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13 May 2020

Dear Parents/Carers



Welcome to week 7 of our Wellbeing Wednesday updates. We hope you found Week 6 on the importance of communication helpful. Week 7 is focused on 'Take Notice' with an emphasis on noticing your own and others emotions and how to support each other.

This week's update contains the following:

1. Anxiety – what is it and what can we do to support each other?
2. Week 7 Quiz
3. This week's 'Challenge'
4. A new recipe to try
5. Useful websites and resources

Take Notice



From today we are able to spend more time outside exercising and some people able to now return to work. However, adults and children alike are still likely to experience different forms of anxiety either as a direct result of 'lockdown', fears around the unknown and anxiety around how to keep safe. Many of our children are experiencing very different days with structures and routines they are not used to.

What is anxiety?

Anxiety or feeling stressed out often happens before depression. It is defined by feelings of fear, unrest, agitation and insecurity. As anxiety increases so does the chance of depression. This is circular – as clinical depression increases the feelings of anxiety, which in turn shows itself more in a worrying, ruminative, obsessive state of mind.

Anxiety is the most common emotion we experience and the most common form of disorder in childhood and in adult years. At some stage in life everyone will feel anxious, most commonly when faced with difficult or new situations. This is perfectly normal. Everyone can relate to symptoms of anxiety or fear and experience symptoms such as breathing becoming shallow, sweating, heart beating faster, butterflies in their stomach and dry mouth. Anxiety only becomes a problem when it goes on for a long time and prevents the young person from enjoying their life.

Even before lockdown anxiety can be a serious problem for teenagers. Common features of anxiety include tension, worry, frustration, irritability, sadness and withdrawal. Young people do not often express their anxiety in a straightforward way often showing they are affected through passive or negative behaviours.



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How do I know if it's anxiety?

To simplify there are some key indicators of anxiety:

<p>Physical signs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heart racing • Breathing changes • Feeling sick • Shaky legs and body 	<p>Thoughts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racing thoughts, usually scary • Difficulty concentrating • Constantly predicting the worst • Overthinking
<p>Behaviours</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoidance of doing things that create anxiety • Agitation • Getting into arguments or fights more often • Checking behaviours 	<p>Emotion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling frightened and panicky • 'Short fuse' – getting irritable and angry easily • Tearful • Other people's emotions affecting you more easily

HOW TO LOOK AFTER YOUR MENTAL HEALTH DURING A TIME OF UNCERTAINTY

You're likely to be in a period where the amount of worry you experience is going to be higher. Anticipate this and be ready to find out how well you can tolerate this level of worry

@BELIEVEPHQ

1

Speak to friends or family and ask how they cope with uncertainty. Could you learn anything from them?

2

Think back to past experiences where you have coped well with uncertainty and pick out what really helped you feel better back then

3

Take each day one step at a time. Focus on the present moment. A routine can help give you some structure

4

In times like this, increase your focus on self care and kindness. Take time to slow down, to breathe, to connect and to relax

5

You're likely to be having lots more worry-type thoughts. Be ready not to react to them. Make a commitment to noticing them, rather than trying to respond to them

6

Rumination is a common factor during times of uncertainty - If your mind starts to wander, use your senses to refocus on what you are doing in the present moment

7

Write down a list of helpful facts that you want to stay focused on, so when your mind wanders, you come back to solid ground

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How to support each other:

Having a discussion with a family member or a tutor, learning the ways to manage the physical impact, thoughts and behaviours is helpful in bringing about change.

You could also help your child in the following ways:

1. **Talk to your child** about anxiety, what is happening in their body and why it happens. Many children and young people don't know what they are feeling when they are anxious, and it can be very frightening and overwhelming. They might even think they are very ill or that they are having a heart attack.
If they are feeling anxious about the coronavirus there are many social stories on our website which can help you explain what is going on <https://www.bradfieldsacademy.co.uk/page/?title=Support+for+Families+during+the+Coronavirus&pid=246>
2. **Help them to recognise anxious feelings** so they can tell when they are becoming anxious and can ask for help.
3. **Tell your child it will be okay**, and the anxiety will pass. It can be helpful to describe the anxiety as a wave to ride or surf that gets smaller after it peaks.
4. Get your child to **breathe deeply and slowly**, in through their nose for three counts and out through their mouth for three counts.
5. **Distract** them by focusing on something else.
6. **Give** them a cuddle or hold their hand if they will let you - touch can be soothing.
7. It can help to **talk to your child** about finding a safe place in their mind – somewhere that they feel relaxed and happy. It may be a grandparent's or friend's house or a holiday beside the sea which they can picture when 'wrong thoughts' come into their head or they are feeling anxious. Sometimes holding a memento, like a seashell or pebble, can help.
8. If your child is feeling the need to check things or repeat certain actions, **suggest they count** up to 10 before they start checking as a delaying tactic.
9. **Encourage** your child to notice what makes them anxious. Talking it through can help but your child could also try keeping a diary or a 'worry book'.
10. **Make** a 'worry box'. Your child can write or draw each worry down and post it in the box out of sight. Small children will enjoy decorating the box too. They can leave the worries in there for, say, a week to see if they were worth worrying about (if not they can be torn up). Alternatively, you could designate a specific 'worry time' for around 10 or 20 minutes, (but not too close to bedtime, or when the child is in bed), so worries can be saved up for that time. This gives the message that we are in control of their worries and not vice versa.



