

# Ashwell Primary School

## MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING NEWSLETTER

Number 3 – Spring 1



Dear All,

Welcome to the third edition of our Mental Health and Wellbeing Newsletter. We are very fortunate at Ashwell to have four qualified Mental Health First-Aiders: Mrs Andrews; Mrs McBeal; Miss Robson; and Miss Howley (who completed her 2-day course last week!). We are also supported by Miss Sohal, who is currently in the final year of studying towards her counselling qualification. Whilst we cannot diagnose or treat mental health problems, we have all been trained to look out for signs and symptoms of common mental health difficulties and can respond in the first instance with support and signposting to further professionals. Having said that, all staff at school are passionate about children's mental health and wellbeing, so please speak to any of us, if you have concerns. We hope you find some of the below suggestions helpful in supporting your child's (and your own) mental wellbeing.

### A MINDFUL MOMENT

#### Mind Bubbles

A 'simple activity to help your child find their 'calm'

- 1) Support your child to sit mindfully with their spine straight and their body relaxed.
- 2) Imagine they are holding a bubble wand.
- 3) Ask them to breathe in deeply, then breathe out as if they are blowing a bubble through a wand
- 4) Breathe in again and ask your child to notice their worry, to imagine what it looks like.
- 5) Ask your child to breathe out and blow through their bubble wand and imagine a bubble forming.
- 6) Then imagine the bubble pops and disappears.
- 7) Keep blowing out worries until your child feels ready to go on with their day.

TIP: YOU CAN TRY THIS WITH A REAL BUBBLE WAND AND BUBBLES

### With Youth

<https://www.withyouth.org/>

**withYouth**  
YOUNG PEOPLE'S Digital Wellbeing Services

WithYouth is a countywide service available for any Hertfordshire resident aged 5-18, as well as parents, carers and professionals. The service provides online support to children and young people experiencing mental ill health and/or emotional distress. They service children and young people to build resilience by working with them to problem solve and develop coping strategies, coming up with solutions that will enable them to improve their own health and wellbeing. They will also provide advice and guidance to parents/families/carers.

No formal referral is needed. You can reach out directly through their instant messaging service or email [withyouth@hertfordshiremind.org](mailto:withyouth@hertfordshiremind.org)



### Children's Mental Health Week 2024

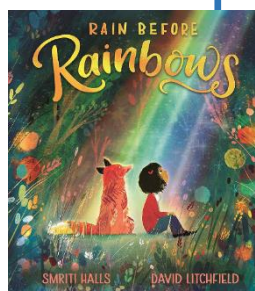
<https://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org>

This week is Children's Mental Health Week! You might wish to use it as an opportunity to have a conversation with your child about mental health. Place 2 Be have some great resources on their website that you may wish to access. One of these is attached to the bottom of this newsletter

### Miss Robson's Recommended Reads

A selection of books, accessible to children to support with anxiety and worries.

- Climb, by Hannah Peckham
- It's Your World Now, by Barry Falls
- The Colour Monster, by Anna Llenas
- The Squirrels that Squabbled, by Rachel Bright
- The Stompysaurus, by Rachel Bright
- Ruby's Worry, by Tom Percival
- Rain Before Rainbows, by Smiriti Prasadam
- The Lion Inside, by Rachel Bright
- The Worrysaurus, by Rachel Bright
- The Invisible String, by Patrice Karst



### This May Help!

<https://thismayhelp.me/>

An NHS backed website, full of helpful videos created to give practical advice for parents supporting their child's mental health in areas such as: gaming and online activity; eating disorders; school avoidance; anger; sleep troubles and more!

### This May Help!



# My VOICE MATTERS

Place2Be's

CHILDREN'S  
MENTAL HEALTH  
WEEK

## TALKING TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

### Are you a parent or carer who wants to talk to your child about mental health?

This Children's Mental Health Week we want all children and young people, whoever they are, and wherever they are in the world, to be able to say – and believe – “My Voice Matters”.

We visited primary and secondary schools to ask students what they wanted from the week – to help shape the activities we create for schools, the messaging we give to teachers, the tips we give to other children, and the advice we give to parents, carers and families.



### LOOKING FOR FREE PRACTICAL ADVICE TO HELP YOU SUPPORT YOUR CHILD?

Parenting Smart, Place2Be's site for parents and carers, is full of expert advice and tips on supporting primary-age children, and managing their behaviour, and act on their views.

[PARENTINGSMART.ORG.UK](https://parentingsmart.org.uk)

### Here's what children and young people told us they need from you:

- ① We don't need to have 'one-off conversations about our mental health' – sometimes a chat on a journey or at bedtime is enough.
- ② I need to know it's okay to talk to you about any and all of my feelings. Please hear what I have to say, without interrupting me.
- ③ Please listen to me carefully and acknowledge how I am feeling – it might seem silly to you but what I am going through is important to me.
- ④ Playing with pets can make me feel better. Same with playing football, basketball or whatever type of sport I am into.
- ⑤ Don't compare my experiences to your own when you were a child.
- ⑥ Sometimes I just need you to listen and hear what I'm saying – I don't always need answers (or lectures)
- ⑦ Please don't worry about trying to fix things for me – I often just need to know you are there for me and understand what I am going through.
- ⑧ If you are open with me about your feelings, this can help me to be more open about mine.
- ⑨ Sometimes I don't want to talk. Please trust that I will come to you (or another grown-up or someone my own age) when I'm ready. Sometimes it's easier for me to talk to someone nearer my own age – my siblings, cousins, friends, younger teachers at school - because they 'get it'.
- ⑩ Sometimes a hug is all it takes to make me feel supported.



### WHAT MATTERS TO YOU? CREATIVE VIDEO ACTIVITIES FOR FAMILIES

These wellbeing activities can help children and young people think about and share what matters to them.

[For primary children: bit.ly/3PzCGI8](https://bit.ly/3PzCGI8)

[For secondary children: bit.ly/3LBD2wK](https://bit.ly/3LBD2wK)

[CHILDRENSMENTALHEALTHWEEK.ORG.UK](https://childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk)

## CONVERSATION STARTERS

Some ways to start a conversation with your child about mental health could be...



TELL ME ABOUT  
YOUR DAY

WHAT WAS THE BEST  
THING ABOUT TODAY?

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST  
STRESS / WORRY IN YOUR  
LIFE RIGHT NOW?

WHAT'S YOUR  
ONLINE LIFE LIKE?



WHO WOULD YOU TALK  
TO IF YOU WERE FEELING  
WORRIED ABOUT YOUR  
MENTAL HEALTH?

WHAT CAN I DO  
TO HELP YOU?



## And finally...

Being a parent is, at times, impossibly hard. Make sure you try hard to take time for yourself and your own wellbeing!

