

Children's Mental Health Week:

Let's Connect!

Primary Schools

PUPILS AND PARENTS



Created by

Ealing Mental Health Support Team

February 2023

Introduction

The Ealing Mental Health Support Team (MHST) is a service designed to support the wellbeing of children and young people in education settings, aiming to provide evidence-based support at the earliest signs of difficulties and promote life-long positive mental health.

The MHST supports a range of schools across the borough and provides support for parents, young people and teaching staff within the wider community as part of our universal mental health offer. The MHST provides advice and guidance around topics including anxiety, low mood, exam stress and wellbeing. This resource pack has been created with both pupils and parents in mind to promote connectedness and to support each other and themselves.

For Children's Mental Health Week, we at the MHST wanted to create a quick, easy resource pack to celebrate this years Place2Be theme on Let's Connect.

We hope you will find some helpful resources on the pages that follow.

Ealing Mental Health Support Team

Children's Mental Health Week

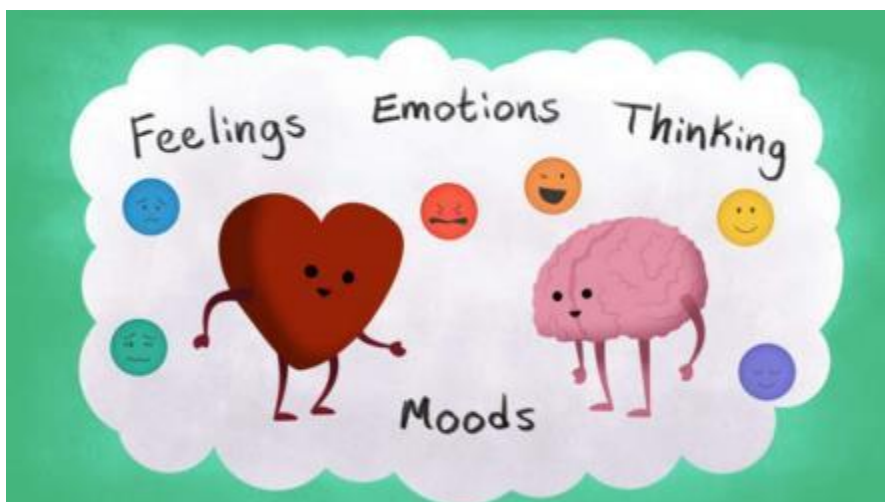
Children's Mental Health Week was first launched by Place2be back in 2015, with the main aim of focusing an importance on children's and young people's mental health. Since then it has become a nationally recognised event, with schools and colleges participating across the country.

Mental Health Week aims to encourage people to get involved through spreading mental health awareness and raising funds in support for children's mental health.

Every year the experts at Place2Be introduce [free resources](#) to help people participate throughout the week devoted to children's mental health.

Resourced include:

- Group activities
- Show and tell activates
- Top tips
- Fundraising packs
- Posters



Theme for 2023 – ‘Let’s Connect’

Let’s Connect is about making **meaningful connections** that are vital for our wellbeing. Healthy connections with family, friends and others can support our mental health and wellbeing. At times when our social connections are not met, we start to feel quite lonely and secluded – which can, in turn, have an adverse effect on our mental health.



Top tips to boost connections

- Engagement – engaging with those around you
- Joining activities – such as sports, drama, music clubs etc
- Working in a team – working in school counsel, student rep, working in class to present work as a team
- Talking to friends, family and others – talking about your feelings, thoughts and experiences

Different types of connections

- Online connections: connections through social media and gaming platforms
- Friendship connections: both in school and out of school
- Family connections: parents/carers, siblings, cousins, auntie/uncles, grandparents
- School connections: teachers, pastoral leads, external wellbeing staff

Boosting connectedness

Joining activities

One way to boost existing connections and establish new ones is through joining social activities such as sports clubs, community projects such as gardening and online groups such as book clubs.

The Ealing Council have published a [handbook](#) with details on the clubs and activities available within the borough including:

- Performing Arts
- Dance class
- Sports clubs
- Youth clubs for young people with SEND

Ealing Council website:

If you're unsure of what's available, the Ealing Council website is a great place to start looking for different activities to join. You can search for age specific clubs, or based on interest.

