

Our Well-Being Newsletter

Newsletter for pupils, parents & staff
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Welcome to our March Well-Being Newsletter!

In honour of Women's International Day this month, our March Well-being Newsletter will focus mostly on Women's mental health. Gender does influence mental health. In England, one in five women (compared to one in eight men) has a common mental health problem such as anxiety, depression or self-harm. Although there are risk factors affecting particularly women, protective factors also enable women to be more likely treated for a mental health problem than men. We will discuss which ones.

Life events affect both men's and women's mental health and there is mental health support out there for everyone. The first step is to be strong enough to seek help and to recognise that, although it can be difficult to admit that we are struggling mentally, there is no shame in doing so. In this edition, you will find information on how to seek that external help but also useful tips on what to do if you are worried about your mental health.



What affects Women's Mental Health?



Women are more likely than men to experience common mental health conditions: While rates have remained relatively stable in men, research has found that prevalence is increasing in women. Young women in particular have been identified as a high-risk group, with over a quarter (26%) experiencing a common mental disorder—such as anxiety or depression—compared to 9.1% of young men (2021). While there can be many reasons why mental health problems develop, some specific risk factors affect many women. According to the Mental Health Foundation, social and economic factors can put women at greater risks of poor mental health than men:

- To live in poverty which, along with concerns about personal safety and working mainly in the home, can lead to social isolation,
- To experience physical, emotional and sexual abuse, which can have a long-term impact on women's mental health,
- To be a single parent, which can lead to loneliness, financial struggle and stress,
- To be carers, which can lead to stress, anxiety and isolation.

However, there are factors that protect women's health, including the tendency for women to have better social networks and that many women find it easier to talk about their feelings than men. Women are more likely to seek help.



Women and self-love



The idea of loving yourself might sound a little cheesy, but it is important. Pause for a moment to reflect on how you feel about yourself ... Do you love yourself? Sadly, for many of us, our default mode is self-critical,— *I could have done better, I should be more this or less that, I wish I hadn't said that.* Women generally have a harder time becoming self-compassionate than men. So how can we reverse the trend?

People who are self-compassionate avoid harsh critiques and negative generalisations of themselves. They see their troubles as part of the human condition, rather than personal failings.

Different people have different definitions of what self-love means to them. Someone may define self-love as making sure that how they live their life promotes their overall well-being and that they continually do everything in their power to live their happiest life. Yet someone else may reframe any negative thinking they have about themselves into positive thoughts. No matter how you celebrate self-love, a common denominator is that self-love is about self-acceptance. It is accepting that you are enough as you are and not to let anyone undermine you. It also means having a high regard for your own happiness and well-being. Achieving full self-love can be a journey. Below are some tips to help you on that journey:

- . Stop comparing yourself to others.
- . Don't worry about others' opinions.
- . Allow yourself to make mistakes.
- . Remember your value doesn't lie in how your body looks.
- . Don't be afraid to let go of toxic people.
- . Process your fears.
- . Trust yourself to make good decisions for yourself.
- . Learn to say no.

How to find the strength to admit that I am emotionally struggling?



First of all, one must recognize that seeking help is a sign of strength. It takes a lot of courage to admit that one is emotionally struggling. There is still some stigma attached to mental health. Whether it is the way we were brought up or our own views on how to cope with difficult feelings, it can be very difficult to seek help.

We must remember that struggling emotionally is nothing to be ashamed of, it just means that we are human.

It can be hard to put into words how we are truly feeling.

Maybe you can't quite put your finger on it, but you're not feeling okay. You might be feeling tired more often, be feeling emotional, and you might not want to do the things that you usually enjoyed before.

Struggling to cope with everyday life doesn't look or feel the same in everyone. We can't generalise about how it will make you feel or act. However, you don't have to be suicidal to need help.

Signs to look out for:

- Feeling exhausted all the time.
- Finding it hard to think clearly.
- Finding it hard to concentrate.
- Feeling restless and agitated.
- Feeling tearful, wanting to cry all the time.
- Not wanting to talk to or be with people.
- Not wanting to do things you usually enjoy.
- Using alcohol or drugs to cope with feelings.
- Finding it hard to cope with everyday things and tasks.
- Experiencing 'burn out'.

If those signs last for weeks or months rather than a few days, then you need to reach out for help. Your GP will be able to find you the right emotional support. It can be daunting but most people find that it can make a big difference to their life. Talk to family and friends as well. Not opening up prevents us from processing our difficult feelings. There are also a lot of organisations offering practical and emotional advice and support (please refer to page 4).



