

# SECKFORD EDUCATION TRUST WELLBEING FOCUS

*Inspiration for staff, students families and carers to look  
after our mental health and wellbeing*

# THE SECKFORD EDUCATION TRUST VISION FOR MENTALLY HEALTHY SCHOOLS

The Seckford Education Trust culture and ethos supports the development of healthy minds and emotional wellbeing.

Our schools and communities are proactive in promoting and raising awareness of mental health and in reducing the stigma sometimes associated with it.

Our schools and families work in partnership to support our students to develop the necessary tools, beliefs and mindsets to overcome any challenges they encounter through life's adventures, to engage them with positivity and optimism and embrace opportunity. Our schools are happy, healthy places where children and staff feel safe, have the resilience to deal with setbacks and can access timely and effective support when needed.

## 10 IDEAS TO 'PAY IT FORWARD'

**Make someone an unexpected cup of tea.**

Find opportunities to give praise and compliments. It will make someone's day!

**Try to make sure every person in a group conversation feels included.**

When queuing in a shop, let someone go in front of you who only has a few items.

Set an alarm on your phone twice a day. In those moments do something kind for someone else.

Donate old towels/ blankets to an animal shelter.

**Return a shopping trolley for someone at the supermarket.**

Send a positive text message to someone.

Write a positive review or comment on a blog, website or social media page.

**Help a neighbour to carry their shopping.**

# gratitude

## PRACTICE BEING GRATEFUL

*Developing an 'attitude of gratitude' is one of the simplest ways to improve your satisfaction with life.*

Gratitude is simply taking time to think about all the positive things in your life, rather than focusing on the negatives. It is a thankful attitude or appreciation for the goodness in your life.



Research shows gratitude is the single most powerful method of increasing happiness. Having an 'attitude of gratitude' helps you feel more positive emotions, relish good experiences, improve your health, deal with adversity, and build strong relationships. Other known benefits are feeling more alive, sleeping better and an ability to express more compassion and kindness.

Gratitude opens the door to more relationships. Showing appreciation can help you win new friends. Thanking a new acquaintance makes them more likely to seek an ongoing relationship. So whether you thank a stranger for holding the door or send a thank-you note to that colleague who helped you

with a project, acknowledging other people's contributions can lead to new opportunities.

Simple things such as keeping a gratitude journal can significantly increase our sense of wellbeing. Short daily reflections will really help you notice the good things in your life.

Another activity could be to create a 'Gratitude Jar'. Write on post-its all the things you have to be grateful for and pick one out each day. Alternatively, build up the jar by adding in something to be grateful for each day and read them then the jar is full.

You could also write a letter of gratitude to someone who has had an impact on you who you have never properly thanked.



Why not think of the ways you can show your appreciation today?

**GRATITUDE WALL:** *a great way to remind us to be grateful each day*



A gratitude wall can be made from a noticeboard or chalkboard. Featuring what we are grateful for serves as a great way to remind us of the positive elements in our lives.

Family, friends, pets, sunny days, bank holidays, anything that makes you feel thankful can be included.

*Why not try making a gratitude wall today!*

# HELPING YOUR CHILD BEAT EXAM STRESS



Young people can find entering a period of examinations a challenging time, but there are ways in which you can support them to ease this stress.

The following links are valuable sources of information for both students and parents/ carers on practical strategies for coping with exam stress, revision tips, looking after your mental health during exams and dealing with disappointment.

[NHS Help your child beat exam stress](#)

[Young Minds Exam Stress](#)

## ONLINE MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

Natasha Devon, MBE, is a writer and activist. She tours schools, colleges, universities and events throughout the world, delivering talks as well as conducting research on mental health, body image, gender and social equality. You can click [here](#) for Natasha's website which has free resources on areas such as:

- Study motivation for Teens
- The Simple Trick to Help You Stay Motivated
- How to Get Results Day Ready
- The Irony & Illusion of Perfectionism
- The Teenage Brain
- Making Social Media Work for Your Mental Health



## 5 INSTANT WELLBEING TIPS

Learn something new. Learning provides you with an escape when you need it, knowledge when you seek it, and a satisfying pastime.

