

Dear Parent

During 14th-25th November 2016 Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board has commissioned Applied Theatre specialists **AlterEgo Creative Solutions** to tour to schools and other suitable venues in our area with their highly innovative production '**Chelsea's Choice**'.

A performance of '**Chelsea's Choice**' is taking place at Bedford Free School on the Friday 25th November 2016 for all pupils in Year 9.

The play - which has now been seen by over 250,000 young people around the UK - tells the story of a group of three students who discover the diary of a girl called Chelsea. Chelsea was a young girl who, having fallen out with her friends and family, was approached by a man called Gary. Gary was older, owned a car, had a flat and treated her like an adult. Unfortunately Gary was not what he seemed to be! Chelsea's story is played out and examined by the three students along with their teacher in an attempt to understand what happened to Chelsea and how it could have been prevented.

The 40 minute production and post-show Q&A have proven highly effective in raising awareness of:-

- Healthy Relationships
- Safe Internet Use
- Risky Behaviour
- The Grooming Process
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Where young people can go for help and advice

Child Sexual Exploitation is a highly sensitive subject 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.

"The Government believes that local initiatives like 'Chelsea's Choice' have a key role to play in preventing grooming and exploitation and in helping keep children safe from this heinous crime." - Rohini Krishnamurthy, Child Safeguarding Division, Department for Education.

With high profile cases around the country 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.

The production will have the full support of Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board and the individual schools during the tour that will make sure that the appropriate care is in place should any of the young people wish to discuss the issues in the play afterwards.

We are also holding two evening performances for parents/carers of children and young people living in Bedford Borough, one performance is on the 15th November at Bedford Girls School @ 6.15pm and the other performance is on the 24th November at Bedford College @ 6.15pm. Please see posters attached. If you would like to attend one of the performances please contact Sue Huckle at the Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board to reserve a place. Her contact details are sue.huckle@bedford.gov.uk or telephone number is 01234 276512. You must book a place as places are limited and based on a first-come, first-serve basis.



More information on child sexual exploitation can be found on the Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board website

http://www.bedford.gov.uk/health_and_social_care/children_young_people/safeguarding_children_board/parents_and_carers/child_sexual_exploitation.aspx

Should you have any questions or concerns about the production please contact me on the above telephone number and I will be happy to set your mind at rest.

Kindest regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E Foley', written in a cursive style.

Miss E Foley
Assistant Principal