Find out more: [Activities during the half-term](#)

[Things to do](#)

[Clubs and Children's Centres](#)



Boosting connectedness

Getting connected for parents:

Building relationships and communication through Quality Time



- Quality time with a parent/caregiver can help young people feel valued and understood
- Quality time helps to build the parent-child relationship and stay connected with each other. It is particularly useful for checking in with the positives and stresses your child might be experiencing
- It promotes a safe space for young people to share with parents/caregivers
- By making yourself available for Quality Time, you are promoting a sense of closeness, building confidence and strengthening the existing connection

Quality Time can be practiced by spending 15/20 minutes each day checking in with your child, and showing an interest in how they are, and what they've been up to. Quality Time can also be done in the form of trips or days out where the young person decides on something for you both to do e.g. a walk around the park, or a trip to the shopping centre.

Dos:

- Follow your child's lead (i.e. talk about their interests)
- Focus on the positives where possible
- Use open ended questions to incite conversation e.g. "what are you up to?" or "what would you like to do this evening?"

Don'ts:

- Bring up sore subjects (e.g. academic achievement, friendships)
- Try to initiate quality time if your child is busy with another task.
- Don't use closed questions that don't offer room for conversation e.g. "do you have much homework?" or "did you see [friend] today?"



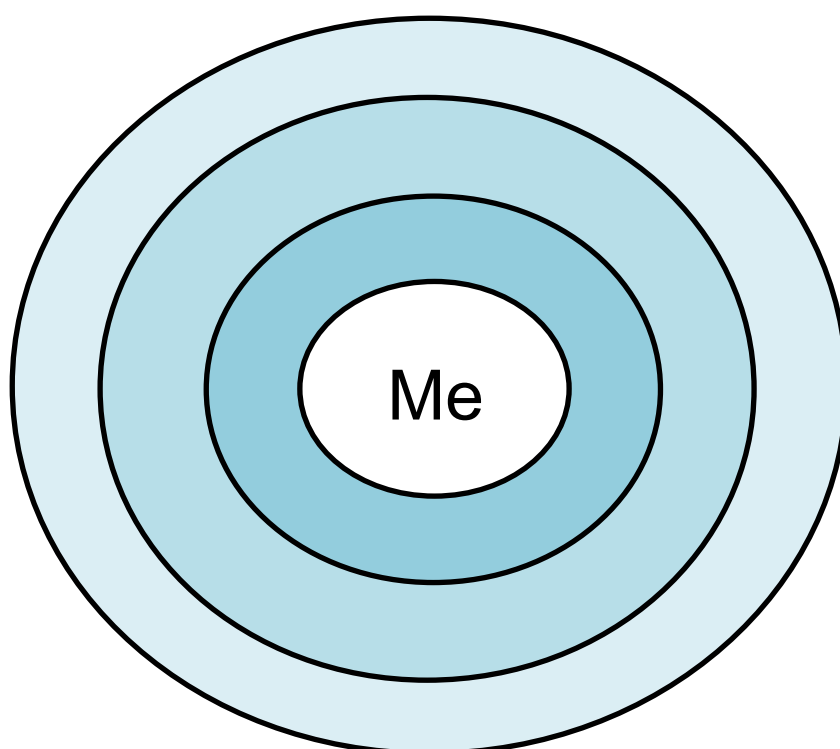
Boosting connectedness

Connecting with the people in your life: The back up team

Staying connected with the people around you is a great way to support mental well-being. Identifying who the people in your life are, that you enjoy spending time with, and feel most supported by is the first step.

Support can come in many different forms, such as motivational support, practical help and comfort or companionship. Think about the people around you, this may be family, friends, people at school/work or at clubs/activities you attend. Plot them on the diagram below (most involved in the middle/ least involved on the outside).

The back-up circle below can be used to explore and write down the people in your life, such as your best friend, a teacher at school, grandparents and/or your cousins.



