

# GHPS Wellbeing Newsletter

Welcome to our third wellbeing newsletter for this lockdown. Below are ideas with helpful web links to support your child's wellbeing while they are at home.

## Children's Mental Health Week

This week is Children's Mental Health Week and the theme is 'Express Yourself'. The week is run by children's mental health charity Place2Be to focus on the importance of children and young people's mental health.

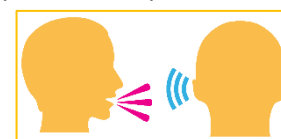


Expressing yourself is about finding ways to share feelings, thoughts, or ideas, through creativity. When children are able to find creative ways to share their feelings, thoughts or ideas it can help them feel good about themselves and who they are. Children can do this through art, music, writing and poetry, dance and drama, photography and film, and doing activities that they enjoy.

It is really important to remember that being able to express yourself is not about being the best at something or putting on a performance for others. It is about finding a way to show who you are, and how you see the world, that can help you feel good about yourself. Given that the past year will have left many of us feeling out of control and helpless, supporting children and young people to express themselves is arguably more important than ever.

Ways you can encourage your child to express themselves:

1. Could you build on existing interests or passions? Think about what has helped them get through the past year. A love of dancing? Baking? Drawing? Fashion? Encourage your child by noticing their unique interests and praising their efforts.
2. Trying new things can be a great way to find a new creative outlet. There are lots of online tutorials and video demos that you and your child could be inspired by... Could you try out something new together? Or perhaps ask someone you know to share their creative hobbies and give them a go.
3. Some children may not think of themselves as being creative. Try to focus on the importance of the process and the way it can make them feel, rather than the end result. Try not to judge their efforts and remember to give encouragement for trying rather than for doing something well.
4. Listening carefully can help children feel more comfortable and confident when expressing themselves. Try to minimise distractions and give your child your full attention when you're spending time together, being aware of your own body language and eye contact. You might want to try summarising what they've shared and acknowledging their feelings.
5. Children are expressing themselves all the time but not necessarily with words. 'Listen' to everything they are trying to tell you with their behaviour, or with their play and creativity or with their silence. It's all self-expression.



- Remember – you don't need a lot of expensive equipment to get creative at home. Recyclable materials or older items you no longer have a use for can provide amazing inspiration, and of course there's no limit to your imagination!

A variety of information and resources can be found on the link below to help and support your child with their mental wellbeing: [www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk](http://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk)

### Helping children cope with change

It is very likely during the ongoing changes we face, that children will need additional support to express and understand their own anxieties and feelings. How children



perceive the current changes to the lockdown will vary depending on their age and cognitive understanding, with one common factor, the feeling of confusion. These feelings of confusion may be very challenging, frustrating or frightening for them to grasp. These feelings can leave children feeling overwhelmed. It is important that we listen to and acknowledge their emotions, giving them the time and opportunity to talk about them.

As with any emotionally charged situation, children's feelings often emerge in physical or verbal (mis) behaviour. They are trying to convey something to us and we may need to take the time to understand what they are trying to say. During this time our reactions play a key factor, here are some helpful tips when responding to outbursts.

#### When we want to say

I've had enough of this...

Just calm down...

Stop shouting...

#### They may need to hear

I'm here for you, tell me...

Take a deep breath then tell me...

Let me help you... how can I help...

### Places to go for Support and Advice



This website from the NHS offers expert advice and practical tips to help you look after your child's mental health and wellbeing as well as the rest of the family. <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/>

## **Talking Therapies**

Talking Therapies is an NHS service providing support to the people of Berkshire including NHS staff and carers, experiencing distress at this unprecedented time. They are there to support those aged 17+ struggling with mild—moderate low mood, stress, sleep difficulties, worry and bereavement.

[www.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/our-services/mental-health-and-wellbeing/talking-therapies-berkshire](http://www.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/our-services/mental-health-and-wellbeing/talking-therapies-berkshire)



The NSPCC are offering support and advice if you feel your child is struggling with their mental health and anxiety due to the coronavirus. More information and advice can be found on their website:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/coronavirus-advice-support-children-families-parents>



Young Minds – <https://youngminds.org.uk/>

The BBC Newsround site has a comprehensive section on coronavirus with text and video guidance focusing on tips if a child is worried, how to wash your hands, and what self-isolation means:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/51204456>



Any of our families with autism may be interested to know that Autism Berkshire continues to offer services to families wherever possible. They are moving things online as well as keeping the helpline and contact email address live.

You can contact them by phone: 01189 594 594 or email [contact@autismberkshire.org.uk](mailto:contact@autismberkshire.org.uk)



**GEMS**  
Autism & ADHD Support Service  
East Berkshire

[www.gems4health.com](http://www.gems4health.com) - This service offers support to parents and carers of people up to the age of 25 who are either on the ASD diagnostic pathway awaiting assessment, or who already have a diagnosis in the Boroughs of Windsor and Maidenhead, Slough and Bracknell.

To find out more contact GEMS ADHD and Autism Support Service East Berkshire on 0800 999 1342 or email [gems.4health@nhs.net](mailto:gems.4health@nhs.net)

## **Communicate any concerns with school**

If you have any worries or concerns about your child's emotional behaviour or wellbeing, then please let school know. There will be things that we can do to help and support you.

We would love to know if this newsletter is useful to you or if there are other support ideas you might need. Please let us know by email to [ghpsoffice@maidenerleghtrust.org](mailto:ghpsoffice@maidenerleghtrust.org)



Keep safe and well,

**Mr Ferris, Mrs Watson and all at Great Hollands Primary School**