



STUDENT WELLBEING MATTERS



Ripley St Thomas CE Academy Student Wellbeing Newsletter
24 March 2021



Welcome to our latest edition of the Ripley Student Wellbeing Matters newsletter. March 23 2021, marks a year to the day since the first coronavirus lockdown in the UK, when Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced tough restrictions on people's lives aimed at stopping the spread of Covid-19. A national minute's silence was held to mark a National Day of Reflection of the events of the past year as we continue to emerge our way out of lockdown on the roadmap to recovery.

Our lives have changed; the way we work and study has changed; the way we interact and communicate with others has changed. We have learnt to cope, we have learnt to adapt and we are emerging stronger and more resilient as a result.

ONE YEAR ON



If you need to contact us please email:
wellbeingmatters@ripley.lancs.sch.uk

IN THIS EDITION....

There is some practical advice on **The benefits of exercise for health and wellbeing** and how physical activity can improve your physical health, brain function and mood.

There is also an artistic feature by Mr. Cameron, entitled: **'Art and Your Wellbeing'** in which Mr Cameron shares the ways in which you can get creative with Art projects and enjoy relaxing time away from your screen.

In a similar theme, **The Health and Wellbeing benefits of reading**, from Ripley Library 'The Reading Room' provides details and advice about how you can select and reserve your reading book for the Easter holiday period.

Additionally, there is a preview of two new **journal pages** with useful information, advice, websites, apps and contact details of relevant agencies and

AND THERE'S MORE....

organisations relating to mental health and wellbeing.

Whilst you're there, take a look at the poster **'What does Anxiety feel like?'** which helps you to identify some of the signs of anxiety and offers practical strategies to help you cope and control anxiety.

To support this, the excellent infographic **'10 Things Students Can Do To Support Their Mental Health'**, also provides simple, practical tips to help you cope and support your mental health.

Finally, there are our regular features including a reminder of who you can contact at school for a **Drop-In or Support Session** and a **Mindful March Action calendar** with daily inspiration and ideas to keep you active during March. Why not give them a go and try some of the suggestions?

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY: BENEFITS OF EXERCISE FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING

How physical activity can improve your physical health,
brain function and mood.

KEY POINTS

- Physical activity keeps the body strong and healthy and can improve mental health by decreasing symptoms of depression, anxiety, pain and loneliness.
- Physical activity can also improve focus, school performance, sleep and energy levels.
- Children who participate in regular physical activity enjoy improved relationships and a more positive body image.

Regular physical activity helps you develop in a range of ways. Not only does it help your physical health, but it also helps improve your brain function and emotional wellbeing.

BENEFITS OF ACTIVITY FOR PHYSICAL HEALTH

Regular physical activity helps develop your fundamental movement skills (i.e. physical literacy). In addition to helping maintain a healthy body weight, physical activity can help build healthy bones, muscles, heart and lungs.

While all physical activity is good activity, movement at a moderate-to-vigorous intensity (i.e., the type of activity which causes you to breathe a bit harder and sweat) is linked to even more health benefits.

Aside from providing general physical benefits, regular activity can also help ease symptoms of premenstrual syndrome (PMS) in girls. This is because moderate exercise helps the body produce hormones called endorphins. These are natural painkillers that can ease cramps and back pain as well as improve mood.



BENEFITS OF ACTIVITY FOR BRAIN FUNCTION

Physical activity plays an important role in developing the brain and supporting essential mental functions.

Exercise leads to improved motor skills (such as hand-eye co-ordination), better thinking and problem-solving, stronger attention skills and improved learning. Not surprisingly, these all combine to benefit school performance. Even the simple act of playing outside with friends has been linked to children performing better in tests and assignments.

BENEFITS OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FOR EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

If you have symptoms of depression or anxiety, or even just an "off" day, physical activity may be the last thing on your mind. However, physical activity can help greatly with maintaining mental wellbeing. "Feel-good" chemicals in the brain, known as endorphins, are released by the brain during physical activity and help to improve mood, energy levels and even sleep. Together, these positive effects help to improve self-confidence and resilience. Kids who get active every day are also better sleepers.

REDUCED ANXIETY

Children who experience heightened anxiety tend to focus on anxiety-inducing things, which in turn makes them more anxious, so creating a vicious cycle. But, through physical activity, an anxious child can break the cycle by focusing on the demands of the physical activity, developing new skills and achieving a sense of accomplishment. See your doctor if you are showing any signs and symptoms of anxiety.

