

Pastoral Newsletter Spring Term 2021

Welcome to our first Pastoral news, where we will share with you information which hopefully you will find interesting, and perhaps pick up some tips along the way that may help you at home.

Maintaining good Mental Health is just as important as having a healthy body. It affects the way children think, feel and act. As a parent, you play a vital role in promoting your child's mental health and recognising when there may be early signs of difficulties.

But how can you promote good mental health?

Put simply, you can do this by:

- being aware of the things you say and how you speak to your child.
- clear and positive actions.
- through the environment you create at home.

So, here are 10 top tips on practical ways you can positively promote your child's mental health:

1

Connect with your child every day

Try to have make time every day for an activity where you can connect with your child without distractions that enables comfortable conversation. We all lead busy lives but doing an activity like this together will offer your child the opportunity for them to feel secure and express how they are doing / feeling.



2

Have quiet time together

This is a great way to connect with your child and takes no planning! Uninterrupted quiet time provides an ideal environment for your child to focus and build their attention span. When things are overwhelming, quiet time can help your child reset their thoughts and avoid behaviour escalation to meltdowns.



3

Praise your child when they do well

Recognise their efforts as well as achievements- praise the small steps. For example, say your child has difficulty sitting quietly and calmly at the dinner table. Although desired, it would be unrealistic to initially expect them to do this for half an hour. So small steps might be praising that they achieved 5 -10 minutes. At the next meal this could be built on by reminding them of their previous achievement and setting a new goal of 15 minutes.



4

Foster your child's self-esteem

Self-esteem is how they feel about themselves, both inside and out. Children with good self-esteem generally have a positive outlook, accept themselves and feel confident. Fostering self-esteem includes showing love and acceptance, asking questions about their activities / interests and helping them to set realistic goals.



5

Actively listen to your child

That's really listening to what they are saying and how they are feeling. Often the way children feel may seem unrealistic or disproportionate to adults but remember, children do not have the wisdom of experience and they may need help and direction to make sense of situations and feelings. Try to answer your child's questions and reassure them in an age-appropriate manner. Whilst you may not be able to answer all their questions, talking things through can help them feel calmer.

Being A Good Listener



6

Wherever possible stick to commitments and routines

Following through on commitments and routines builds trust and continuity, important relationship factors. Try to keep to as many regular routines as possible to help your child feel safe and secure. This includes having regular times for going to bed, waking up, eating meals and doing activities /hobbies.



7

Keep your promises

Should the need to break a commitment or routine occur make sure there is a valid reason and take the time to explain why to your child. Remember success comes from keeping your promises to your child.



8

Find opportunities to play together

Play is a fantastic way for children to learn new things and develop problem solving skills. It also offers great opportunities for them to learn how to express their feelings.



9

Be a positive role model

Look after your own mental health and wellbeing. Children are intuitive and will readily pick up on feelings such as stress, anxiety, hopelessness and fear.



10

Help your child to develop a language of feelings

Teaching children about feelings can be hard as it is an abstract concept but if they can understand and express their emotions, they will be less likely to 'act out.' For example, you can discuss how characters in a book are feeling and the reasons why they may be feeling that way.



We hope you find these tips helpful. It is important to recognise and accept that sometimes your child may not feel comfortable talking to you. As a parent this is a tough one, rather than feel resentful or unhappy, you can take positive action and help them find someone they feel comfortable talking to e.g., another positive adult role model. Above all else, if you have any concerns, no matter how minor, or are at all worried about your child's behaviour, mental health or wellbeing please contact your GP. In the first instance, they may offer a face-to-face appointment or speak on the phone. GPs are experienced professionals trained to help and you should not worry about wasting their time.

Meet our Safeguarding Team



Mrs M Bostock
Deputy Headteacher
Designated Safeguarding Lead
LACE



Mrs L Williams
Headteacher
Deputy Safeguarding Lead



Mrs R Whitehouse
Parent Liaison Officer
Deputy Safeguarding Lead



Mrs A Humphreys
Assistant Headteacher/SENCO
Deputy Safeguarding Lead