



25th February 2019

Dear Parent

Swindon Borough Council have arranged for AlterEgo Creative Solutions to tour schools in Swindon with their highly innovative production 'County Lines'. All students in Year 9 will have the opportunity to see this production on Tuesday 12th March.

The play has been developed by the creative and experienced team behind the hugely successful 'Chelsea's Story' (formerly 'Chelsea's Choice') which our previous Year 9 students saw last year.

The 'County Lines' play has now been seen by thousands of young people of this age around the UK and received strong support in raising awareness of this important issue. With high profile cases around the country including Swindon currently making the news on a regular basis, it is all of our duties to raise awareness of this subject. Councils, charities, support agencies, schools, parents and carers all need to engage with and acknowledge this issue in order to give young people the tools and knowledge that they need to keep themselves and their friends safe.

"County Lines gangs pose a significant threat to vulnerable adults and children upon whom they rely to conduct and/or facilitate this criminality." - *National Crime Agency, County Lines Gang Violence, Exploitation & Drug Supply briefing.*

The 60-minute production and post-show Q&A have proven highly effective in raising awareness of:-

- What County Lines is, how it is linked to Criminal Exploitation and how can it affect young people
- The Grooming Process and how it can apply to County Lines
- The similarities and potential crossovers between Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- How young people can spot the indicators of CCE and CSE and where they can go for help & advice
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CCE and CSE are highly sensitive subjects and every care has been taken to ensure that the production is hard-hitting and relevant without being graphic or offensive. The issues are raised and discussed in a manner entirely relevant and suitable for the target age group.

Should you have any questions or concerns about the production please contact myself and I will be happy to set your mind at rest. However if you would prefer to not let your son or daughter see this production please let me know on blacklerd@ridgewayschool.com and I will arrange for them to complete some classroom based activities on the topic as an alternative.

Kind regards

Dawn Blackler

Designated Safeguarding Lead



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