

Parent and Carer Information Sheet

The Impacts of the Pandemic on Our Mental Health and Wellbeing

We all have times during our lives when our mental health and wellbeing is stronger than others. This is normal and perfectly OK. However, major life events can put a greater strain on our mental health and wellbeing than normal. It is important we recognise this and take some time to understand our thoughts, feelings and behaviours.

The COVID-19 pandemic means we all have an awful lot to process; our lives have changed unrecognisably in a very short space of time. The shock of the situation, grief for what life used to be like, anxiety of how we are going to cope, missing people we care about and not knowing how long it will all go on for, can all take their toll on our mental health and wellbeing.

How Can We Look After Our Mental Health and Wellbeing in Times of Stress and Uncertainty?

1. Be as kind to yourself as you can. Eat well, sleep well, drink enough water and spend some time outdoors each day.
2. Take a little time each day to just be still and process the thoughts and feelings you have and the situation you find yourself in. This could be while you have lunch or a coffee break or you may decide to try meditation, yoga, journaling or another form of relaxation exercise.
3. Talk to family and friends about how you are feeling. If there is no one you feel comfortable talking to, there are many organisations you could contact online or by telephone and text.
4. Try and focus on what you can control, even if that is just making sure the laundry is done and the dried clothes are folded and put away.
5. Limit the time you spend time reading or listening to the news.
6. Be mindful of how much time you are spending on social media – sometimes an overload of information and other people's opinions can just be too much.
7. Recognise the positives and small achievements in each day.
8. Don't put too much pressure on yourself to juggle everything all of the time – parent, carer, teacher, employee. Do what you can, when you can and if it all goes wrong one day, let it go and try again the next day. You have tried your best.
9. Use this time to think about how you would like your life to look once it is all over; what do you want to achieve or prioritise? Focus on the positives that could come out of this situation.

It's OK not to be OK. There are things we can do to feel better and people who can help, we are not alone.