




## Mental Health Newsletter Autumn 2024

Date	Newsletter Information
13/9/24	<p>Welcome to all our new families and children. We work hard at The Leys to support the wellbeing and mental health of our children, staff and families. Through this weekly update we try to reduce the stigma and misconceptions around mental health, make families aware of resources, apps and websites, local training opportunities, activities in school and awareness days. Within school our two Mental Health Leads, Mrs Barr and Mrs Clibbon, have a wealth of knowledge and can help guide staff and families to a range of advice when required. We also have weekly access to Leila Touhami, our Stevenage Mental Health Support Practitioner from CAMHS (Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services). Who supports a range of children and their families with quality assured programmes. This half term she will be working with our Year 4 cohort on 'Managing Our Emotions'. The school also buys 3 hours of counselling sessions weekly from Safe Space (Herts CC therapists), Mrs Parrot (who has completed Emotional Literacy Support Assistant training) is supporting individual and small groups of children with their wellbeing and developing strategies to help them cope with life's problems and we have our two nurture room teams who are supporting children who also present with SEND needs. For urgent mental health help or if you need to urgently speak to someone, Call the Single Point of Access (SPA) Tel: 0800 6444101 available 24 hourly or go to <a href="https://www.hpft.nhs.uk/get-help/">https://www.hpft.nhs.uk/get-help/</a> If you have non-urgent concerns or require general support, please check out our website page or contact the mental health leads through the school office.</p> <p><a href="https://www.leys.herts.sch.uk/nad-parent-toolkit.html">https://www.leys.herts.sch.uk/nad-parent-toolkit.html</a></p>
20/9/24	<p><b>Hertfordshire's emotional wellbeing support (early help services)</b></p> <p>In addition to the in school support for mental health and wellbeing there is more support online and through other agencies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Sandbox (for 10-25-year-olds): <a href="#">The Sandbox   Digital Mental Health Service (mindler.co.uk)</a></li><li>• With Youth (for 5-18-year-olds) including <a href="#">online groups</a></li></ul>

	<p>and Lumi Nova therapeutic game (designed for 7-12-year-olds): <a href="http://withyouth.org">withyouth.org</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NESSie parent/carer support service: <a href="#">Parents/Carers landing page - NESSie IN ED, CIC</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Herts Haven Cafes</a> (for 10-18-year-olds) in person, drop-in support at Watford, Stevenage, Hemel Hempstead and Ware.</li> <li>• Just Talk Herts information and signposting: <a href="http://justtalkherts.org">justtalkherts.org</a>, including <a href="#">What's Next? Let's Just Talk about the Future (justtalkherts.org)</a></li> </ul> <p>Find out about all these services and more at: <a href="http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/youthmentalhealth">www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/youthmentalhealth</a></p>
27/9/24	<p>Hertfordshire Community NHS Trust (HCT) Children's Wellbeing Practitioners regularly run a variety of workshops focused on children and young people's 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. The workshops aim to provide support, guidance, some strategies and tips to try to improve children and young people's mental health.</p> <p>The workshops are free to attend and currently take place on Microsoft Teams. They are currently offering workshops on: Wellbeing, Sleep, Self-esteem and Resilience. The Children's Wellbeing Practitioners Eventbrite page, has information about what the workshop will cover and allows parents/carers to book a place:</p> <p><a href="https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/hct-childrens-wellbeing-practitioners-33494371787">https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/hct-childrens-wellbeing-practitioners-33494371787</a></p>
4/10/24	<p>Already this term we have trained our Year 5 Peer Mentors - Fletcher, Oliver, Felicity, Naeem, Serah, Austin, Remii, Harrison, Freddie, Nathania, Elsie and Charlie, who are working in pairs and threes one lunchtime each week to support the younger children with friendship disagreements and strategies to help them have a</p>

