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Dear Parents/Carers



Welcome to week 9 of our Wellbeing Wednesday updates. We hope you found Week 8 on 'Kindness' interesting and that you managed to do a few acts of kindness for someone else.

This week's focus is 'Learn' as we explore how to improve the quality of our and our children's sleep. With the brighter mornings, lighter evenings and the stresses of lockdown it's not unusual for sleep to be

disturbed. A good night's sleep is so important to our wellbeing. This fact is likely not new information to you; we have long been aware of the connection between sleep and a decent quality of life. We know that a poor night's sleep can significantly impact your mood and functionality the following day,

This week's update contains the following:

1. Importance of Sleep & top tips.
2. Week 9 Quiz
3. This week's 'Challenge'
4. A new recipe to try
5. Useful websites and resources

Learn – Importance of sleep



Sleep is imperative for our minds and bodies to function. This is because just one bad night's sleep affects our mood, concentration and alertness whilst long-term sleep deprivation has far more serious consequences. Research also shows that people need 8 hours sleep, though this can vary individually.

The Conscious professional <https://www.theconsciousprofessional.com/wellbeing-sleep-well/> outlines the 7 key areas to consider when preparing for a good night sleep. These are summarised below:

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1. Consistency

Our bodies respond to regularity and routine very well. It is not easy to have identical routines every day as life often gets in the way. However, if we can find some consistency, this will help the quality of our sleep. Try and make sure that you go to bed and get up at around the same time every day, weekends included. This is especially important for children.

2. Declutter Your Room

Tidy your room! It really makes a huge difference when it comes to switching off and getting to sleep. It's all about atmosphere. A tidy room is a more relaxing and calming place than a messy one. Reducing clutter reduces the potential of you being distracted from sleeping. A tidy room ensures the minimum amount of sensory disruption.

3. Temperature

A comfortable temperature is important to an undisturbed night's sleep. In the summer you may want to switch from a duvet to a sheet, commandeer a fan or open a window. You will have your own preferences, but studies suggest that somewhere between 18° and 24° is the optimum temperature range. Be cautious about putting a fan in a child's bedroom and make sure any open windows have child safety fitted or are high enough that children cannot reach/fall out.

4. A Quality Bed

Yes, replacing your mattress or pillows is a bit of an overhaul, but it may be the one key to fixing any sleeping issue you might be having. The most important thing is that the surfaces you are sleeping on are supportive. The average life expectancy of a mattress is around 10 years, pillows should be good for around 5. If you have surpassed either of these it might be time to invest in some updates!

5. Pre-Sleep Routine

Your habits just before bed are just as important to the quality of your sleep. The big one is screens! Your brain needs to wind down before bed to avoid your thoughts taking over when trying to get your head down. The light that emits from the screens of our devices and T.Vs is extremely activating to the brain. Instead, engage in calming activities, such as reading, colouring or even a short meditation. Ensure children do not charge their phones in their bedrooms as often these will disturb their sleep during the night. Encourage children to 'switch' off before bed and do some calming activities so that they are more ready for sleep.



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6. No Naps

Napping during the day can be so tempting and is often quite beneficial in the short term. However, it is detrimental to your overall sleeping pattern. Naps take away from your tiredness at bedtime, which can lead to frustration when trying to sleep, leading to your brain waking up, leading to more lost sleep time, and so on! A great alternative to napping is, in fact, engaging in physical activity. This gets your body and brain pumping blood around the system again. This could be anything from doing the washing up to going out for a walk or run.

7. Food and Drink

Eating well is central to our general wellbeing. But you might want to consider whether how and when you are eating is affecting your sleep patterns. The most common mistake is eating too close to bed time. A burst of energy is the last thing you need before going to bed; the effect will be especially detrimental if you are indulging in excess caffeine or sugar. Try to stop eating at least three hours before bed.

8. Use Up Your Energy

A tired body is a body that will sleep. Those that exercise regularly tend to get better sleep as they regularly use up all of their physical energy during the day. This does not necessarily mean that you need to start running marathons on a daily basis, but you should take a look at how active your life is. The change you need might be as simple as going for a daily 30min walk!