Bring a mindful attitude to your daily life. It improves physical health, relieves stress and improves sleep.

Move more and enjoy the outdoors. Being active and outdoors in nature will improve your mood, reduce stress and help you to relax.

Eliminate negative self-talk. Don't put yourself down. Create positive new messages to yourself instead. Change your mindset, change your life - tell yourself you can and you will!

Practice being grateful. Having an 'attitude of gratitude' is one of the simplest ways to improve your satisfaction with life.



# RESOURCES TO SUPPORT CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

During a young person's childhood they may encounter a range of challenges and difficulties that could affect their mental health or wellbeing.

Here are some ideas of resources to support a wide range of issues.

## **BEREAVEMENT**

You might find Amanda Seyderhelm's practical book on supporting children through grief and change helpful.



[Childhood bereavement network UK](#)  
[Support for Families and Carers](#)

[My Name is Zac: This is My Story by Wilcox, Emily \(9781906759117\) | BrownBfS](#)

This comic style booklet for young people aged 13+ tells a story of a young boy's experience of bereavement.



## **OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE DISORDER**

[Parent's Guide to OCD](#)



## **SLEEP DIFFICULTIES**

Good sleep is fundamental to good mental and physical health and making small changes to sleep can often make a big difference to how we feel and our ability to cope with things.

[The Sleep Foundation](#) has good advice and ideas including summer sleep routines for kids.

## **GAMING ADDICTION**

[The Parent Zone](#) has resources about digital life and gaming.

## **EATING DISORDERS**

[Beat - The UK's Eating Disorder Charity](#)

[Eating Disorders in Young People - A Parent's Guide](#)

[Boy Anorexia - an informative website about anorexia in boys](#)

## **SELF HARM**

[Self Harm UK Project](#) dedicated to supporting young people impacted by self-harm

[Parents Guide to Support - Self-Harm](#)

[Calm Harm App: Home Award-winning app designed to help young people resist the urge to self-harm](#)

## **DOMESTIC ABUSE**

The NSPCC has excellent resources, support and helplines.

[How to Protect Children From Domestic Abuse](#)

[Supporting Your Child - Domestic Violence \(youngminds.org.uk\)](#)

### **The Rainbow Journal:**

A self-help resource with artwork, quotes and poems by young people who self-harm, the Rainbow Journal contains useful tips to gain insight and awareness, and it helps young people move from self-harm to self-care.

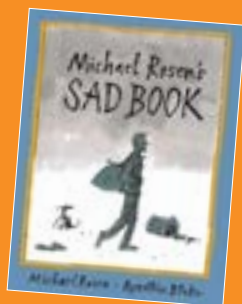


The Journal is now available as a [free download](#).

# FEELING SAD OR DEPRESSED

[Michael Rosen's Sad Book](#)  
by [Michael Rosen](#)

A touching book about what it's like to be deeply sad.



[MoodKit | CBT App](#)

Approved by NHS Choices and winner of Healthline's best apps for Depression.



[Positive Penguins | Challenge Your Thinking](#)

Designed for 8 - 12 year olds, four positive penguins take the children on a journey to help them understand their feelings and challenge negative thinking.



## ELIMINATING NEGATIVE SELF-TALK

Don't put yourself down.  
Create positive new messages for yourself instead.

Negative self-talk is something that most of us experience from time to time, and it comes in many forms.

Negative self-talk is any inner dialogue you have with yourself that may be limiting your ability to believe in yourself and your own abilities and to reach your potential. There are many ways to reduce the negative self-talk in your daily life. Learn to notice when you're being self-critical so you can begin to try and re-frame these thoughts. For example, notice when you say things to yourself that you wouldn't say to a good friend or child.

Sometimes, looking at things in the long term can help you to realise that you may be placing too great an emphasis on something. For example, ask yourself if something you're upset by will really matter next month?