	<p>positive playtime.</p> <p>We have also completed our first meeting with our Well-being Champions, Year 2 - Olivia and Kiera, Year 3 - Antonia and Scarlett, Year 4 - Oliver and Maaya, Year 5 - Brianna and Kunashe, Year 6 - Ethan and Delilah.</p> <p>In addition to this, some of our Year 6 children will receive training to become Youth Ambassadors. This is a new county initiative to train children to support themselves and their peers and to give children a voice to improve services for themselves and others.</p>
11/10/24	<p>Yesterday, it was World Mental Health day. We know that prioritising your own mental health is essential if you care for children. Therefore this week we are highlighting support for adults in the community. Below is a link to a variety of talking therapies provided by Herts NHS. On this site you can find links to webinars, self-help videos and guide booklets about topics such as; becoming a parent, bereavement, depression, stress and sleep issues.</p> <p><a href="https://www.hpft-talkingtherapies.nhs.uk/">https://www.hpft-talkingtherapies.nhs.uk/</a></p> 
18/10/24	<p>Anxiety Based School Avoidance</p> <p>Since the lockdowns during Covid many more children have become anxious about attending school. This can be caused by many issues including; friendships, expectations around learning, mental health, SEND, illness or bereavement. The Young Minds website has further advice for parents supporting an anxious child.</p> <p><a href="https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/parents-a-z-mental-health-guide/school-anxiety-and-refusal/?utm_source=newsletter&amp;utm_medium=email&amp;utm_campaign=360schools&amp;utm_content=sept_2024">https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/parents-a-z-mental-health-guide/school-anxiety-and-refusal/?utm_source=newsletter&amp;utm_medium=email&amp;utm_campaign=360schools&amp;utm_content=sept_2024</a></p> <p>The Children Wellbeing Practitioner 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"> <li>1. <a href="#">Theory and Psychoeducation</a> (just under 18 minutes long)</li> </ol>

	<p>2. <u>Strategies and Tips</u> (just over 30 minutes long)</p>
<p>25/10/24</p>	 <p>Over half a million people in the UK are severely affected by mental illness. But it's not just what's going on in their minds that makes life hard...it's what's going on in ours. One of the most difficult things about living with a mental illness can be the judgement of others.</p> <p>Over a third of UK adults say they wouldn't feel comfortable in the presence of someone they believe is experiencing severe mental illness. Three in five people living with a mental illness say the fear of how others perceive them has stopped them seeking support.</p> <p>Let's Rethink, is a campaign to tackle the unfair stigma and the discrimination that people face at work, in school and at home around their mental health.</p> <p>This charity provides an advice and information helpline that is open Monday to Friday 9.30am - 4pm. Their phone number is 0808 801 0525. Or you can find out more on their website at <a href="https://www.rethink.org/">https://www.rethink.org/</a>.</p>
<p>8/11/24</p>	 <p>The first Wednesday in November is Stress Awareness Day. Although stress is not a mental health condition, because a small amount of stress can be good as it helps us to complete tasks and feel more energised. But stress can become a problem when it lasts for a long time or is very intense. In some cases, stress can affect our physical and mental health. If you want to find out more about stress including strategies to manage it please look at the Mind Website link below.</p> <p><a href="https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/stress/what-is-stress/">https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/stress/what-is-stress/</a></p>

15/11/24



Just before half term staff heard that the school had been awarded the new **Emotional and Mental Wellbeing in Schools Mark**, gaining an **'advanced practice'** grade having scored 57 out of 63 on the assessed criteria against the Department for Education's 8 principles of a whole school approach to promoting mental health and wellbeing. Staff and governors were delighted for this recognition of all the hard work which has gone into supporting the children and their families for many years.



22/11/24



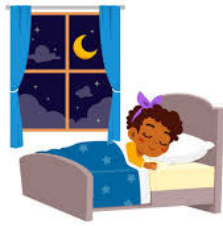
November is Men's Mental Health Month. Sadly due to society's expectations of masculinity, men are less likely to talk to others about their feelings, so they suffer in silence. The NHS reports that 12.5% of men in England have a mental health disorder, the Samaritans report that 3 times more men are likely to die by suicide in England than females and men are far more likely than women to go missing, sleep rough, become dependent on alcohol or use drugs frequently.

