**Mental wellbeing for parents/carers**

Teaching about mental wellbeing is a key part of the PSHE curriculum, in this blog we will get you thinking about your own mental wellbeing as a parents/ carers. Exploring how you feel, think and cope with everyday pressures is part of this. Our mental wellbeing has an impact on our children, so taking time to look after ourselves allows us to look after them.

**How to look after your mental wellbeing**

Mental health is just like physical health, we have to consciously look after it. If we embed wellbeing techniques into our everyday lives, our children can learn their own to help them respond to life’s ups and downs.

Here are some things to think about to maintain a healthy mental wellbeing. These ideas are based on [Mind’s 5 ways to wellbeing](https://www.mind.org.uk/workplace/mental-health-at-work/taking-care-of-yourself/five-ways-to-wellbeing/) which is a great simple step by step guide to improve your mental wellbeing

* **Eating well**: what we put in our bodies gives us the energy and nutriants we need. Here are [some great healthy recipes](https://www.nhs.uk/change4life/recipes/dinner#featured-recipes) to support a balanced diet.
* **Get active**: this doesn’t mean you need to sign up for the gym! Here are some great [ideas to enjoy exercise for free](https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/free-fitness-ideas/) and include the whole family.
* **Connect with others:** this provides an opportunity to give and get support from others and create a sense of belonging. It could be as simple as meeting up with a friend to taking up a new group hobbie.
* **Learn a new skill:** try cooking some new recipes or a craft! Learning a new skill can be a great way of boosting our confidence and gives us a sense of purpose.
* **Give to others:** we can feel more connected, with a sense of purpose by helping others and it can be rewarding too. This could be ringing up a family member who’s having a difficult time or volunteering in our local community.
* **Mindfulness:** this is about paying attention to the present, trying not to worry about the future. Often these are activities that help us to slow down and focus on the here and now.
* **Sleep**: it’s really important for us to get some decent rest. The NHS recommends that adults have between 6-9 hours sleep every night. A regular routine, including ‘winding down’ before we go to bed can help.
* **Sharing is caring**:talking to friends and family about how you are feeling really can help. If we can’t talk to family and friends, there’s always someone who will listen, this could your GP, or another professional.

**Spotting the signs when we might be struggling**

Emotional health can effect everybody **differently**, we have listed some of the common signs, but this is not exhaustive.

* Poor concentration and being easily distracted
* Worrying more
* Lack of interest and/or avoiding socialising
* Finding it hard to make decisions
* Low mood and/or feeling overwhelmed
* Tiredness and change in sleep patterns (some find it hard to sleep, others find it hard to do anything but sleep)
* Short temper
* Relying on alcohol or drugs to change mood, relax anxieties or get to sleep

Remember, we might feel some of these on the odd day, and that’s ok, but if we are finding every day is proving difficult to manage we might need some support, so please ask for some help.

Life events can affect our mental wellbeing hugely, such as a loss or bereavement, a breakdown in a relationship, work and money worries.

Asking for help does not mean you will need it forever, and looking after your children’s mental wellbeing is a priceless tool for their future. **Our mental health is not something that defines us, it is part of us.**

**If/when you or someone else needs help**

First of all, if it is an emergency and you do not think you can keep yourself or others safe please go to any Accident & Emergency (A&E) department, calling 999 if needed. If you are safe and want to talk, there are many organisations out there to offer support. There is a list of organisations [here](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/mental-health-helplines/)

[The Samaritans](https://www.samaritans.org/)

Available 24/7 and can be called on 116 123 from any phone, completely free.

[Mind](https://www.mind.org.uk/)

Have invaluable information on mental wellbeing on their website. They also have an information helpline 0300 123 3393.

[Shout](https://www.giveusashout.org/)

Don’t feel like talking? Text SHOUT 85258 if you are struggling, feeling worried or stressed and someone will text you back.

[The Women’s Centre Cornwall](https://www.womenscentrecornwall.org.uk/contact/)

Run by women for women, they have two main helplines a **Domestic Abuse Helpline 01208 79992** and a **Rape and Sexual Abuse Helpline 01208** **77099**.

[Young Minds](https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/for-parents/parents-helpline/)

Worried about a child or young person’s mental health? Call their **Parents Helpline 0808 802 5544**.

Remember you can also always speak to your **GP** about issues with your mental wellbeing too.