

Our Well-Being Newsletter

Newsletter for pupils, parents & staff
Issue 16 – May 2022

St Michael's Catholic College, Llewellyn Street, London, SE16 4UN
02072376432 | contact@stmichaelscollege.org.uk
www.stmichaelscollege.org.uk



Welcome to our May Well-Being Newsletter!

Our Newsletter will this month focus on stress and anxiety. Most of us have had to deal with one or another, or both. Anxiety is a feeling of unease, worry or fear. Stress can be defined as a feeling of emotional or physical tension. It can come from any event or thought that makes us feel frustrated, angry, or nervous. Stress is our body's reaction to a challenge or a demand. Both feelings are common. It can become a mental health problem if our feelings are very strong or last a long time.

Our Parent's section will this month focus on our young people and technology. How to help our teenagers reduce their screen time without conflict, how not let technology reduce their sleep time and making sure that they use social media safely.

How to deal with anxiety



- try talking about your feelings to a friend, family member, health professional or counsellor;
- use calming breathing exercises:
<https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/guides-tools-and-activities/breathing-exercises-for-stress/>
- exercise – activities such as running, walking, swimming and yoga can help you relax;
- find out how to get to sleep if you are struggling to sleep:
<https://www.wvl.nhs.uk/media/.leaflets/61d8276e8d91a8.96413296.pdf>
- eat a healthy diet with regular meals to keep your energy levels stable;
- consider peer support, where people use their experiences to help each other. Find out more about peer support on the Mind website:
<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/drugs-and-treatments/peer-support/about-peer-support/>
- listen to free mental wellbeing audio guides:
<https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/guides-tools-and-activities/mental-wellbeing-audio-guides/>



Parents' Page

Teenagers and screen time



Ofcom in the UK, estimates that the average 3-4-year old spends three hours a day in front of a screen. This rises to four hours for ages 5-7, 4.5 hours by ages 8-11, and 6.5 hours for teenagers. The social isolation and distancing during the peak of Covid-19 resulted in a surge in screen time. The number of messages in the WhatsApp groups of children is now 5 times higher than it was pre-lockdown. The World Health Organisation (WHO) advises that screen time should be replaced with more time for interaction, physical activity and sleep. It is worth remembering that teenagers are still children and must be given rules, guidelines and boundaries by their parents/guardian. This goes for mobile phone usage as well as any other matter in the home. There are as many dangers online as there are outside the home, if not more.

The more time children spend in front of screens, the more inactive they are. Whether your teen has weight problem or not, physical activity helps children feel better, sleep better and learn better.

Some stress-free strategies to reduce your teen's screen time:

Watch your own screen habits. Although your teen may not seem to pay attention to anything you do or say, you are still their most important role model. Therefore you cannot tell them to cut back on screen time if you are yourself spending hours doing the same.

Remind teens to limit screen usage. It is important to let your teen know you are paying attention to how much time they spend on a screen. Our children were born digital, so it is up to us to remind them that there is an unplugged world out there.

Motivate your teen to exercise. Your teen will be more motivated to move if you let him choose the type of activities they want to participate in.

Encourage activities that involve socializing. Look for activities and clubs that engage your teen socially, so they will get out and be with other people. If you can't convince them to join you at social events, suggest activities related to their interests that involve other teens, such as school or church groups or volunteer work.

Create screen rules together. You will be more likely to get your teen to listen if you come up with screen-time rules as a family. Together you can write up a contract that outlines clear house rules with rewards and agreed upon punishments. Here are some suggestions for rules to implement together:

- Not to use their tablets during meals, either at home or a restaurant;
- No TV/mobile phone during meals;
- No TV/mobile phone until after homework and chores are done;
- The mobile phone gets turned off at a set time at night.
- No screen in your teen's bedroom.

Talk about it. Simply setting limits won't go over well with older teens, who need to have rules that make sense to them. Show them articles or books about the impact of using too much media so they understand that your rules are not unfounded – and that you have got their best interests and good health at heart.

Being safe online



- . Think before you post.
- . Don't upload, share videos or pictures that you do not want random people to see. People often screenshot or share tweets which get saved and shared around.
- . Do not share personal details: Keep private things such as your address, phone number, your full name and school you go to private.
- . Always check your social media privacy settings.
- . Be careful with scams or 'phishing' sites: 'Phishing' is when someone tries to trick you into telling them your password. Once these passwords fall into the wrong hands they can get into your personal details.
- . Knowing when to stop: Being constantly online does not provide true relaxation. Take a 5 minute break every 30 minutes. Too much blue light from the screens also affects our sleep.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>



Staff Corner

Tips to combat stress

Be active

Exercise won't make your stress disappear, but it will reduce some of the emotional intensity that you are feeling, clearing your thoughts and letting you deal with your problems more calmly.

Connect with people

A good support network of colleagues, friends and family can ease your work.

Have some 'me time'

Here in the UK, we work the longest hours in Europe, meaning we often don't spend enough time doing things we really enjoy. Set aside a couple of nights a week for some quality "me time" away from work.

Challenge yourself

Setting yourself goals and challenges, whether at work or outside, such as learning a new language or a new sport, helps build confidence. This will help you deal with stress.

Avoid unhealthy habits

Don't rely on alcohol, smoking and caffeine as your ways of coping.

In the long term, these crutches won't solve your problems. They'll just create new ones.

Help other people

Evidence shows that people who help others, through activities such as volunteering or community work, become more resilient.

Work smarter, not harder

Working smarter means prioritising your work, concentrating on the tasks that'll make a real difference. Leave the least important tasks to last. Accept that your in-tray will always be full. Don't expect it to be empty at the end of the day."

Get tips on how to manage your time better

Accept the things you can't change

Changing a difficult situation isn't always possible. Try to concentrate on the things you do have control over.



<https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/>

✝ Chaplain's Corner ✝

O Mary, Mother of God and our Mother, in this time of trial we turn to you. As our Mother, you love us and know us: no concern of our hearts is hidden from you. Mother of mercy, how often we have experienced your watchful care and your peaceful presence! You never cease to guide us to Jesus, the Prince of Peace.
Amen.

Mental Health Support for everyone



Free 24/7 mental health text support



Free online Emotional support for young people



Free parenting helpline: 0808 802 5544



A free online counselling support for over 25s



Samaritans
Hours: Available 24 hours.

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