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Dear Parent/Carer

Chelsea's Choice Production on Monday 27th February 2017

Throughout the spring term, West Sussex County Council has commissioned Applied Theatre Specialists AlterEgo Creative Solutions to tour schools and other suitable venues in our area with their highly innovative production 'Chelsea's Choice'.

This production will take place at Sackville School for our year 9 students on Monday 27th February from 2.00pm–3.00pm. They will be off timetable for period 5 on this day and the session will be fully supervised by teaching staff. The performance will also be attended by a WSCC youth worker and representatives from Barnardo's and/or Sussex Police to help answer any questions the students may have.

The play, which has now been seen by over 200,000 young people around the UK (including 11,000 West Sussex pupils last year), 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.

Please contact either myself or Mr Hayden using the email addresses below if you have any queries regarding this.

Yours sincerely

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