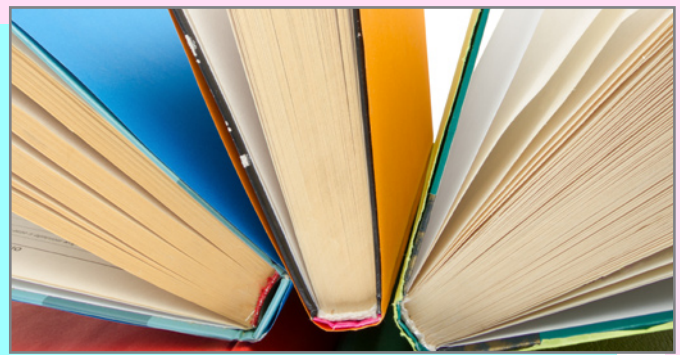
One of the best routes to combating negative self-talk is to re-frame it to something with a more positive feel. Take the negative thought and change it to something that's encouraging and accurate. For example, rather than thinking 'I can't do this' try re-framing the thought to 'I can't do this YET - I just need more practice'.



# LEARN SOMETHING NEW

Learning has been shown to help improve and maintain our wellbeing. It can boost self-confidence and self-esteem, help build a sense of purpose and foster connections with others. Being active and outdoors in nature will improve your mood, reduce stress and help you to relax. Learning provides you with an escape when you need it, knowledge when you seek it and a satisfying pastime. People engaged in learning report feeling better about themselves and a greater ability to cope with stress, as well as feeling more self-confidence, hope and purpose. Some scientists think that setting goals and working towards them plays an important role in the way learning influences wellbeing.

Setting targets and hitting them can create positive feelings of accomplishment and achievement and can also be motivating to do more. Classes and formal courses are great ways to learn new things, but there are lots of other ways to keep learning. You might:



- Learn to cook a new dish from a recipe.
- Visit a gallery or museum and learn about something that interests you.
- Take on a new responsibility at work, such as learning to use an IT system.
- Subscribe to a research or literary journal.
- Fix a broken bike, garden gate or bigger DIY project. YouTube is great for this.
- Sign up for a course at a local community centre. You can learn a new art or crafting skill or try something practical such as gardening or plumbing.
- Rediscover an old hobby that challenges you.

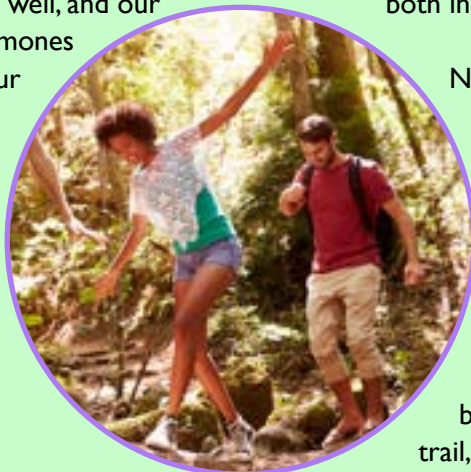
Learning provides you with an escape when you need it, knowledge when you seek it and a satisfying pastime.

# MOVE MORE AND ENJOY THE OUTDOORS

Being active and outdoors in nature will help improve your mood, reduce stress and help you relax.

There are numerous mental health benefits related to movement. Whilst we all know that exercise is good for us, it can be viewed as a chore: however, the truth is that whatever our job, or lifestyle: there is always an opportunity to move our body. When we do move our body, energy flows through it, our bodily systems are activated, which makes us function well, and our brain generates various happy hormones that make us feel good. Moving your body can:

- improve your mood reduce feelings of stress or anger
- help you take time out and feel more relaxed
- improve your physical health
- improve your confidence and self-esteem
- help you be more active
- help you make new connections
- increase resilience and concentration



As well as exercise, spending time outside in the fresh air, green space or nature can benefit both your mental and physical wellbeing. Every June the 'Gardening and Wellbeing Therapy Organisation' hosts 'National Growing for Wellbeing Week'. You can sign up for a free resources pack [here](#) which contains things you can do both in the classroom and in the garden.