Top tips to support your wellbeing

Exercise



Physical activity has a huge potential to enhance our wellbeing. Even a short brisk walk can increase our mental alertness, energy and positive mood. Participation in regular physical activity can also increase self-esteem, and reduce stress and anxiety.

Find out more: [How to use exercise](#)
[Get active](#)

Diet



What we eat and drink affects our physical and mental health. Having a balanced diet can have a positive impact on your energy levels, it can also help you to think more clearly and improve your mood and overall wellbeing.

Find out more: [What a healthy balanced diet looks like](#)
[Tips on healthy food swaps](#)

Sleep



It is important to develop and stick to a healthy sleep routine. Good-quality sleep makes a big difference to how we feel mentally and physically.

Find out more: [Sleep strategies for kids](#)

Stay connected



Maintaining healthy relationships with people you trust is important for your wellbeing. Think about how you can stay connected with friends and family, whether it is in person – by going for a walk, shopping or sitting in the park together – or virtually – by phone, messaging, video calls, online gaming platforms or social media.

Find out more: [10 apps to stay in touch](#)
[UK Safer Internet: 3- 11 year olds](#)
[UK Safe Internet: Parents & Carers](#)

Routine



When we experience changes to our normal routines it can make it hard for us to feel grounded and relaxed. Try to figure out what your routine will look like now. For example, think about planning fun activities into your week outside of school times.

Learn new skills



Research shows that learning new skills can improve your wellbeing by boosting self-confidence, helping you build a sense of purpose and helping you connect to others. Consider taking up a new hobby or working on a DIY project with friends and family.

Relaxation and mindfulness



Relaxation techniques such as deep breathing and meditation can really help to manage your emotions. If you are able to practice these regularly then you will feel the greatest benefits, so see if you can set aside even a little time every day.

Find out more: [Relaxation Techniques](#)
[What is mindfulness?](#)
[Mindful Breathing Exercise](#)

Looking for positives



It can be difficult sometimes to stay positive, especially if you have a lot of worries. One way you can stay positive is by keeping a 'Happy Journal' where every day you write down one or two things you are grateful for that day (no matter how small). You could consider with your family how you can help the other people in your community, as helping others can be good for our own wellbeing.

Find out more: [Journals for children](#)

Resources for children

We have put together resources for Children’s Mental Health Week as well as activities, interactive websites and materials to support their wellbeing.

Click on each ‘**go to resource**’ to find out more!

Mindfulness calendar: Daily 5 minute activities PDF

Go to resource

Childline Calm Zone Website

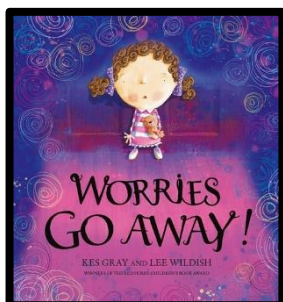
Try some of our breathing exercises, activities, games and videos to help let go of stress.

Go to resource

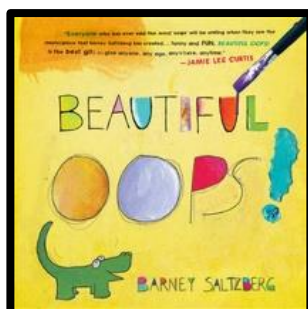
Rest Easy activities and strategies Website

Go to resource

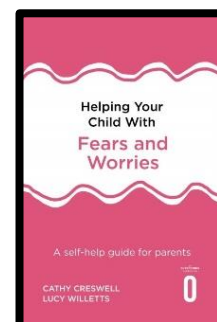
Self-Help Books



Worries Go Away!
By Kes Gray and Lee
Wildish



Beautiful Oops!
By Barney Saltzberg



Helping Your Child with
Fears and Worries
By Cathy Creswell

Resources for parents and carers: supporting your child's wellbeing

In this section you can find resources for supporting your child, ways to talk about mental health and wellbeing.

Click on each 'go to resource' to find out more!

Separation anxiety: tips for parents

PDF

Go to resource



Go to resource

BBC Parents' toolkit Website

Top tips, useful links and expert advice to support you and your child's wellbeing and learning in a changing world.