IMPROVED RELATIONSHIPS

If you are feeling lonely and unable to make friends, shared physical activities can give them a sense of belonging and companionship. Children with social anxiety might find it difficult to be in a group environment, but a focus, such as a sport, may relieve some of the social pressure. Over time, the act of sharing experiences with others, developing rapport and working towards common goals can help you focus and develop the confidence to speak up in class. It can also help foster friendships in school if the activities are school-based.

IMPROVED RELATIONSHIPS

When you see how much fun it is to be able to dance, jump, walk, run, stretch and play, you are more likely to want to continue enjoying being active throughout your life. Seeing and appreciating what your body can do, rather than how it looks, is a great way for you to build a positive body image and self-esteem.

It is important for parents to help their children develop this awareness as early as possible and to play their part in promoting a healthy body image through their own behaviour. The desire to look lean or muscular often becomes stronger during the pre-teen and teen years among both boys and girls. You are less likely to develop unhealthy habits to reach a so-called physical ideal if you have a healthy perception of what 'looking good' means, and understand that it comes from healthy, balanced habits.

ART AND YOUR WELLBEING



Between Microsoft Teams lessons and playing Xbox or binging Netflix over lockdown 1, 2 and 3 I found that I was staring at a screen far too much. After a while it became necessary to find something offline I could do. Having been not the best at art during my time at school, painting and drawing was not top of my list. However after a late night YouTube rabbit hole,

I found myself watching a Bob Ross video. Bob Ross was a TV celebrity in the 80s and 90s. His easy way of explaining things got me thinking that I should give it a go. I bought some cheap acrylic paints from Amazon and watching started my first YouTube tutorial. There are so many to choose from, many are specifically designed for a beginner. If you click on the picture of Bob Ross to the right you can go to his YouTube channel.



Another option I have also tried is painting by numbers. This needs much more precision as you need to concentrate on what you are doing. A pack costs around £20 and comes with everything you need. If you struggle with having a creative idea this could be a great way to get some screen breaks. They are readily available on Amazon and although they take time and patience they are a great way to spend focused time away from a screen. You also get an amazing looking painting at the end. Only the most observant would notice that it has tiny numbers barely visible through the paint.



Time away from the screen is so important for your health and wellbeing. For those of you who don't enjoy the great outdoors or who like a good mix of activities, painting and drawing is a great way to spend time with your family as well.





FROM THE READING ROOM

The Health and Wellbeing Benefits of Reading

People who read books regularly are more satisfied with life, happier, and more likely to feel that the things they do in life are worthwhile.

THE
READING
AGENCY

Reading has been shown to put our brains into a pleasurable trance-like state, similar to meditation, and it brings the same health benefits of deep relaxation and inner calm. Regular readers sleep better, have lower stress levels, higher self-esteem, and lower rates of depression than non-readers.

Researchers at the University of Sussex found that after six minutes of reading, subjects' stress was reduced by up to 68 per cent.

the reading room...



@RipleyLibraries

@ripleyreads



FROM THE READING ROOM



**CLICK AND
COLLECT**

**Want a
good book to
read over Easter?**

**Use our Click and Collect service.
Simply email: reading@ripley.lancs.sch.uk
using your school email, and the book will
be delivered to you during Form.**

**Need help deciding
what to choose?**

**Then search 'Oliver', the Library Catalogue.
From Home, this can be accessed from the
School Website > Curriculum > Libraries.
You can search by **Author**, **Title** or **Genre**.**

the reading room...



@RipleyLibraries

@ripleyreads

LOOK AFTER YOUR MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING



FIVE WAYS TO WELLBEING

Connect



Strengthening relationships with others and feeling close to and valued by others, including at work, is critical to boosting wellbeing.

Be Active



Being physically active, including at work, improves physical health and can improve mood and wellbeing and decrease stress, depression and anxiety.

Take Notice



Paying more attention to the present moment, to thoughts and feelings and to the world around, boosts our wellbeing.

Keep Learning



Being curious and seeking out new experiences at work and in life more generally positively stimulates the brain.

