

Big Guide to the 21st Century Child

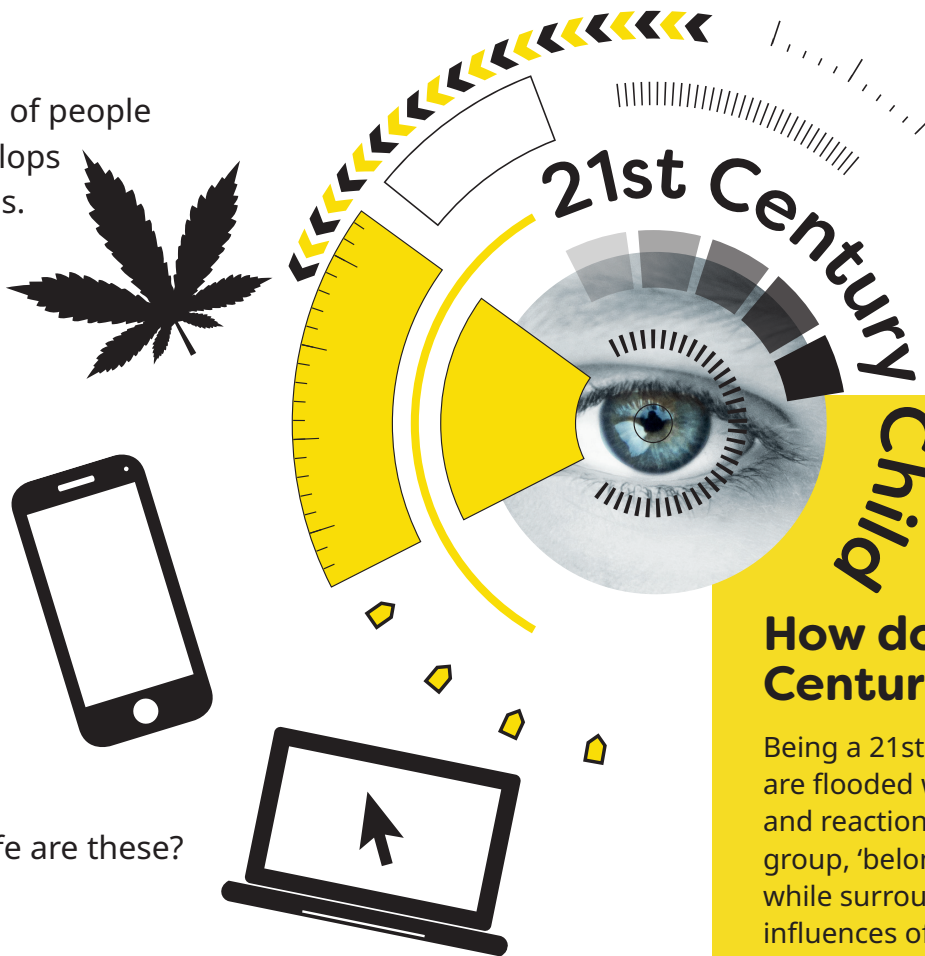
Who is the 21st Century Child?

Your child is the 21st Century Child, with a range of people having an impact on how your child grows, develops and responds to challenges faced on a daily basis.

Who influences your child?

Think about and discuss the following with your child:

- Friendship circles - who are your child's friends and who do they hang out with?
- Relationships – boyfriends, girlfriends
- Where are they and what are they doing when they hang out with their friends?
- Who do they speak to/follow online?
- Who are they talking to on their phone?
- Which phone apps are they using and how safe are these?
- Which online games do they play?



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How does the 21st Century Child behave?

Being a 21st Century Child is not easy. Bodies are flooded with hormones, affecting mood and reactions. Being a part of a friendship group, 'belonging' and 'fitting in' is priority, all while surrounded by the positive and negative influences of peers and social media.

When to be concerned?

- Missing school
- Alcohol/drug misuse
- Changes in friends/friendship groups
- Money disappearing/appearing
- Gifts including new clothes/phone
- Sneaking out/coming home late
- Changes in appearance
- Difficulty sleeping
- Anxiety

FACT:
All young people are different... you know your child best.

