

Mental Health Newsletter Autumn 2022

Date	Weekly information on the Newsletter
9/9/22	<p>Hertfordshire Community NHS Trust have asked us to send the following Children's Wellbeing Practitioners Eventbrite link to all our parents/carers to enable you to view their rolling programme of workshops on offer and dates across the end of this year and into next year. These workshops cover many emotional health and well-being concerns, including sleep issues, anxiety and self-esteem. They are FREE and suitable for adults caring for both primary and secondary aged children.</p> <p>https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/hct-childrens-wellbeing-practitioners-33494371787</p>
16/9/22	<p>Supporting Children with Bereavement</p> <p>As the country gives thanks for the life of the only Queen that most of us have ever known. Many adults have compared this loss to that of losing a member of their own family. At times like these we often recall others we have lost. Bereavement and grief can be unpredictable. Feelings that we think have been left behind can suddenly re-surface and unsettle us.</p> <p>For some children, this might be their first experience of death, however the extensive coverage of the Queen's departure and the public displays of grief and flowers might raise feelings that they cannot name and questions you might not feel confident to answer. For the children it is important that we try to do so. Here are a few top tips to help you;</p> <p>Use clear and age appropriate language (not she is lost or asleep)</p> 

	<p>Explain what death is - The body has stopped working properly and they cannot be brought back to life..</p> <p>Reassure children, as many will worry that others may die.</p> <p>Be open, honest and direct with children.</p> <p>Let them ask questions and know that their feelings are normal.</p> <p>If you have concerns or worries please talk to a Mental Health leader at school. Further advice or support can be found at https://www.winstonswish.org/talk-to-children-about-death-of-queen/</p>
23/9/22	<p>General Mental Health reminders and information especially for new parents. Please check out the Mental Health section on the school website (in the Parents section). It has emergency contact information, the school policy, plus general support for all our wellbeing and lots of further websites and advice. If you can't find what you need the school's Mental Health leads are Mrs Barr and Mrs Clibbon, who have a wealth of further advice and support to help with a whole variety of issues from sleep to bereavement. We also have Leila Touhami, our Mental Health Practitioner, who works in school on a Thursday supporting children's mental health through; whole class, small group and parents with individualised provisions. If we can't resolve concerns directly we can also support parents with referrals to more specialist agencies.</p>
30/9/22	<p>As well as offering courses for the whole family on healthy eating and exercise, BeeZee Bodies are also offering an online course next Tues 4/10/22 at 6pm entitled - Feed Your Family on a Budget - where their qualified nutritionists will offer some tips and ideas to help support you in finding ways to make sustainable changes that are cheaper AND healthier.</p> <p>This workshop covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenges to feeding a family on a budget

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower cost healthy swaps • How meal planning can help to keep costs down • Shopping tips to stick to the list and the budget <p>Book a place on Eventbrite through the link below. https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/feeding-your-family-on-a-budget-tickets-404719245157</p> <p>If you want to find out more about BeeZee Bodies online or face to face courses in Stevenage please see their website below. https://beezeebodies.com/for-families/</p>
7/10/22	<p>Anxiety is a normal emotion for all of us, including our children, to feel at times in our lives. It helps us to strive for our best in an interview or exam and helps us stay more alert after a scare. For our younger children separation anxiety can be common and in older years it may be anything from insects to the dark, which causes anxiety. However, if anxiety starts to impact our day to day living it can become a problem. Some children are more likely to have worries and anxiety than others. Children often find change difficult and may become anxious following a house move or when starting a new school. Children who have had a distressing or traumatic experience, such as a car accident or house fire, may suffer from anxiety afterwards. Family arguments and conflict can also make children feel insecure and anxious. Teenagers are more likely to suffer from social anxiety than other age groups, avoiding social gatherings or making excuses to get out of them.</p> <p>Things you can do to help an anxious child</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teach your child to recognise signs of anxiety in themselves • encourage your child to manage their anxiety and ask for help when they need it • children of all ages find routines reassuring, so try to stick to regular daily routines where possible • if your child is anxious because of distressing events, such as a bereavement or separation, look for books or films that will help them to understand their feelings • if you know a change, such as a house move, is coming up, prepare your child by talking to them about what is going to happen and why • try not to become overprotective or anxious yourself • way there, such as seeing who can spot the most practice simple relaxation techniques with your child, such as taking 3 deep, slow breaths, breathing in for a count of 3 and out for

	<p>3. You'll find more guidance for helping children with anxiety on the Young Minds website</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • distraction can be helpful for young children. For example, if they are anxious about going to nursery, play games on the d cars • turn an empty tissue box into a "worry" box. Get your child to write about or draw their worries and "post" them into the box. Then you can sort through the box together at the end of the day or week <p>In addition, this week Herts Mind Network have launched a new resource - Lumi Nova to support children aged 7-12 with anxiety issues. This app has been funded and approved by the NHS, see below for more information.</p> <p>https://www.withyouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Herts_Lumi-Nova_Parent_eFlyer.pdf</p>
14/10/22	<p>Mental Health Champion Last week we held our first Wellbeing Champions meeting. Our Champions this year are; Donaldson - Harry, Soundar - Mia, Dahl - Harrison, Gavin - Olivia, Mante - Isla, Morpurgo - Janelle, Zephaniah - Ivy, Riordan - Perla, Malala - Taraji, Blackman - Asad and Kipling - Alys. We discussed what this role involves, how they can help their classmates (and themselves) with their wellbeing and talked about the importance of being a good listener. All the children in years 1 to 6 are completing their wellbeing questionnaires between now and half term, so when we meet again we will have some targets to work on.</p> 
21/10/22	<p>This week in school it has been all about oracy and</p> 

talking skills. Just Talk, is a Hertfordshire strategy to encourage children to talk about their problems and mental health and that this is a sign of strength not a weakness. As part of this, all the classes have been completing daily PSHE tasks, talking about ways to help themselves and each other's mental health. The younger children have been talking about the importance of sleep and the older children about body image. They have also been learning more emotional language and how these words fit into our Zones of Regulation.