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- 11. Work on positive-thinking.** Name their worst case scenarios and think through together how to sort out the situation if it happens, e.g. 'I'm worried that we'll miss the bus.' 'What do you think we could do if that happens?' 'We could get the next bus'.
- 12. Help** them maintain a healthy lifestyle with regular exercise to reduce the levels of stress hormones, good sleeping habits, calm bedtime routines, limited screen or computer time in the evening, and a healthy diet.

HOW STUDENTS CAN LOOK AFTER THEMSELVES AND OTHERS DURING SELF ISOLATION

@BELIEVEPHQ

-  Stay in regular touch with friends through skype, facetime or google hangout. Staying connected can help reduce stress and anxiety
-  Make sure you engage in regular exercise. You can make this fun and do it online at the same time with friends or family
-  Don't be afraid to check in with your friends or family. Ask them how they are doing and see if you can help them in anyway
-  Challenge yourself each day to be curious about how well you can stay focused on the present moment
-  Reduce the amount of time you spend on social media and checking the news. Regular checking can increase worry
-  Schedule a time each day where you can sit down with your family and talk about what you are thinking and how you are feeling
-  Take care of your physical health. Maintain a good sleep routine and make sure to eat a well balanced diet
-  Slow down what you are doing and breathe. Deep breathing is a great way to calm your mind and body
-  If you are struggling do not be afraid to reach out for help. Speak to your friends, family or teachers and ask for support





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This week's Quiz:

Have some fun and try to answer these questions. We will send out the answers with next week's Wellbeing Wednesday update.

1. What are incisors, canines, molars and premolars all types of?
2. What sugary fluid do bees remove from flowers to help them make honey?
3. Which male Disney character is able to fly and refuses to grow up?
4. How many months of the year end with the letter Y?
5. Which continent appears first in the English dictionary?
6. What type of fruit is typically red or green, grows on a vine, and may or may not contain seeds?
7. What is the capital city of the Republic of Ireland?
8. Which of the following is not a Jessie J song: Domino, It's My Part, Wings?
9. In the Sing a Song of Sixpence nursery rhyme, how many blackbirds were baked in a pie?
10. Can you unscramble this word to reveal the name of a fizzy drink: DEMONALE

The answers to last week's quiz questions are below:

Quiz Week 6 answers:

1. The Hunchback of Notre Dame
2. A wind instrument formed of a long wooden tube that originally came from Australia
3. Pink
4. Vienna
5. Belle's father, Maurice
6. Bicycle (a 2 wheeled vehicle pulled by a human or bicycle)
7. MADAGASCAR
8. Green
9. True
10. William Shakespeare

How did you do?

CHALLENGE

Weekly Challenge



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Make your own information video for children and young people about any aspect of staying healthy. You can do this in any way, but here's a guide you may find helpful on how to do a Stop Motion Animation using a free mobile phone app.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j08dkbYMzWE>



Weekly Recipe to try at home:

STRAWBERRY MERINGUE NESTS

You will need:

Readymade meringue nests
Punnet of strawberries
Double cream
Flake to grate on top

METHOD:

1. Slice strawberries and place on meringue nests – the more the better
2. Whip the cream to soft peaks then dollop on top of the strawberries
3. Grate the flake over the top of the cream
4. Sit back and enjoy



Useful Contacts:

[YoungMinds Parents Helpline](#)

- Call us for free 0808 802 5544 (Mon-Fri 9:30 - 16:00).
- Available in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

No Panic

- Support for people struggling with panic attacks, OCD, phobias, and other related anxiety disorders.
- Also provides support for carers of sufferers.
- Helpline: 0844 967 4848 (Daily 10:00–22:00). Charges apply.
- Youth Helpline for 13-20 year olds: 0330 606 1174 (Mon-Fri 15:00–18:00). Charges apply.
- Having a panic attack? Crisis Number with recording of a breathing technique: 01952 680835 (24 hours)



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OCD Action

- The national charity that provides support and information to anybody affected by OCD.
- Helpline: 0845 390 6232 (Mon - Fri 09:30-17:00)
- Email: support@ocdaction.org.uk

Triumph over Phobia (TOP UK)

- The OCD and Phobia Charity runs a network of self-help therapy groups.

Anxiety UK

- Anxiety UK is a national charity with local services all over the UK. The website includes [resources for parents](#) concerned about their child's anxiety.

Royal College of Psychiatrists

- Anxiety Factsheet: [Worries and Anxieties, Helping Children to Cope: Information for Parents](#)

Try Clear Fear - Clear Fear is a free app to help children and young people manage the symptoms of anxiety. Developed for stem4 by Dr Nihara Krause, a Consultant Clinical Psychologist, together with ideas from young people, Clear Fear uses a Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) framework to help change anxious thoughts and emotions, alter anxious behaviours and calm fear responses.



The app also has helpful descriptions of the different ways in which anxiety shows, resources and a 'grit box' to boost resilience. It is recommended for the ages of 11-19 years but can be used by a younger group with the support of a parent/carer. Clear Fear compliments, but does not substitute for the assessment and ongoing support of a mental health professional. For further information on the app visit the [Clear Fear website](#). Available free on the [App Store](#) and [Google Play](#).

Hope you find this week's Wellbeing Wednesday helpful, we would be grateful for any feedback or pictures

Many thanks

Ms Sweetlove and Mrs Halton