What does the 21st Century Child face?

Young people are experiencing new challenges every day, both in and out of school, and many of which can be linked to each other.

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| ➤ Body image – the 'perfect' body | ➤ Sexual health |
| ➤ Social media and the influence and impact this has | ➤ Relationships |
| ➤ Bullying | ➤ Anti-social behaviour |
| ➤ Peer pressure | ➤ Crime |
| ➤ Alcohol / drugs / smoking | ➤ Gang culture |
| ➤ Exploitation | ➤ Youth violence |

How to keep your child safe and well

Parents and carers are still the number one place to seek information, advice and help.

If your child asks you about sex/drugs/relationship etc – discuss the facts and, if you don't know what these are, suggest finding out together. Remember, children and teens may talk like they know it all, but often this is hearsay and not always factually correct.

Discuss self care –

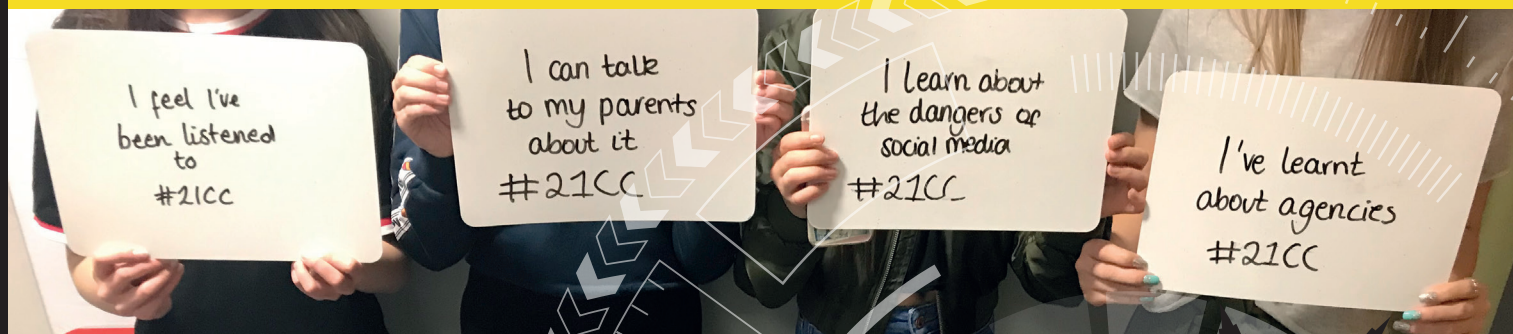
- How are they looking after themselves both physically, emotionally and mentally?
- Do they have hobbies?
- How long do they spend on their computer/phones?
- Do they exercise?

Relationships, both friendships and sexual are always a tricky topic –

- Ask your child to think about if they are positive relationships?
- Are they supportive relationships?
- Do they make your child happy and feel good?
- Is it a safe relationship?

“Young people say their parents are one of the first people they will turn to for help”

What the 21st Century Child says...



Top Tips for Your Child

Is your child going out?

Going to the park?

Going to a party?

Hanging out with friends?

How are they staying safe?

- Where are they going and with who?
- How are they getting home? - and what is their back up plan?
- Have they got credit on their phone?
- Have they eaten? - Even if your child says they are not drinking, if they decide to, this will slow down how quickly their body absorbs the alcohol into their system.



Discuss what to do if they feel worried or uncomfortable.

Remind them:

- They don't have to do something if they don't want to
- If they find themselves in a scary/risky situation, 'get out and get safe'
- If in doubt phone home or someone they trust who can help
- If someone is ill from drinking alcohol / taking drugs, don't be afraid to call for an ambulance or call for help



Want more information?

If you would like to find out more about the issues the 21st Century Child may face visit:
www.sandwell.gov.uk/21stcenturychild

Alcohol and drugs - www.ourguideto.co.uk
Talk to your school pastoral manager.
In case of a crime call 101, in case of an emergency call 999.