Other simple sleep tips:

- Have a bath before bed. It lowers your temperature and this aids better sleep
- Read, or listen to audios or podcasts or the radio. Think about the content of this to ensure it does not raise your heart beat or cause distressing emotions
- Try where possible to get into a regular pattern of sleep as the body finds this easier e.g. a bedtime of 11pm-7am most nights for adults.
- Do not get fixated with having to sleep as this can cause stress. When in bed think about doing the following 3 things; Relaxing, Rejuvenating and Recharging
- If you wake up and cannot get back to sleep for 20 minutes, get up and do something soothing like reading a book



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- Before bed ensure you have written down on paper all tasks or things to do or issues. Research shows that people who do this fall asleep much faster.
- Use hypnotherapeutic audios or meditations when in bed or practice meditation/mindfulness to calm your mind
- Cut back on alcohol, stimulants like caffeine and cheese
- Play soothing, relaxing music or an audio story book on a tape or CD that shuts off automatically after a set period of time.
- Have a glass of (warm) milk before bedtime to make you feel drowsy.
- Take a warm bath or shower before going to bed.
- Place a drop of lavender oil on your pillow.
- Drink a cup of herbal chamomile tea before going to bed.

Other helpful resources



The **Mental Health Foundation** have produced a Sleep Guide which can be downloaded here:

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/how-sleep-better>

We highly recommend reading **The National Autistic Society** – Sleep and Autism page which gives a range of strategies to support you in creating a sensory friendly environment to help young people with autism to sleep better

<https://www.autism.org.uk/about/health/sleep.aspx>



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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. How many milk teeth are there in a full set?
2. Who became the 44th President of America in 2009?
3. Who sings the following songs: Shape of You, Castle on the Hill, and Perfect?
4. Which country is Athens the capital of?
5. In which city would you find the Statue of Liberty?
6. What is $8 + 42 + 30$?
7. Which word is the odd one out and why: Sheepdog, Spaniel, Siamese?
8. True or false: the River Nile runs through Africa?
9. What is Tracy Beaker's real name?
10. What colour are Mickey Mouse's shorts?

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

Quiz Week 8 answers:

1. Caesar
2. Despicable Me 2
3. True
4. A train
5. Stars and stripes
6. Indian
7. Elsa
8. Silver birch
9. Before midday
10. Black



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CHALLENGE

Weekly Challenge

Make yourself a bottle rocket

Follow this YouTube video to make yourself a bottle rocket – Warning, this could get messy!!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VEOB64o04qU>

Weekly Recipe to try at home:



Lotus Biscoff Cheesecake

Ingredients:

For the base

250 g Lotus Biscoff biscuits
100 g unsalted butter, melted, plus extra to grease

For the filling

500 g cream cheese
100 g icing sugar
300 ml double cream
1 tsp. vanilla extract
100 g smooth Lotus Biscoff spread

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For the topping

50 g smooth Lotus Biscoff spread

50 g biscoff biscuits

Directions:

1. Lightly grease the base and sides of a 20.5cm (8in) round springform tin. Unclip the tin to remove the base, then take a 30.5cm (12in) sheet of baking parchment and lay it over the base of the tin. Carefully clip the paper-covered base back into the tin so the paper is tightly stretched over the base and any overhang is pulled underneath the join, then line sides of tin with another piece of baking parchment.
2. Make the base. Whiz the biscuits in a food processor until finely ground. Drizzle in the melted butter and pulse until combined. Tip the biscuit mixture into the base of the prepared tin. Press and smooth down with the back of a spoon. Put into fridge to chill.
3. Make the filling. Using a hand-held electric whisk, beat together the cream cheese and icing sugar until smooth, then beat in the double cream and vanilla until the mixture is thick and holds its shape. Spoon half the cream cheese mixture into the tin, spread roughly to level, then dollop over teaspoonful of the Biscoff spread. Tip the remaining cream cheese mixture over the top and spread to cover completely and make a smooth, even layer. Chill in the fridge for at least 6hr or overnight.
4. When ready to serve, make the topping. Put the Biscoff spread in a small heatproof bowl and sit over a small pan of simmering water (alternatively microwave for 30sec bursts). Stir frequently until smooth and runny, then remove from the heat and keep warm. Roughly crush the biscuits using the end of a rolling pin.
5. Remove cheesecake from tin and transfer on to a serving plate or cake stand. Peel off parchment paper around sides. Drizzle half the melted spread over the top of the cheesecake, then scatter the biscuits on top. Drizzle over the remaining spread. Serve in slices.



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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.

[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.

Young Mind - Support for sleep problems:

https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/feelings-and-symptoms/sleep-problems/?gclid=EALalQobChMlgYOD59jT6QIVQe7tCh1-zg5IEAAYBCAAEgJjr_D_BwE

Great App for calming techniques and stories: <https://www.calm.com/>

We 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

