



# Wyoming Public School

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## WE NEED YOUR HELP

Dear Parents and Caregivers of Stage 3 Students,

Throughout the year we have experienced increased numbers of students coming to us for assistance with matters that have occurred online overnight or during the weekend/holidays.

Some of these matters have started at school the day before but many of them start with an online comment that then escalate overnight and continue face to face the next day.

I am writing to ask for your support.

We know that a large majority of students have a "snap chat" account and are using it to communicate with their friends away from school. Historically, these "chats" have been in writing, so students have been able to screen shot inappropriate comments and seek help.

Unfortunately, we believe that students are now sending "voice messages" which are not accessible once played.

Not only are these messages causing students a great deal of distress they are taking our wonderful teachers many hours to investigate, debrief and seek additional counselling support for students who have been at the receiving end.

We cannot change this on our own. Please take a minute to think about if you really know what your child is accessing or participating in when online. We understand that as children approach high school, parents feel pressured to increase their independence. Unfortunately, unsupervised access to social media and the internet have proven time and time again to be a major player in students mental well-being and can compound feelings of anxiety, depression, and self-hate/self-harm.

Due to this, we have included regular lessons and class discussions on cyber safety and cyber conduct throughout the year. We have also had presentations by the Police Youth Liaison Officer on this topic to reinforce our message.

We need your help to stop this behaviour.

While your child may not be directly involved in sending specific messages, I assure you that the language and or pictures that your child would be exposed to on snap chat or other similar sites is horrifying.

Please join with us in teaching our children that it is not ok.

Rebecca Wild  
**PRINCIPAL**  
3 November 2022