Go to resource

Make it count! PDF

This guide is for parents and carers to help children understand, protect and sustain their mental health.

Go to resource



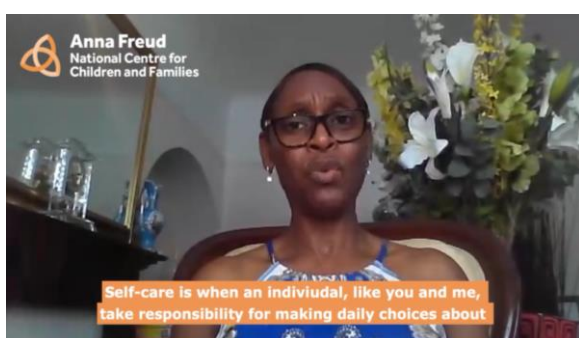
Wellbeing toolkit for parents of primary school children PDF

Go to resource

Resources for parents and carers: supporting your wellbeing

Looking after yourself as a parent or carer is not selfish – your health and well-being is important so that you can care for yourself and others. Click on each 'go to resource' to find out more!

What is self-care and why is it important? Video



Go to resource

Self-care for parents and carers Website

Go to resource

10 stress busters - NHS Website

Tips and audio guides with practical advice to help you reduce your stress levels.

Go to resource

Family Lives – Wellbeing and Emotional Health Website

Go to resource

You can find a list of apps for wellbeing and mental health [here](#).
If you feel that you may need further support from mental health services, you can find out how to access mental health services [here](#).

Where can I find further support?

General support services

Anxiety UK - <https://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/>

Information, resources and support for helping you understand how to deal with your anxiety.

- » Call 03444 775774 (available 9:30am-10pm Monday-Friday, 10am-8pm weekends)

BEAT - <https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/>

Beat is the UK's eating disorder charity. We exist to end the pain and suffering caused by eating disorders.

- » Call 0808 801 0677 (available 12pm-8m every day, 4pm-8pm weekends)

Childline - <https://www.childline.org.uk/>

A free and confidential support service for children. Childline is here to help anyone under 19 in the UK with any issue they're going through.

- » Call 0800 1111 (available 9am – midnight, every day)
- » Chat online to a counsellor (available 9am – midnight, every day)

Frank - www.talktofrank.com

Confidential advice and information about drugs.

- » Call 0300 123 6600 (available 24 hours a day, every day)
- » Text 82111 with a question
- » Chat online (available 2pm-6pm, every day)

Good Thinking - <https://www.good-thinking.uk/>

A free, NHS-supported service to support individuals in managing their own mental health and building resilience so they can perform at their best.

Kooth - www.kooth.com

Free, safe and anonymous online counselling for young people.

- » Chat online to a trained counsellor (until 10pm, every day)

MIND - <https://www.mind.org.uk/>

Call, text or email for signposting to mental health support in your area.

- » Call 0300 123 3393
- » Text 86464
- » Email info@mind.org.uk

The Mix - www.themix.org.uk

Online guide to life for 16-25 year-olds in the UK. Emotional support is available 24 hours a day. On the website, you can chat about anything you like on their moderated discussion boards and live chat room.

- » Call 0808 8080 4994 (4pm-11pm, every day)
- » Chat online to trained supporter (4pm-11pm, every day)
- » Crisis messenger text service (24 hours a day, every day)

NSPCC - <https://www.nspcc.org.uk>

The NSPCC is the UK's leading children's charity, preventing abuse and helping those affected to recover

- » Call 0808 800 5000
- » Email help@nspcc.org.uk
- » If you would like support about **online safety**, go to:
<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/talking-child-online-safety/>

Refuge (National Domestic Abuse Helpline) - <https://www.refuge.org.uk/>

The National Domestic Abuse Helpline is a freephone 24-hour helpline which provides advice and support to women and can refer them to emergency accommodation.

- » Call 0808 200 0247

Young Minds - www.youngminds.org.uk

Information for young people about emotions and mental health.