Give



Carrying out acts of kindness, whether small or large, can increase happiness, life satisfaction and general sense of wellbeing

SUPPORT SERVICES



The Ross Centre,
Euston Road,
Morecambe
Tel: 01524 550650
Monday -Friday
09:00 - 17:00hrs



Lancashire Care Wellbeing & Mental Health Helpline

Tel: 0800 915 4640



Monday -Friday 19:00hrs - 23:00hrs
Saturday - Sunday 12:00hrs - 00:00hrs

Useful Websites



Anxiety UK - www.anxietyuk.org.uk
BBC Headroom - www.bbc.co.uk/headroom
CAMHS - camhs-resources.co.uk
Chasing the Stigma - www.chasingthestigma.co.uk
Childline Toolbox - <https://childline.org.uk/toolbox>
Every Mind Matters - www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters
Get Self Help - www.getselfhelp.co.uk
Healthy Young Minds - www.healthyyoungminds.co.uk



Kooth - www.kooth.com
Lancashire NHS Mental Health Crisis Line - www.lscft.nhs.uk/Crisis
MIND - <https://www.lancashiremind.org.uk/>
MindEd - www.minded.org.uk
No Panic - www.nopanic.org.uk
NSPCC - www.nspcc.org.uk
PAPYRUS - www.papyrus-uk.org

WHO TO CONTACT FOR ADVICE AND SUPPORT

THE WELLBEING & MENTAL HEALTH TEXTING SERVICE



NHS
Lancashire &
South Cumbria
NHS Foundation Trust

A confidential and anonymous service that aims to support Wellbeing and Mental Health by providing emotional support to those who may prefer to communicate via text.

Experiencing any of the following? 😞



Bullying



Parental conflict



Loneliness



Mental health problems



Sexuality challenges



Suicidal thoughts



Abuse



Self-image issues



Self-harm

We are here to help 😊❤️

Text **HELLO** to

07860 022846 📞 SOS



Scan Me!

APPS FOR YOUR PHONE



Mindshift



MindShift app is designed to help young adults cope with anxiety, by acting as a portable coach that guides you through challenging situations.

5 Minute Relaxation



Do you feel stressed and anxious? Do you crave a moment of peace and relaxation? This app will help you feel calmer and more relaxed in just 5 minutes.

STOPP



Help stop the vicious cycles of depression and anxiety, and other repetitive behaviours such as negative thinking, worry, drinking, smoking, gambling, aggression, self-harm etc.

Calm



Explore hundreds of meditations to help you relax. You'll receive an original Daily Calm along with new sleep stories, meditation and music programmes.

Headspace



HEADSPACE

Headspace is your guide to mindfulness for your everyday life. Learn meditation and mindfulness skills to help cope with sadness, anger, and adapting to change.

Calm Harm



Calm Harm provides tasks that help you resist or manage the urge to self harm. Add your own tasks too and it's completely private and password protected.

What does Anxiety feel like?

Anxiety is the feeling of fear or panic. Most people feel anxious, panicky or fearful about situations in life, such as family problems or exams, but often once the difficult situation is over you feel better and calmer.

Sometimes you may feel anxious after the difficult situation and this is when anxiety becomes a problem and can affect you doing every day things.



Feeling anxious? You could try...



taking some big, deep breaths



not drinking caffeine (especially energy drinks)



listening to music (calming music)



being in the moment (focus on right now)



grabbing a snack (a healthy snack)



IT'S O.K TO BE NOT O.K!

IF YOU'RE HAVING MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS, YOU'RE NOT ALONE. 1 IN 4 OF US WILL HAVE PROBLEMS WITH OUR MENTAL HEALTH AT SOME POINT IN OUR LIVES.

Still feeling anxious? You may find it useful to speak to a doctor.

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10 THINGS STUDENTS CAN DO TO BOOST THEIR MENTAL HEALTH



Mind and Body

Look after your body as well as your mind. Eat a well balanced diet, keep hydrated and get into a regular sleep pattern



Exercise

Engage in regular exercise. Find a sport or activity that you enjoy. Exercise is a great tool for improving mood and reducing stress and anxiety



Organisation

Manage your time effectively. Stay organised and on top of things. This will help to reduce pressure



Self Care

Practice self care. Make sure to look after yourself. Relax, smile, have a bath, go for a walk and do something you enjoy

Talk to someone

Don't be afraid to talk to someone about how you are feeling. Talk to your friends, family or teachers.



