fund 12 groups to carry out workshops in schools, reaching an estimated 15,000 year nine students.

Evening Standard

Children at risk of suicide denied mental health services due to oversubscription

Leading education figures have warned that children at risk of suicide are being refused places on waiting lists for mental health services due to them being oversubscribed. A report by the Centre for Young Lives and the Child of the North multi-university research programme highlighted the strain on Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (Camhs), revealing that 32,000 children had been waiting over two years for support. Anne Longfield, founder of the Centre for Young Lives, expressed concern over the high thresholds for intervention, stating that even suicidal children are frequently turned away. Referrals for mental health services have been rising, with experts blaming the pandemic and cuts to public services. Susie Beresford-Wylie, director of SEND at **Olympus Academy Trust**, which runs nine schools in Bristol and Gloucestershire, said schools now tell parents of children with a suicide plan to go straight to A&E. But she added: "When they have been triaged there as needing Camhs and they are on a waiting list, that same child is sent back to school with no interim support."

The Observer

Investigation into deepfake pornographic images at private schools

Police are investigating allegations that deepfake pornographic images were created at a boys' school using manipulated photos from a girls' school's social media accounts. About a dozen girls are believed to be victims. Concerns are growing about the spread of "nudifying" technology and the lack of preparedness among parents, schools, and police to address the issue. Measures to tighten the law on AI-generated abuse images were dropped when the election was called. Michael Tunks, the head of policy at the Internet Watch Foundation, said: "The challenge here is that children and their parents probably don't know an offence is potentially being committed. They need to realise that making, creating and possibly sharing this type of child sexual abuse imagery is illegal."

The Times

Hundreds of reports of knife possession in schools last year

An increase in knife attacks on students and instructors has led to concerns of a knife crime 'emergency' in UK schools. Figures obtained by the *Independent* reveal that police received 738 reports of weapon possession in schools last year, with four attacks on children or teachers involving blades or sharp instruments each week. The manifestos of the main

parties include promises to tackle knife crime, with the Tories pledging tougher sentences, Labour proposing community youth hubs, and Nigel Farage's Reform UK appealing for the reintroduction of stop and search. However, experts warn that fear should not be fuelled and positive messages about safety should be underlined. Some schools have taken practical measures to stop knives being brought into school, including the use of metal detector wands to screen arriving pupils for weapons. Mark Tilling, headteacher of **High Tunstall College of Science** in Hartlepool, introduced using wands to scan children at two of the school's off-site teaching centres in the town last year. "It [the wands] is a deterrent for children not bringing with them anything they shouldn't into school, including mobile phones," he said. "It's for the protection of our students and staff on school site."

The Independent UK

New campaign warns children about dangers of sharing explicit images

A new campaign has been established by the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) to caution children about the dangers of sharing sexually explicit images and videos. The campaign, called Think Before You Share, aims to foster frank discussions between young people, parents, and teachers about the issue. The IWF collaborated with researchers at Anglia Ruskin University (ARU) to gather insights from young people about their experiences in the digital age. The campaign is backed by research from the International Policing and Public Protection Research Institute (IPPPRI) at ARU. The research found that the sharing and soliciting of nudes has become normalised among young people, with some engaging in a "football card collection culture" of nudes of their female peers. The IWF also offers a service called Report Remove to help young people stop the sharing of their imagery online and take action against threats of sexual extortion.

BBC News