So how can we support boys to avoid them becoming one of these statistics? Encourage boys to;

- Talk about problems when they arise and ask for support when they need it
- Know that other boys and young men share similar challenges and feelings

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Care about themselves and each other and be able to demonstrate this</li> <li>• Show emotion and cry when they need to</li> <li>• Challenge unhelpful stereotypes about what it is to be manly</li> </ul> <p><a href="https://vimeo.com/240500903?&amp;login=true#">https://vimeo.com/240500903?&amp;login=true#</a> =</p>
29/11/24	 <p>Mental First Aid England are promoting December 3rd as <b>Tech Timeout Tuesday</b>. Excessive screen time and constant connectivity can take a toll on our physical and mental health. Research shows that prolonged exposure to digital devices may lead to feelings of overwhelm, stress and anxiety, impacting our overall well being. On average we spend 6 hours a day online and pick up our phones 58 times. So why not plan to have some offline fun as a family and join the campaign?</p> <p><a href="https://www.techtimeout.co.uk/techtimeout-tuesday/">https://www.techtimeout.co.uk/techtimeout-tuesday/</a></p>
6/12/24	 <p>Nine of our year 6 children have signed up to become Youth Ambassadors. This involves working with three county wide organisations to talk about and raise awareness of the support available to young people. In the last few weeks they have learnt more about the charities involved and the main presenting mental health issues for young people, anxiety, stress and low mood. They have also written a play and have been rehearsing this, which we hope to video before the end of term.</p>

13/12/24



In our recent mental health survey, **up to 50% of children identified that they were not getting enough sleep.** Good sleep is fundamental to good mental health, just as good mental health is vital to good sleep. A good night's sleep is about getting to sleep, staying asleep and getting enough good quality, deep sleep. Increasingly, studies show that the pattern and quality of our sleep is not only closely linked with our mental health and wellbeing, but also with our immune system, our alertness/cognitive functioning, our mood, our physical well-being, blood pressure and general health. Having enough good-quality sleep is a key, and often underestimated, protective factor for children and young people. Sleep helps to regenerate their brains and bodies, process information and memories, boost immunity, guard against obesity and stress, and help concentration, learning and behaviour. Primary school-aged children generally **need around 10 to 11 hours of sleep a night**, while teenagers need around 8 to 10. Things to help children get a good night's sleep:

- Having a regular time to go to sleep and wake up.
- Having a predictable and consistent nighttime routine.
- Making sure children and young people are in natural daylight for at least half an hour- particularly in the morning.
- Making sure children and young people get enough exercise during the day.
- Older children should avoid napping during the day.
- Avoiding caffeine, particularly in the afternoon.
- Turning off computer screens or other devices at **least an hour before bedtime**. Blue light from TVs, tablets and mobiles excite the brain and interfere with the sleep hormone levels, preventing the brain from feeling sleepy.
- Having low lighting and a quiet space in bedrooms.
- Avoiding checking devices, particularly in the middle of the night.
- Supporting children and young people to develop positive coping strategies for regulating their emotions and managing their stress levels.

	<p>If you need more help with sleep concerns in your child, speak to Mrs Barr, Mrs Pomroy or Mrs Clibbon in school or look at the website below, which has a downloadable sleep book that can be either printed or listened to through an audiobook.</p> <p><a href="https://thesleepcharity.org.uk/information-support/children/">https://thesleepcharity.org.uk/information-support/children/</a></p>
20/12/24	<p>If you think your child is unhappy or you are worried about their behaviour, it's easy to be hard on yourself and think you aren't doing a good job. But you aren't alone, we all tend to question our ability and parenting when things are not going well. Here is a link to the <b>Young Minds website</b> with hints and tips for any parent who is worried about their child or their own wellbeing over the holiday. Also don't forget the school Mental Health page, which can now be accessed from the home page of the website. Wishing all the parents, carers and children a happy and safe holiday.</p> <p><a href="https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/parents-guide-to-looking-after-yourself/?utm_source=newsletter&amp;utm_medium=email&amp;utm_campaign=360schools&amp;utm_content=nov_2024">https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/parents-guide-to-looking-after-yourself/?utm_source=newsletter&amp;utm_medium=email&amp;utm_campaign=360schools&amp;utm_content=nov_2024</a></p>