Nature can be forests, beaches and rivers and parks and gardens, but it can also be window boxes, listening to birdsong or even house plants. All can positively affect our mental health and wellbeing.

Combining movement with nature is even more powerful - a walk on a beach or run through a park or forest trail, for example. Exercising in green spaces for as little as 5 minutes has been found to improve mood and self-esteem.



# BRING A MINDFUL ATTITUDE TO YOUR EVERY DAY LIFE

*Mindfulness is the practise of purposely focusing your attention on the present moment—and accepting it without judgement. Mindfulness is now being examined scientifically and has been found to be a key element in stress reduction, self-compassion, empathy and overall happiness.*

There is more than one way to practise mindfulness, but the goal of any mindfulness technique is to achieve a state of alertness, focused relaxation by deliberately paying attention to thoughts and sensations without judgement. This allows the mind to refocus on the present moment.

All mindfulness techniques are a form of meditation. Mindfulness improves wellbeing. Being mindful makes it easier to appreciate the pleasures in life as they occur, helps you become fully engaged in activities, and creates a greater capacity to deal with adverse events. By focusing on the here and now, many people who practise mindfulness find that they are less likely to get caught up in worries about the future or regrets over the past, are less preoccupied with concerns about success and self-esteem, and are better able to form deep connections with others.

Mindfulness improves physical health. It can help relieve stress, lower blood pressure, reduce chronic pain, and improve sleep.

Mindfulness also improves mental health. In recent years, psychotherapists have turned to mindfulness meditation as an important element in the treatment of a number of problems, including: depression, substance abuse, eating disorders, couples' conflicts, anxiety disorders, and obsessive-compulsive disorder.



**Mindfulness improves physical health. It can help relieve stress, lower blood pressure, reduce chronic pain and improve sleep**

If mindfulness meditation appeals to you, going to a class or listening to meditations online can be a good way to start. You don't have to engage in formal mindful meditations however to bring a mindful attitude to your daily life.

A less formal approach to mindfulness can also help you to stay in the present and fully participate in your life. You can choose any task or moment to practice informal mindfulness.

For example, when brushing your teeth, focus on your breathing and feel your feet grounded on the floor. You could also try mindful walking. Whilst taking a walk, really tune into the sounds around you, near and far. Try to experience the textures of the different sounds around you. You might also notice other sensations of walking, or the elements.

You could also experiment with some mindful eating - don't multi-task, but really focus on the sensations of eating with all of your senses.

Lastly, take the time to notice the small moments of joy - a colleague's thanks, your child's hug. Pause for a moment rather than moving on to the next thing immediately. You will start to notice more of these daily, joyful moments.

Why not start today?



# **QUICK LINKS**

## **RESOURCES FOR PARENTS**

### **BITESIZE SECONDARY PARENTS SURVIVAL GUIDE**

BBC Bitesize has released [videos](#) for parents with advice and tips from adolescent psychologists on supporting the mental health of secondary school children which may be useful to signpost to. There are episodes on coping with uncertainty, handling lockdown emotions, limiting screen time, sleep and more.

### **PARTNERSHIP FOR CHILDREN - COVID19: CHILDREN'S WELLBEING ACTIVITIES FOR TEACHERS AND FAMILIES**

Partnership for Children has a range of free resources to boost children's wellbeing and help them find healthy ways to understand their feelings during the Covid-19 pandemic. All activities take around ten minutes and cover the themes of feelings, staying connected, dealing with change, dealing with worries and relaxing. Example activities include a feelings diary, coping toolbox, relaxation activities set, transition circles, ways to feel better idea sheet, and much more. To access all activities for free, click [here](#)

### **THRIVE PARENTS TOOLKIT**

Thrive have produced a Parents' Toolkit available [here](#)

### **USEFUL ORGANISATIONS FOR PARENTS**

A comprehensive list of organisations for signposting to parents can be found [here](#)

### **YOUNG MINDS: PARENTS SECTION**

The Young Minds website has an online section for parents [here](#)

