

The Mental Health Support Team

Covid-19 Newsletter
May 2020

Welcome to our fourth newsletter! During the lockdown and disruption to schools we wanted to share some resources (see hyperlinks) that parents and carers can do at home when looking after their young people to support their wellbeing.

We are still open for referrals for 1:1 support via phone/video call. Please make a referral via our website. Referrals can come from teachers, other professionals, parents/carers or young people themselves.

We would love your feedback. Please follow this link to answer questions on what we are sending.
<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/RVW5K5S>

A lot of the activities and ideas we suggest are based around the **5 Ways to Wellbeing**: <https://>

We have a few podcasts linked to Self-care and the 5 Ways to Wellbeing. They can be found here:

[5 Ways:](#)

[100 self care activities](#)

[What do the MHST do for self](#)

Mindfulness! *Being present & engaging fully in each moment.*

A Gratitude Journal!

Studies show that intentionally recognizing people and experiences that they are thankful for—on a daily or weekly basis—increases mental wellbeing and positive feelings.



A gratitude journal or list is a great activity to do before bedtime, to encourage children to notice more each day and to be mindful of all the things they can be thankful for. It can be a list of 10 things they appreciated and enjoyed that day, e.g. 'I am grateful for the colorful flowers I saw on our walk today'. Try this [31 day gratitude journal](#), or get creative and make your own!



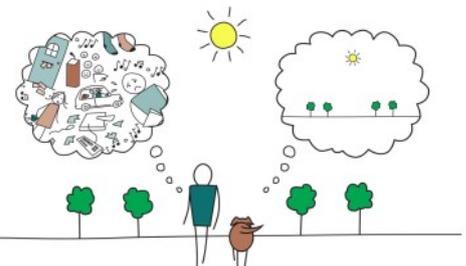
[9 Gratitude Activities for Children](#)

Self-Soothe Box

A self-soothe box is a fantastic way to manage worries. It can help you to feel more grounded and relaxed in times of stress. [Young Minds](#) talk through how to make a self-soothe box and what is helpful to include, such as stress balls, photographs and scents.

Videos & Resources

- ⇒ 3 Minute [Body Scan](#)
- ⇒ Guided [Muscle Relaxation](#)
- ⇒ Gratitude and Kindness [4 Bedtime Meditations](#)
- ⇒ Mindfulness is [Being Alive and Knowing It](#)



Mind Full, or Mindful?

You can find a [mindful colouring sheet](#) at the end of the newsletter.



Mindfulness

The Mental Health Support Team

Covid-19 Newsletter
May 2020

Creative!

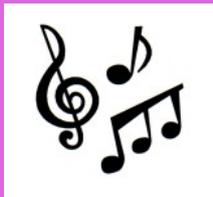
Affirmation Stones

Colorful **affirmation stones** are a fun and simple creative activity, whilst also encouraging children to notice and appreciate their positive qualities— great for building confidence and self esteem! Stones can also be painted with kind messages for others, with many villages and towns leaving them around for people to look at!



We have made a [page of positive affirmations](#) which you can find at the end of the newsletter!

Make a Rainstick Instrument!



Follow the [instructions here](#) to make a rainstick using simple home materials. This is a great project and the final product makes a lovely relaxing rain sound!

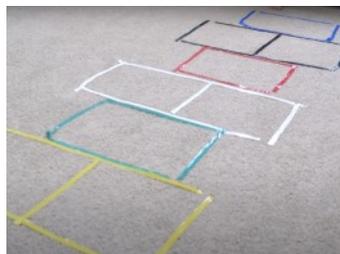


Active!

Exercise is amazing for mental health as it releases chemical endorphins in the brain which are known to improve our mood.

Create Fun Games & Pathways!

Painters tape comes in great colours and doesn't stain or mark surfaces. Create pathways to jump, hop, and crawl along; mazes; hopscotch; stepping stones leading from the kitchen to other rooms or the garden! You can even make [giant mazes](#) and [hopscotches!](#)



Workout Videos

⇒ [Yoga for Children with Animals](#)

⇒ [Family Fun Cardio Workout](#)

be Active!

