



Urge to parents and guardians to educate children on hoax calling

Dear Roy,

If you are a parent or guardian, we are appealing for your help as we enter of the school summer holidays.

In recent years, we have seen a trend of increased [hoax calls from children](#) and young people during the six-week break.

Whilst we appreciate that the majority of children enjoy time off school being safe and responsible, some think that prank calling the police on the emergency line is a harmless joke, which is not the case.

Hoax calls are treated very seriously and those responsible are warned that misuse of the emergency line can cost lives.

If 999 operators are busy dealing with a hoax caller, they could be prevented from answering a genuine call, which in some instances could be a life-or-death situation. Hoax calls cost lives and are a waste of valuable resources.

Not only that, but it is an offence to make a malicious or hoax call to the emergency services. Hoax callers could face a maximum penalty of up to six months in prison or a fine of £5,000.

All calls to the emergency services are recorded and we can always trace the number, even if the call is made from a withheld number.

We ask that in an effort to ensure your children and / or family members enjoy their summer break out of trouble, you take the time to educate them about the dangers of hoax calling, and the consequences of doing so.

Superintendent Neil Billany, head of demand, said: "Our 999 phone lines are also often the target of hoax calls from youngsters, messing around with their friends.

“Not only is this frustrating for our call handlers who work tirelessly to help those in danger, but it’s also a criminal offence, and could cost lives.

“My plea to parents and carers is to make sure they educate their children on the dangers of hoax calling, and the consequences of it, not only for them, but for other people too.

“We also ask parents and carers to provide children with ideas on how to spend their time safely and out of trouble, to avoid boredom which can lead to hoax / prank calling.”

Our colleagues at [Norfolk Police released this video](#) which provides a stark reminder as to why not to hoax call.

Learn more on the [No Joke to Hoax campaign page on the force website](#).

Kind regards,



Message Sent By

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