

Health & Wellbeing Bulletin Autumn 2023

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Welcome to the Autumn issue of your Mental Health & Wellbeing bulletin

As we make our way through the Autumn term after a long summer break, it is important to take care of ourselves and those around us. This term can often feel a little different as we may have said goodbye in July to some staff who have been with us for many years. But from that, we welcome wonderful new staff, along with new pupils and families and we must embrace and celebrate our fabulous schools and everything that you do to support that. The clocks go back every year and those first few days when the sun sets before 5pm will always come as a shock. Late autumn has well and truly arrived, and brought with it all the pouring rain and wind you'd expect from this time of year.

But hey, Christmas will soon be here, and who doesn't love that!

Take Care everyone and look after each other – Sue

Alcohol and mental health are closely linked. Drinking too much can affect your well-being.

People drink for many reasons: to celebrate, socialise, commiserate or drown our sorrows. We may drink to try and change our mood: to feel more relaxed, courageous or confident. However, the effect of alcohol is only temporary. As it wears off, we often feel worse because of how alcohol withdrawal affects our brain and body.

You may feel like alcohol is your coping mechanism: a way to deal with depression, stress, anxiety or other difficult feelings. But relying on alcohol to manage your mental well-being can become a problem in itself. There's no shame in asking for help and exploring what a new relationship with alcohol could look like.

Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) with Education Support

We have a new provider this year to give us this confidential employee benefit. Education Support are the only UK charity dedicated to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of teachers and education staff in schools, so they are experts in this field. They have a range of counselling options including telephone, online or face-to-face sessions, and a mindfulness module.

This is a benefit the Trust had no hesitation in providing for our staff to help you deal with personal and professional problems that could be affecting your home life or work life, health, and general wellbeing.

Confidential help 24/7, 365 days a year **08000 856 148**

online resources:

educationsupport.org.uk/online-support



Useful Apps for a Healthy Lifestyle



Fabulous – Daily Habit Tracker for Healthy Routines



Eat Five – How to Hit Your Healthy Target

BACK
TO
BASICS

Tools and Knowledge to get Healthy

How are diet and mental health linked?

The relationship between our diet and our mental health is complex. Eating well can help you feel better. You don't have to make big changes to your diet, but see if you can try some of these tips.

- **Eat regularly**
- **Stay hydrated**
- **Eat the right balance of fats.** Your brain needs healthy fats to keep working well
- **Include more whole grains, fruits and vegetables** in your diet
- **Include some protein** with every meal
- Look after your **gut health**
- Be **aware of how caffeine** can affect your mood. It can cause sleep problems, especially if you drink it close to bedtime

November

The international men's health movement, Movember, are working towards a world where men take action to be mentally well, and are supported by those around them. It's a sign of strength and courage to seek help for mental health, so I wanted to share some steps men can take to empower themselves and learn healthy coping mechanisms for the challenges they face in day-to-day life.

- The best place to start is by developing your self-awareness. Being able to recognise your own thoughts, feelings and behaviours and acknowledging how they affect you and others around you, allows you to better manage them.
- Building a strong support network is crucial for your mental wellbeing, so reach out and connect with family members, friends, colleagues, or other trusted people. Sharing your thoughts and feelings with someone you trust will offer you a different perspective on the challenges you're facing.
- Set realistic goals and celebrate your accomplishments no matter how small they may seem. Break down tasks into smaller, manageable steps as achieving those goals can boost your sense of purpose and self-esteem.
- Be compassionate to yourself. It's common for men to place high expectations on themselves, which can increase stress and lead to self-criticism.
- Seek professional help. It's perfectly ok to require more help than just self-care. If your mental health is having an impact on your everyday life and is not getting better, it's a good idea to make an appointment with a professional via our Employee Assistance Programme.

Visit the [Movember](#) website to access helpful resources and more information on men's mental health and other health issues affecting men.

Menopause

Why should we be talking Menopause? The Facts:

1. Later retirement

The global workforce is becoming older, with a higher number of those directly experiencing symptoms in employment. This means more individuals than ever before are going through menopause at work

2. Attached stigma

91% of responses in a recent survey by Talking Menopause suggested little or no acknowledgement of menopause in their organisations – this needs to change

3. Lack of knowledge

Employers are responsible for the health, diversity and inclusion of all employees. Menopause affects everyone, but few understand it and know how to discuss or support it especially at work

4. Negative impact

81% of menopausal employees suggested that menopause had a moderate to extremely high impact on their performance at work

5. Attendance

Approximately **14 million workdays** are lost in the UK annually due to menopausal symptoms

Recipe idea for you

Chicken and Tarragon pasta – Speedy midweek supper treat (serves 3)

Ingredients

250g dried pasta, such as tagliatelle
2 tbsp olive oil
2 skinless boneless chicken breasts
2 garlic cloves, chopped
142ml carton single cream
3-4 tbsp roughly chopped fresh tarragon
100g spinach leaves, remove thick stems
Lemon wedges, to serve

Method

1. Cook the pasta in boiling water for 8-10mins or according to packet instructions, until just tender
2. Meanwhile, heat oil and fry chopped chicken over a high heat for 4-5mins stirring, until golden and cooked
3. Add the garlic, cream, tarragon and 3 tbsp of the pasta water. Gently heat through
4. When pasta is cooked, stir in spinach and then drain well, toss into the creamy chicken. Season with salt & pepper and serve with crusty bread and a lemon wedge

Best Jokes for Kids to Use in the Classroom

Q: What did the left eye say to the right eye?

A: Something between us smells!

Q: How does the ocean say hello?

A: It waves!

Q: Why won't the elephant use the computer?

A: He's afraid of the mouse.

Q: Who's the king of the classroom?

A: The ruler.

Q: Why didn't the skeleton go to the school dance?

A: Because he had nobody to go with.

Inspiring Quote

"If you see someone without a smile, give them one of yours" – Dolly Parton