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Chaplain's Corner
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Dear Lord,

*I never really valued myself.
More often than not my
insecurities remind me of my failure and
shortcomings.*

*I never really thought about accepting
myself
unconditionally.*

*Please help change my perspective
of myself.
Help me to love who you created me to
be.*

*If I can love and accept myself, I can be
more honest
with who I am and the choices I make.*

*If I love myself, I can love others.
If I can love myself, I will
better understand and grasp how my
family and friends love and see me.*

*Lord, please give me eyes to see who I am
and a
heart that loves unconditionally in Jesus
name.*

AMEN!



Staff Corner

Getting the work - life balance right

What can one do about it?

- **Setting your own goals:**

Start by setting smaller goals for changing your work pattern. Don't try to change everything at once. Some examples can be:

- setting a time to finish each day during the term; Set free time to rest properly on weekends and weeknights.
- sign up to a regular activity, such as a class or club. Connecting with yourself and your passions can help avoid burnout.
- set aside 15 minutes to meditate daily.
- take your entire lunch break.

- **Change your state of mind when you get home:**

- Take fresh air, exercise or enjoy a nice, hot bath. Try to leave behind the day at school. Can you physically separate your home life from your work life?

- **In the holidays:**

- Do not fill the holiday with work you have not been able to do during term time. Allow yourself time to rest properly and do not over schedule yourself so you feel overwhelmed.

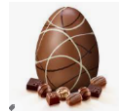
- **At work:**

- There will always be more to do than there is time to do it. Prioritise and talk to your line manager if you cannot physically do all that is being asked of you. They should be able to provide some support.
- Take your entire lunch break and limit checking emails.

- **Planning and paperwork:**

- It is important to build up a bank of readily accessible resources that will engage the students without too much reliance on your time and materials. Do not fall into over-planning lessons.

What to do in London during the Easter break



- **London Museums (most of them are free):**
 - The British Museum;
 - The Museum of London;
 - The London Dockland Museum;
 - The Natural History Museum;
 - The Science Museum;
 - The National Maritime Museum;
 - The V&A Museum of Childhood.
- **Southwark and Tower Hamlet libraries** are opened throughout the Easter break.
- **London parks:** every London park offers a place of tranquility and beauty.
- **Surrey Dock Farm:** a working city farm and charity, ideal for young children: Rotherhithe St, South Wharf, London SE16 5ET.
- **Mudchute Park & Farm:** Pier Street, Isle of Dogs, London E14 3HP. Set in 32 acres of countryside in the heart of East London, the Mudchute is a community charity, with a working farm, stables, and a wide range of educational activities. It is open every day, free of charge.

Events happening in April in London:

<https://www.visitlondon.com/things-to-do/whats-on/special-events/london-events-calendar#quicklink-1>

Mental Health Support for everyone



shout
85258 here for
you 24/7

Free 24/7 mental health text support

kooth
Kooth is a free online service
offering emotional
and mental health support
for children and young people
www.kooth.com

Free online Emotional
support for young people

Scared of your partner or ex?
Talk to us any time,
day or night.
Freephone 24 hour National
Domestic Abuse Helpline
Confidential,
non-judgmental support
Or reach us online:
www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk
Refuge
The National Domestic Abuse Helpline

You are not alone.
Thousands of parents contact us every year
and get the help they need.
T: 0808 802 5544
E: parents@youngminds.org.uk
W: youngminds.org.uk/parents
YOUNGMINDS
Parents Helpline
0808 802 5544
youngminds.org.uk
Mon-Fri 9.30am-4pm

Free parenting helpline: 0808 802 5544

ChildLine
0800 1111

LGBT
foundation
WE'RE HERE IF YOU NEED US
0345 3 30 30 30 lgbt.foundation

Qwell
COUNSELLING.COM

A free online counselling
support for over 25s

**Carers UK
Helpline**
advice@carersuk.org
0808 808 7777
Monday to Friday, 9am - 6pm

**Cruse
Bereavement
Care**
Somewhere to turn when someone dies

Samaritans
Hours: Available 24 hours.

116 123

THE NEST
Nurturing Healthy Minds
at Brandon Library

The Nest is a free & confidential mental wellbeing
service for young people aged 11-25
We are now running a weekly drop-in
Every Thursday 16.30 - 18.30
[email thenest@groundwork.org.uk](mailto:emailthenest@groundwork.org.uk) or drop in