- » Young people - text 85258 (24 hours a day, every day)

Parents - call the parents helpline 0808 802 5544

PAPYRUS (Suicide Prevention Charity) - www.papyrus-uk.org

Confidential help and advice to young people and anyone worried about a young person.

- » Call 0800 068 4141 (10am-10pm Monday-Friday, 2pm-10pm weekends)
- » Text 07786 209 697 (10am-10pm Monday-Friday, 2pm-10pm weekends)
- » Email pat@papyrus-uk.org

Samaritans - <https://www.samaritans.org/>

A 24-hour service offering confidential emotional support to anyone who is in crisis.

- » Call 116 123 (24 hours a day, every day)
- » Email jo@samaritans.org

Shout Crisis Textline - <https://www.giveusashout.org/>

Shout is the UK's first 24/7 text service, free on all major mobile networks, for anyone in crisis anytime, anywhere. It's a place to go if you're struggling to cope and you need immediate help.

- » Text Shout to 85258 (24 hours a day, every day)

Switchboard (LGBT+ helpline) - <https://switchboard.lgbt/>

A safe space for anyone to discuss anything, including sexuality, gender identity, sexual health and emotional wellbeing.

- » Call 0300 330 0630 (10am-10pm, every day)
- » Chat online
- » Email chris@switchboard.lgbt

Local support services

[Ealing Advice Service](http://ealingadvice.org/) - <http://ealingadvice.org/>

The service provides free, advice and assistance in social welfare.

» Call 0300 125464

[Ealing Council](https://www.ealing.gov.uk/coronavirus) - <https://www.ealing.gov.uk/coronavirus>

You will find links that will take you to regularly updated pages with the latest council service information.

[Ealing Families Directory](http://www.ealingfamiliesdirectory.org.uk) - www.ealingfamiliesdirectory.org.uk

An online services directory and information resource for children, young people and families living in the London Borough of Ealing

For information about **Food Banks** in Ealing:

<https://www.ealingfamiliesdirectory.org.uk/kb5/ealing/directory/advice.page?id=mr-exIG6aIY>

[Ealing Family Information Service](http://www.ealingfamiliesdirectory.org.uk) - www.ealingfamiliesdirectory.org.uk

The FIS can offer advice on services and support available. A dedicated SEND officer can also provide support and specialist information for families who have a child with additional needs or disability.

» Call 020 8825 5588

» Email: children@ealing.gov.uk

[Ealing Grid for Learning](https://www.egfl.org.uk/) - <https://www.egfl.org.uk/>

The Ealing Grid for Learning (EGfL) provides information for school staff, governors and the Ealing Learning Partnership.

[HappyMaps](#) – [HappyMaps | Support for Your Child's Mental Health](#)

A map of local resources for parents to support their children.

Ealing services for SEND

[Ealing Local Offer](http://www.ealinglocaloffer.org.uk) - www.ealinglocaloffer.org.uk

Information on services and support for children and young people ages 0-25 with SEND.

- » Call 020 8825 5588 (9am-5pm, Monday-Friday)
- » Email: children@ealing.gov.uk

[Contact Ealing](https://contact.org.uk/) - <https://contact.org.uk/>

Contact is a leading UK Wide charity, providing advice, information and support to families caring for children and young people aged 0-25, with any disability or additional need, regardless of diagnosis.

- » Email ealing@contact.org.uk
- » Call 020 8571 6381

[ISAID Ealing](https://www.family-action.org.uk/what-we-do/children-families/send/isaid/) – <https://www.family-action.org.uk/what-we-do/children-families/send/isaid/>

ISAID (Impartial Support, Advice and Information on Disabilities and Special Educational Needs) offers free, impartial, independent advice and support to families living in Ealing with a child or young person up to the age of 25 who has special educational needs or a disability (SEND).

- » Call 0203 9788989
- » Email isaidealing@family-action.org.uk

[Ealing Mencap](http://www.ealingmencap.org.uk/covid19) – <http://www.ealingmencap.org.uk/covid19>

LIFELINE is available to anyone in Ealing with learning disabilities, Autism or physical disabilities, as well as their families/carers.

- » Call 020 8566 9575 (9am-5pm, Monday-Friday)

