



## Parent Support Adviser

### Well-being Email

1<sup>st</sup> April 2020

Dear Parents,

#### How to look after ourselves – Part 2

As promised last week, I have continued to look for information and ideas to share with you. This week the sheet is all about you, however, some of the tips could be good for your children too.

#### **Tips for looking after your mind**

Building good emotional wellbeing in your child starts with looking after yourself. When life is busy it can be easy for forget, but small changes can make a difference. Here are some simple ways take care of your mind.

##### **1. Write it down**

Try writing down how you feel to keep track of your mood from one day to the next. Think about why it might have changed. What makes you feel good? What makes you feel worse? If you notice you're recording a lot of negative thoughts, start noting down something good too. Getting into the habit of doing this regularly - even if you can't manage every day - can help you to tap into your emotional wellbeing.

##### **2. Get a good night's sleep**

Quality of sleep can make all the difference to how we feel. But there are some simple things you can do to improve it. Make sure your bedroom is as comfortable as possible, drink less caffeine and turn off your tech at least an hour before trying to sleep. If you have trouble drifting off, get up and read a book or make a warm drink. Then go back to bed. This breaks any thought patterns that may have been stopping you falling to sleep.

##### **3. Be kind to yourself**

How does your inner voice speak to you? Is it critical, judgmental, or unkind? We're usually much more critical of ourselves than we would be of others. So try to give yourself the same level of understanding you would a close friend. How would you comfort them if they were feeling bad? What would you say? Try speaking to yourself in this way. Remember that no one is perfect, and we all have moments that are harder than others.

##### **4. Eat well**

We all know that what we eat affects our physical health, but it impacts our moods too. Missing meals can cause low blood sugar and make us feel sad, while dehydration can make us irritable. Eat a varied diet to get a mix of nutrients. Where possible, choose more wholegrain cereals, nuts, beans, fruit and vegetables. Avoiding sugary foods helps too - they give us a quick high but the burst of energy soon disappears, leaving us feeling tired and low.

## **5. Talk about it**

Talking about our emotions can help us process the day's events. These can be casual conversations - simply sharing what has happened and how you're feeling. You may not want advice, but it can be useful to get another point of view. Being open about what's really going on will help others see when you might need a bit of extra support.

## **6. Make time to exercise**

Being active releases endorphins, which lift our mood. Even a short burst can help you feel more balanced. It could start with a short walk, some exercises at home. Look for ways to incorporate it into your routine - walking, or gardening. You could also link your exercise with the children. There are lots of classes being offered online.

## **7. Nurture your relationships**

Take time to build the relationships that matter to you. Regularly contact people who make you feel good about yourself. Put aside time to spend chatting to family or friends, and check in with them often to see how they're doing. Build strong relationships with your children by looking for things that you enjoy doing together. Offer support if someone needs it (sometimes just being there for someone to talk to matters) and accept help when offered.

## **8. Be in the present**

Learning to focus on the present helps to take our minds off worrying (often about things we can't change). It's as simple as making an effort to notice what's happening around you. You could be walking, eating, washing the dishes - but take a minute to think about what you see, hear, touch, smell and feel right now. Whatever comes up, notice it and let it be as it is. Accept it without judgement. Get into the habit of bringing yourself back to the present moment once a day, even if for a couple of minutes.

## **9. Accept you can't control everything**

Life is full of uncertainty. Not knowing what's coming in the future can be unsettling. But spending too much time thinking about what might happen usually only makes us feel worse in the present moment. Practise spotting when you feel the need for certainty. Remind yourself that it's just a feeling. Then try letting go of that need - it will help take some of the pressure off.

If there is anything that I can help with before next week, please do not hesitate to contact me-  
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Kindest regards

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