Breathing

Learn how to breathe effectively. Practice a number of techniques and find what works for you: ratio breathing, deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation



Write down

Write down how you feeling or what you are thinking. This can be a really simple way to understand what is going on within your mind and body



Challenge

Try to challenge your thinking. If you experience an unhelpful thought try and turn it into a helpful thought



Check in

Regularly check in with yourself. Monitor your emotions and mood

Problem solve

Learn how to problem solve effectively. When you experience a problem try and write down a number of solutions.



STAYING SAFE & HEALTHY TOGETHER



hand sanitiser station

Fact: People who washed their hands between six and 10 times a day were 36 per cent less likely to become infected.

 **POSTER**

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STAYING SAFE & HEALTHY TOGETHER



please follow instructions first time

Fact: Children are likely to become infected with coronavirus at roughly the same rate as adults, but the infection is usually mild.

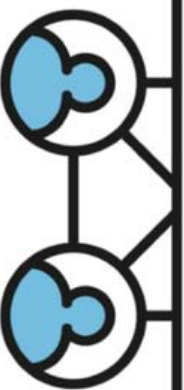
 **POSTER**

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STAYING SAFE & HEALTHY TOGETHER



remember to stay
2 metres apart



Fact: Why 2m? Surprisingly, it can be traced back to research in the 1930s. Scientists established that droplets of liquid released by coughs or sneezes will either evaporate quickly in the air or be dragged by gravity down to the ground.

POSTER

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STAYING SAFE & HEALTHY TOGETHER

2 metres is...



2.4 skateboards



12 hot-dogs



9.6 toothbrushes



STAY 2 METRES APART

POSTER

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ACTION CALENDAR: MINDFUL MARCH 2021



MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
1 Set an intention to live with awareness and kindness	2 Notice five things that are beautiful in the world outside	3 Start today by appreciating your body and that you're alive	4 Notice how you speak to yourself. Try to use kind words	5 Take three calm breaths at regular intervals during your day	6 Bring to mind people you care about and send love to them	7 Have a 'no plans' day and notice how that feels
8 Eat mindfully. Appreciate the taste, texture & smell of your food	9 Take a full breath in and out before you reply to others	10 Get outside and notice how the weather feels on your face	11 Stay fully present while drinking your cup of tea or coffee	12 Listen deeply to someone and really hear what they are saying	13 Pause to just watch the sky or clouds for a few minutes today	14 Find ways to enjoy any chores or tasks that need doing
15 Stop, breathe and just notice. Repeat regularly during the day	16 Get really absorbed with an interesting or creative activity	17 Look around and spot 3 things you find unusual or pleasant	18 If you find yourself rushing, make an effort to slow down	19 Cultivate a feeling of loving-kindness towards others today	20 Celebrate the International Day of Happiness dayofhappiness.net	21 Listen to a piece of music without doing anything else
22 Walk a different route today and see what you notice	23 Tune in to your feelings, without judging or trying to change	24 Appreciate your hands and all the things they enable you to do	25 Focus your attention on the good things you take for granted	26 Notice when you're tired and take a break as soon as possible	27 Have a device-free day and enjoy the space it offers	28 Appreciate nature around you, wherever you are
29 Notice what is working today and be thankful that this is so	30 Mentally scan down your body and notice what it is feeling	31 Notice the joy to be found in the simple things of life	"Mindfulness means that we commit fully in each moment to be present" - Jon Kabat-Zinn			

ACTION FOR HAPPINESS



www.actionforhappiness.org





Wellbeing and Support Drop In

Need to speak to a member of the Team?

The Wellbeing Team



Mrs Blundell-Roberts



Mr Quarry



Miss Apsey



Michael, Chaplain



Mrs Taylor



Miss Rice



Mrs Burr



Mrs Smith



Mr Liver



Mrs Bowker



Miss Western



Mr Wiggins



Mrs Ellison



Mr Greenhalgh



Mrs Webster



Mr Greenacre



Mrs Casson



Mr Wilson

The team are offering virtual drop-ins by appointment. If you would like to chat to anyone on the team, from Learning Support, the Bridge or Pastoral Support, please send them an email and they will arrange a time.

It is an opportunity to have a short chat that may help keep you on track.

Always remember, if you are feeling unsafe you should contact your pastoral staff or in an emergency, come to The Lodge reception so someone can help.