<https://www.justtalkherts.org/parents/advice-for-parents.aspx>

4/11/22

Next week is International Stress Awareness Week. Stress is a normal emotion that everyone will feel at some point in their lives. It can sometimes be useful to enhance our performance but it can become a problem when it interferes with our everyday life. For example, it might start to negatively impact our social life, academic performance and mood. This is when we might need some extra help. Signs and Symptoms of stress; withdrawn isolated avoiding people, things taking on too much apprehensive, nervous, eating poorly, sleeping poorly, finding it difficult to meet deadlines, tense muscles, frequent colds/flu, insomnia, a lack of energy, chest pain, rapid heart beat, heavy breathing. sweating and stomach aches. When we feel stressed, we sometimes cope with this by avoiding doing the things that cause the stress. Though this might help in the short term, in the long term it keeps our vicious cycle going! Help to break the negative cycle by planning on how to complete the



task and then rewarding yourself with something fun once you have done it!

11/11/22

Seasonal Affective Disorder, or SAD for short, is depression that happens to a person **only** at a specific time of year. With SAD, a person becomes depressed in autumn or winter, when days are shorter and it gets dark earlier. SAD is brought on by the brain's response to the seasonal changes in daylight. When the daylight hours grow longer again, the depression lifts.

Simply spending more time outside during daylight hours is enough to relieve seasonal depression. Exercising outdoors or taking a daily walk are ways to do this. Also making sure you get enough sleep and children have a regular bedtime can help too.



18/11/22



The Anti-Bullying Alliance have been running their national Anti-Bullying week and their theme this year has been 'Reach Out' to stop bullying. Across

the school children have been learning about what is bullying, how to report worries, what are respectful relationships and how to help friends. If you are concerned about your child being bullied please speak to their class teacher in the first instant. Here are links to parent/carer information to support your child.

	<p>https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/anti-bullying-week/parents-and-carers</p> <p>https://www.leys.herts.sch.uk/cl-antibullying-accreditation.html</p>
25/11/22	<p>With Christmas round the corner and Black Friday being heavily advertised, finance is the theme of this update. Unfortunately there is often a link between Mental Health and financial issues.</p> <p>Feeling depressed, stressed, anxious or experiencing mania can make it difficult to manage money. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● You might find it harder to make budgeting and spending decisions. ● To make yourself feel better, you might spend money you don't have on things you don't need and then regret it later. ● You might feel anxious or stressed about talking on the phone, going to the bank or opening your bills. ● The symptoms of a mental illness might cause you to behave impulsively like spending a lot of money all in one go or what you perceive is a bargain.. <p>Any of these problems can be made worse if your income goes down, for example, if you have to stop or take time off work because you're unwell. It's normal to experience money worries, but it's better to face them rather than ignore them. Here are a few top tips to help get things back on track.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Removing the auto-filled information from your web browser can help slow down impulsive spending and give you the chance to think about whether you really want or need what you were planning to buy. ● Removing shopping apps that you might be tempted to use from your phone/tablet. ● You can also use free online tools (such as BlockSite) that let you temporarily block shopping sites for as long as you want. ● Keeping your wallet out of easy reach also makes impulsive spending more difficult.

	<p>If you want further advice please see the websites below. https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/debt-and-money/ https://www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en/everyday-money/budgeting/money-problems-and-poor-mental-wellbeing</p>
1/12/22	 <p>Over the last couple of weeks children in years 1 to 6 have been completing a well-being survey to find out how happy, resilient, positive and friendly they are. In Key Stage 2 (Years 3-6) we have found; 84% are always or usually happy, 88% felt that grown ups in school listened, cared and wanted them to do their best, 89% felt that there was many things that they could do well, 90% felt that they had a positive attitude towards their self, 87% felt that they were trying their best in school, 75% said that they usually got enough sleep and 91% felt that they usually had a balanced diet.</p>
9/12/22	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Free Online Emotional Wellbeing/Mental Health Workshops for Parents/Carers and Young People</h2> <p>Hertfordshire Community NHS Trust (HCT) Children’s Wellbeing Practitioners regularly run a variety of workshops focused on child and adolescent emotional wellbeing and mental health. Some workshops are for the parents/carers of primary school aged children and others are directed at adolescents although parents can also attend these. The workshops aim to provide support, guidance, some strategies and tips to support child and adolescent mental health.</p> <p>The workshops are free to attend and currently take place on Microsoft Teams. The workshops available can be found on the Children’s Wellbeing Practitioners Eventbrite page, where you can also find out more information about what the workshop will cover</p>

	<p>and book a place. https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/childrens-wellbeing-practitioners-school-nursing-service-hertfordshire-33494371787</p> <p>The service has also produced a two part recorded webinar to help with anxiety about going to school. Please take a look at the links below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Theory and Psychoeducation (just under 18 minutes long) 2. Strategies and Tips (just over 30 minutes long)
16/12/22	<p style="text-align: center;">Mental Health Support for Hertfordshire's Children and Young People</p> <p>If your child or teenager is feeling low, anxious, or generally struggling, there are lots of services available to help them all year round. Please always encourage them to talk and ask for help if they need it. The services listed on Just Talk's webpage are all free and don't need a professional referral, so they can be contacted directly by young people and/or their parents/carers. Services listed include Hertfordshire's new With YOUTH Digital Wellbeing Service for ages 5-18, parents and carers and many more, so please take a look: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/mentalhealthsupportforhertsyoungpeople</p>