

# Mental Health and Wellbeing Parent Workshop

With Karen Ayres and Colin  
Williams

3rd February 2021

A very warm welcome to you all



**Karen Ayres**  
Assistant Head Teacher for  
Inclusion and SENCo



**Colin Williams**  
Learning Coach



# Aims of today's workshop

- To understand what we are doing at Grange Park to support children's wellbeing and mental health
- To explore resources and strategies to support children's mental health and wellbeing
- Support with spotting signs of ill mental health and how to support children showing signs of this
- Link to Children's Mental Health Awareness Week
- Look at the challenge of lockdown and how a simple daily routine might be constructed to support learning, wellbeing and balance.
- Share issues/ideas and finding solutions together.



# Mental wellbeing support

## Our leads at Grange Park

**Mental Health Lead:** Karen Ayres    **Learning Coach:** Colin Williams

**Mental health Support Team:** Karen Ayres, Colin Williams

**Safeguarding Team:** Tijen Hassan, Cathy Basiel, Sue Denny, Karen Ayres, Tracy Murray

## Outside support

**Anna Freud Centre:** <https://www.annafreud.org/>

- Great support and information for parents and carers

**Parent Support Service:** <https://new.enfield.gov.uk/if/parent-support-service/>

- Enfield service offers 1:1 support to parents who are struggling with issues with their children at home up to the age of 18

**Educational Psychologist Support (EPS) TELEPHONE: 0208 379 2000**

- This service provides free support via a telephone consultation

# Mental wellbeing teaching at **Grange Park**

We already teach about and support mental wellbeing at our school. We teach about mental wellbeing by:

- Participating in Mental Health Awareness Week
- Learning about mindfulness – continuing to embed through the PSHE curriculum
- Sports Coaches and teachers linking the benefits of exercise to mental health
- Embedding the 5 ways to wellbeing
- Having a wellbeing and mindfulness section on your Google Classrooms
- Having Trust Boxes in all classrooms

And we support mental wellbeing by:

- Having a support system in place for mental wellbeing by referring to me and Colin
- Support for families via telephone/email/support pre-recorded videos from Karen, Colin and Nicole



# Resources and Strategies to support our Children's Mental Health & Wellbeing

## Day to day

Our everyday habits are important to our mental health, just as they are to our physical health. Here are a few suggestions to help your child develop good habits.

### Think about the five ways to wellbeing

Are there things you can encourage them to do, or do together, each day?



# Keep active

Be active at home during  
**#COVID19** outbreak

- 1** Try exercise classes online
- 2** Dance to music
- 3** Play active video games
- 4** Try skipping rope
- 5** Do some muscle strength & balance training





# Give....

Your time...your words...your patience





# Take notice

Take notice of the beauty around us.

Talk about what you see with your children.

Draw their attention to it - talk about the colours, shapes, scents...

Bring them into the present moment and enjoy it together.



# Keep learning

Try something new as a family:

- Cooking a new dish
- Learning some magic tricks
- A new language
- New hobby, such as skating
- Try an online painting class

Together...and many more beside



# Connect



Connect with each other.

Talk and listen.

Really listen.



## Talk openly about mental health

Just as you might encourage them to eat fruit and veg to keep their bodies healthy (and model this behaviour yourself), talk openly about, for example, staying connected with others or being physically active in order to take care of our minds.



## Model good habits

Children often learn from copying what they see around them. If you are taking care of your own mental health, it's easier for them to see what good habits look like.

# Phone Usage

Think about phone usage – both theirs and yours

We don't fully understand the impact of social media on our mental health but using phones and laptops can impact on our sleep, which is important to our mental health.

We're also more likely to listen to one another if we're not distracted by technology.



## Notice any changes in your child's behaviour

Young people tell us how they're feeling in many ways, not always verbally.

Learning what is normal for your child makes it easier to notice when things change, and if this might be a sign that they're struggling.





## Signs of poor mental health

- withdrawing, or avoiding friends or social situations
- finding it hard to concentrate, or losing interest in schoolwork
- not wanting to do things they previously enjoyed
- feeling irritable or angry
- feeling tearful, miserable, lonely or hopeless
- feeling empty or numb
- being very self-critical
- sleeping more or less than normal
- eating more or less than normal
- feeling tired or not having any energy
- wanting to self-harm



## How can I help my child?

**Try to open up a conversation about what's going on.** You might start by letting them know that you've noticed they don't seem very happy at the moment, voicing your concerns in a caring and non-judgmental way.

**Listen and provide emotional support.** Try not to ask too many questions, come up with quick solutions or gloss over their sadness. Empathise with how they're feeling – letting them know they can talk to you as often and for as long as they need to.

**Try again another day if they don't want to talk.** Finding it difficult to talk or reach out is often a part of feeling low or depressed – and it can be especially difficult for young people to talk about these kinds of feelings. Let them know you're there when they're ready to talk

**Think together about whether there's anything in particular that's making them feel this way.** This could include a problem with a friendship or family relationship, feeling bullied or left-out at school, feeling overwhelmed by school work, struggling with a change such as divorce or separation in the family, or a combination of things. Are there changes that could be made at home or school that would make things easier?



**If they don't feel able to talk to you, encourage them to speak to someone else – while reassuring them that you'll still be there.** Let them know about the phone, webchat, email and text support they can access from services available.

**Support them to keep routines, activities and connections with other people going as much as possible.** Make opportunities for seeing friends and family (Tier 4 safe), and encourage them to do the things they enjoy – whether that's exercising, listening to music, doing something creative like colouring or drawing, watching a favourite film, reading a favourite book or going for a walk with you.

