

Health & Wellbeing Bulletin

Autumn 2024

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

As the leaves transform and the air turns crisp, you may notice a shift in your mood. The change in daylight and the attraction of cosy indoor spaces can mean a departure from your summer routine. For many of us, it can pose a challenge when it comes to maintaining our overall sense of well-being.

Autumn is renowned for its breathtaking colours and while cooler temperatures make getting outside less enticing, taking a stroll in this wonderful season can serve as a way to enhance your mood and reduce stress.

As always the start to the Autumn term is a busy one in our schools, welcoming new pupils and staff, so every little bit of 'you time' can help to get you through the coming months.

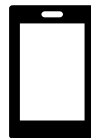
Take care of yourselves and those around you – Sue

Owning a Pet can change your life

Caring for a pet can help our mental health in many ways, including:

- increasing your physical activity. Dog owners are likely to take their pets for a walk or run every day. This can be a fun way to fit exercise into your routine
- providing companionship. Pets can give you a sense of security and someone to share the day with. Caring for them can help you feel wanted and needed. This can be especially valuable for older people or those who live alone
- reducing anxiety. The companionship of a pet can help to ease your anxiety
- boosting self-confidence. Pets can be great listeners, offer unconditional love and won't criticise you. This can help your self-confidence, especially if you feel isolated or misunderstood
- helping you meet new people. Dog owners often stop and chat with each other on walks. But other pets can be a way to meet people too: in pet shops, training classes or online groups, for example
- adding structure to your day. Feeding, exercising and caring for a pet can help you keep to a daily routine, which can help you feel more grounded and focused. It can give your day purpose and a sense of achievement.

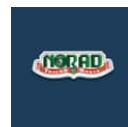
A pet can be a great source of comfort and motivation. In many ways, pets can help us to live mentally healthier lives.



Best Apps for Christmas



Heads Up



NORAD tracks Santa



Kitchen Stories – Recipes

6 Steps for the whole family to be healthy

- Identify free times for activity
- Plan a weekly menu and prep your meals
- Simplify your family's schedule by prioritizing and see what you can do without
- Take bay steps, not giant leaps, you don't have to do everything at once
- Ask everyone in the family to do their part
- Live by example and model the behaviour you want for your children

Ways to manage your mental health this autumn

Pick out the best bits. Although there may be parts about the upcoming months that you don't enjoy, there may also be things you're excited for, such as bonfire night or Halloween or simply being able to wear cosy socks and woolly jumpers.

Back to basics. The summer months can be a hectic time with travelling, increased responsibilities (like childcare), and a packed calendar of social events. The autumn time can be a perfect opportunity to wind down and focus on the basics including sleep, food and exercise. You may have more time on your hands which you can use whichever way benefits you. Whether it's cooking a recipe or getting back into a book series you like.

Introduce new hobbies or activities. We might not be able to do all of the same things that we enjoyed in the summer, but why not use the autumn as an opportunity to source new interests. This could be something that's indoor based, such as knitting, jigsaw puzzles, arts and crafts or writing. Or you could research local clubs or classes that take place in the evenings, which could be a great way to get of the house and make use of the longer and dark evenings, whilst connecting with other people.

Exercise. We may feel less inclined to want to get out and be active when it's colder outside, but exercise in any form can help boost our mood and give us more energy. It's easy to feel lethargic when we spend excess time inside, so whether it's a brisk lunchtime walk or joining your local gym, there are ways to keep us moving and energised, whatever the weather.

Set up a routine. If you find you're spending more time indoors or at home, it's possible that we can fall out of routine and feel unproductive. Try to stick to a routine to continue the rituals or activities you may have enjoyed in the summer that are still possible, such as morning walks or seeing friends or family on a set day. This helps us to maintain a sense of familiarity, keeping us active and improving focus too. If you're someone who works from home, you might also find that your routine needs to be amended as we enter darker mornings and darker afternoons. Perhaps you might want to start work later or amend your hours to ensure you have a chance to get out in the daylight and go for a walk around lunchtime.

Stay connected to others. We may feel that we're seeing less of our friends and family when the days are shorter. That's why keeping in touch with loved ones is important. You don't have to just stay indoors to socialise either – there are a whole host of outdoors events to attend during autumn time, such as local craft fairs and fireworks displays.

Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) with Education Support

Don't forget our confidential employee benefit designed to help you deal with personal and professional problems that could be affecting your home life or work life, health, and general wellbeing. 08000 856 148

Recipe idea for you

Italian Stuffed Chicken – A quick and easy supper dish after a busy day at work

Ingredients

2 tbsp chopped olives or sundried tomatoes
1 garlic glove
½ tsp fried mixed herbs
200g tub full-fat soft cheese
4 boneless skinless chicken breasts
4 ripe tomatoes
Olive oil for drizzling

Method

1. Heat oven to 220C/fan 200C.gas 7
2. Beat the olives or sundried tomatoes, garlic and almost all the herbs into the cheese and season
3. Cut a slit along the side of each chicken, then use your knife to open it out into a pocket
4. Stuff each breast with a quarter of the cheese mix, then press to close and lift onto a greased baking tray
5. Season the top of the chicken and overlap tomato slices across the top of each piece of chicken
6. Scatter the remaining herbs and drizzle with oil
7. Roast for 20mins until the chicken is golden around the edges and tomatoes look shriveled
8. Serve with a salad and crusty bread



Things you didn't know about Autumn.....

Autumn equinox is different each year

Autumn was once called Harvest

The term 'Fall' isn't exclusive to America

Global warming may affect your Autumn selfies

Autumn can affect your health
Bobbing for apples is a British invention

Autumn is the season of love

Inspiring Quote

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world" - Nelson Mandela