Parents Helpline: 0808 802 5544 (Monday to Friday 9.30am – 4pm, free for mobiles and landlines)

### **PRACTISING MINDFULNESS**

If you wish to practise mindfulness with your child, then try these resources:

[Smiling Minds App](#) and [5-Minute Mindfulness Series](#)



# HELPLINES AND WEBSITES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

| ORGANISATION  | CONTACT INFORMATION   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Shout</b><br/>Free, confidential support via text, available 24/7</p>   | <p>Text SHOUT to 85258 in the UK to text with a trained crisis volunteer who will provide active listening and collaborative problem-solving</p>        |
| <p><b>The Mix</b><br/>Free, confidential telephone helpline and online service that aims to find young people the best help, whatever the problem</p> | <p>Call free on 0808 808 4994, 11am to 11pm daily or access the online community at <a href="http://www.themix.org.uk">www.themix.org.uk</a></p>        |
| <p><b>ChildLine</b><br/>Confidential telephone counselling service for any child with a problem</p>   | <p>Call free anytime on 0800 1111<br/>Chat online with a counsellor between 9am and midnight daily. You can also check out the message boards.</p>      |
| <p><b>Children's Society</b><br/>Information and support on different aspects of mental health and wellbeing</p>                                      | <p><a href="http://www.childrensociety.org.uk/coronavirusinformation-and-support">www.childrensociety.org.uk/coronavirusinformation-and-support</a></p> |

## Domestic Violence

| ORGANISATION  | CONTACT INFORMATION   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>NSPCC</b><br/>Child protection charity</p>                  | <p>Adults concerned about the welfare or safety of a child can call the 24 hour helpline on 0808 800 500<br/>Children can call the ChildLine 24 hour helpline on 0800 1111<br/><a href="http://www.nspcc.org.uk">www.nspcc.org.uk</a></p> |
| <p><b>Refuge</b><br/>Advice on dealing with domestic violence</p> | <p>24 hour helpline 0808 2000 247<br/><a href="http://www.refuge.org.uk">www.refuge.org.uk</a></p>  |

# GETTING HELP WITH MENTAL HEALTH

*It's OK not to be OK - we all need someone to talk to sometimes. If you feel overwhelmed, at risk of abuse or you are experiencing financial need, there are people you can call on for support.*

| ORGANISATION  | CONTACT INFORMATION  |
|---|--|
| <b>Mental Health Foundation</b><br>Provides information and support for anyone with mental health problems of learning disabilities | <a href="http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk">www.mentalhealth.org.uk</a>   |
| <b>Mind</b><br>A mental health charity  | 0300 123 3393 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 6pm)<br><a href="http://www.mind.org.uk">www.mind.org.uk</a>   |
| <b>PAPYRUS</b><br>Youth suicide prevention society  | 0800 068 4141 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 10pm; open weekends and bank holidays 2pm to 10pm)<br><a href="http://www.papyrus.org.uk">www.papyrus.org.uk</a> |
| <b>Samaritans</b><br>Confidential support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair                                   | Free, 24 hour helpline 116 123<br><a href="http://www.samaritans.org.uk">www.samaritans.org.uk</a>   |
| <b>SANE</b><br>Emotional support, information and guidance for people affected by mental illness, their families and carers         | <a href="http://www.sane.org.uk/support">www.sane.org.uk/support</a>   |
| <b>Young Minds</b><br>A charity dedicated to children's mental health   | Parents' / carers' helpline 0808 802 5544 available Monday to Friday, 9:30am to 4pm  |
| <b>Cruse Bereavement Care</b><br>Support for grief and bereavement  | Phoneline 0808 808 1677 open Monday to Friday, 9:30am to 5pm<br><a href="http://www.cruse.org.uk">www.cruse.org.uk</a>                                   |
| <b>The Cameron Grant Memorial Trust</b><br>Supports mental health in young people   | <a href="http://www.camgrant.org.uk">www.camgrant.org.uk</a>   |