Try out a ['30 Day Family Fitness Challenge'](#) to get everyone involved! Or create your own by designing a 30-day calendar with a different active activity each day!



Yoga Pose



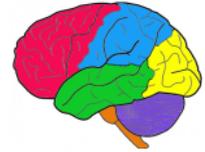
Great for balance, posture and concentration!

Stand up straight. As you breathe out, slowly raise your foot. Bend your knee & place your foot on the inside part of your other leg. Inhale & reach out like branches on a tree with your arms & hands. Exhale, bringing your hands together in front of you. Hold the pose and gaze ahead.

The Mental Health Support Team

Covid-19 Newsletter
May 2020

Science!



Optical Illusions!

An optical illusion is caused by how our visual system is set up, characterized by seeing & perceiving something that differs from reality. These are fun games and it's super interesting to learn why we experience these illusions the way we do!



[8 Optical Illusions Explained!](#) [Create your own Optical Illusions!](#)

[An Illusion made from Cakes!](#)



[Optics 4 Kids!](#) - Classic optical illusions and activities such as making a homemade rainbow or Kaleidoscope!

Fun & Games!

Balloon Pop!

A fun and simple game using balloons and string!

Each player has 1 balloon. Using a piece of string, tie the balloon to the foot of each player, keeping the string length short. Participants must try to pop the other persons balloons without getting their balloon popped! The last person left with a balloon is the winner!



Ring Toss: *Materials:* Paper Plates, Cardboard tubes, Paint, Glue & any decorations!

Leave 3 paper plates & paint the rest of the plates, making sure each one is a different colour. Decorate them as you like and then cut out the centre of each so it is a ring.

For the cardboard targets you can use paper towel tubes or empty wrapping paper/tin foil roll. Cut this down to 3 parts. You can make it more challenging by making the tubes into different heights! To finish, take the three paper plates you saved at the beginning and glue each of the cardboard tubes onto them to create your targets, then you are ready to go!

Outside Links

Parent Survey from Oxford University: *Are you a parent of a child or young person in year 0 (reception/foundation) to year 11?* If so please take part in <http://cospaceoxford.com/survey>

Childline: under 19s can call **0800 1111** for free, confidential support

Emerging Minds: <https://bit.ly/EMAnxiety>

BBC Bitesize [Parent Toolkit for Wellbeing](#)

[Self Care](#) Ideas for Children

Supporting Parents who are Worried About Their Children's Well-being during Lockdown [Booklet](#)—Guidance for discussing worries, wellbeing tips etc

CAMHS Oxfordshire: <https://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/camhs/oxon/>





Positive AFFIRMATIONS



Positive affirmations are statements that are repeated to encourage and uplift the person speaking them. Studies show that using positive affirmations can improve confidence, [combat stress](#) and [boost your overall health](#). Give them a go by repeating them to yourself when you're feeling worried or low, when you need a confidence boost, or even in the morning after brushing your teeth!

I am a good friend

I am grateful for what I have

I am loved by myself and others

I am creative

My body can do many things

I can make a difference in the world

I am proud of myself

I take the time to help others

All problems have solutions

I see the good in myself and others

I can do difficult things

I am learning to resolve conflict

It's ok to make mistakes

I enjoy doing....

Mistakes help me learn

I am good at.....

I don't compare myself to others

I am working on....

I believe in myself

I see challenges as opportunities

I talk about my feelings

I am unique

I am kind & thoughtful

I have the courage to be myself

I try and maintain a positive attitude

I play well with others

Trying my best is enough

I respect all people and our differences

I am going at my own speed

I appreciate that things take time

Trying my best is enough

I strive for progress, not perfection

I become more confident when I challenge myself

I enjoy learning & helping others learn

I accept who I am and love it—strengths & weaknesses

I accept people have different opinions

I know how to calm down when angry or overwhelmed

I have good intentions