**Help them to do the daily things that support our wellbeing.** This includes getting up at a regular time, eating regular meals, doing exercise, drinking water, spending quality time with loved ones and getting enough sleep.



**Reassure them.** Let them know you love them, these feelings won't last forever, and that you can find support to help things feel better.

**Don't ignore worrying signs, hoping they'll go away.** Trust your gut feeling – you know when something's just not right.

**Seek professional help if you're worried about your child's mental health.** Some children and young people will need professional and specialist help to feel better. They may benefit from a specific diagnosis or a treatment such as talking therapy. You can find more information about this below.



# How should we respond if we are worried?

Being a parent can be challenging in everyday situations. Now, more than ever, taking care of your mental health is important. Staying at home more or having to work during a difficult situation can put different pressures on everyone. And if you're struggling, it's okay to reach out for support from friends, families and organisations that are here to help.

Changes to our mental health can sometimes affect children and their well-being. They may pick up on your anxiety or low mood. This doesn't mean you should hide or minimise your feelings. You can try to explain them using phrases like, "It's ok to get big feelings, everyone gets big feelings but it's still the grown up's job to look after the children" or "If grown-up's get big feelings it's not your fault - we can ask other grown-ups for help with our feelings."

The NSPCC can help support you through any worries for your child's mental health and wellbeing:

0808 800 5000 or email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk).



**Children's Mental Health Week**  
**1-7 February 2021**

**EXPRESS YOURSELF**



# SEE IF YOU CAN SPOT THE DIFFERENT WAYS PEOPLE ARE EXPRESSING THEMSELVES IN THIS SHORT VIDEO



# Challenges of the lockdown

**There are many issues which may impact upon a child's mental health during this enforced lockdown. Some of the more common issues are:**

## **Supporting education / Structuring the day**

By structuring the day allows the child (and adult) to view and understand what needs to be accomplished that day. The structure does not need to just highlight tasks that need completing. It is a good idea to also build in times for relaxing and fun

### **A good structure for the day may include:**

- What is now and what is next
- What tasks are expected of them, and the likely duration of these tasks
- A clear start and end to the structured day
- Demonstrate balance - Highlight the fact that there is time for work, time for relaxing and time for fun
- Agreed ideas - parent and child discuss and agree upon the detail of the timetable and stick to it. This may give the child a feeling of ownership

Visual timetables are recommended, particularly age appropriate, child friendly designs.

We know it still may not be easy, but try to reintroduce structure around regular routines, healthy eating and exercise. A good night's sleep is also really important - try to get them back into routines that fit with school.



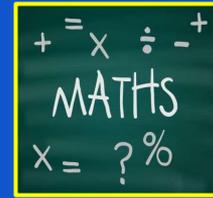
9:45am - Exercise  
get your mind  
ready for learning



10:30am  
Live lesson



Break



11:45  
Maths then  
Relaxing activity  
(Mindfulness)



12:30pm  
Spelling and grammar



Free time



9:00am - Wake up  
Make your bed



Get washed  
and dressed

# VISUAL TIMETABLE

## **Supporting Well-being During Lockdown - Issues and Possible Solutions**

### **My child is missing his friends/grandma**

Possible solutions: creating safe ways to interact with peers e.g. regular video calls, connecting via gaming platforms

### **My child and I disagree a lot**

Possible solutions: clear rules/boundaries, pick your arguments, communicate assertively and calmly

### **I am concerned about my child's physical/mental health:**

Possible solutions: eat meals at structured times - schedule in some exercise - continue to groom and take care of yourself, even if you aren't going anywhere - change the environment, get out of the house for a walk or cycle

### **My child does not want to engage in online learning**

Possible solutions: establish the reason why, there may be an easy solution - Discuss this with the class teacher

## Low mood

Children may struggle to understand what is happening at this time, as a result, there may be a range of negative feelings present.

## Things you can do

**Promoting a positive mindset** - creating a can do attitude - finding tasks that highlight improvements or become easier in time

**Positive Diary** - this is something to complete everyday. The Positive Diary has been designed to help the individual reflect and focus upon times where they have felt proud, achieved something or made someone else feel good. Using this consistently may help the individual recognise that great things happen everyday.

M O N	Something I did well today...	
	Today I had fun when...	
	I felt proud when...	
T U E	Today I accomplished	
	I had a positive experience with...	
	Something I did for someone...	

# Further Support

Guidance for Parents and carers on supporting children and young people's mental health during coronavirus:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-well-being/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

For useful tips for talking about your feelings:

<https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/documents/topics/learning-disability/mental-health/top-tips-feelings.pdf>

Support for mental health for young people with autism:

<https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/mental-health/anxiety>

Where to get URGENT help:

<https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/mental-health-services/dealing-with-a-mental-health-crisis-or-emergency/>

Call Parents' and Carers' helpline on: 0808 802 5544

# Support for your child and or young person

[Shout](#) provides free, confidential support, 24/7 via text for anyone at crisis anytime, anywhere.

You can:

- text SHOUT to 85258 in the UK to text with a trained Crisis Volunteer
- text with someone who is trained and will provide active listening and collaborative problem-solving

# Childline

[ChildLine](#) provides a confidential helpline for any child with a problem. It comforts, advises and protects

You can:

- call 0800 1111 any time for free
- have an [online chat with a counsellor](#)
- check out the [message boards](#)