

July 2020

Children and Young People's Newsletter



Brent, Wandsworth and Westminster

Welcome to our newsletter. This year we are all facing many difficult changes which can impact on how we feel. We are here to support you through this so check out what we have for you in this newsletter:



We are dedicating this Newsletter to diversity. In our service, we are treating everyone equally. We celebrate all differences and have an open culture which respects individual uniqueness. We continuously educate ourselves around these issues to have a better understanding of the needs of the young people and families that we support.

We stand against racism with all who are oppressed and we are aware of the impact that the discrimination has on mental health. If you are a young person who is experiencing difficult feelings due to racism this article can help you to understand what you can do and where to get further support:

<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/looking-after-yourself/racism-and-mental-health/>. You can also go to <https://www.blackmindsmatteruk.com/our-mission> who are providing free therapy sessions to those affected by racism. Finally, for those who would like to find out more you can visit this website and watch some educational videos at the bottom of this page: <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/crime-law/racism-racial-bullying/>. We also recommend some TED talks which discuss a variety of topics around racism: https://www.ted.com/playlists/250/talks_to_help_you_understand_r

Black lives matter



June was a PRIDE month which means we celebrated our diversities and how far the LGBT+ movement has come. There are still some events in July which you and your friends and family can join: <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/pride-webinar-series-a-history-of-pride-tickets-106011681794?aff=ebdssbonlinesearch> , <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-pride-in-practice-training-academy-tickets-106083029196?aff=ebdssbonlinesearch> .

We also wanted to acknowledge that being a young person and learning about your identity and sexuality can be a difficult and confusing time. If you ever feel like you struggle to speak to your friends or family about it and would like to speak to someone who will understand what you're going through, you can contact one of the helplines listed on this website: <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/lgbtiqplus-mental-health/useful-contacts/>.

Remember that no one should ever feel bad for being who they are. We are all different and that's what makes us special. If you are experiencing difficult feelings and want to talk about it visit this website to find further support: <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/for-children-and-young-people/finding-support/>. Additionally you can go to www.kooth.com/ where you can access free counselling sessions. If talking to people you know becomes difficult you can also go to www.ellefriends.org.uk/ where you can chat to others about how you feel anonymously. And don't forget, our service still accepts referrals so if you are experiencing low mood or anxiety, you can speak to your head of year from your school about referring to us. Our Infoline is also open for families and young people who would like to find more support in the area. Call on 07435 929882, from Monday to Friday, 9 am – 5 pm.

Mental Health Support Team

How to manage transition back to school

Prepare yourself

Knowing that the virus is still around and facing constant changes can increase our anxiety. Following the guidelines and being prepared will decrease the chances of getting the virus and might help your anxious thoughts too. Having your face mask on public transport is a must and the use of antibacterial gel as well as washing your hands often are the main protective measures. For further guidance visit trustworthy sources such as www.gov.uk and www.nhs.uk.

Manage your anxiety

Going back to school can be stressful due to many reasons and this can result in heightened anxiety. When you know what to do if that happens you can stay more in control of your worries. Think about who you can talk to when you are worried, maybe a teacher or a friend. It is also worth to remind yourself that you're not the only one feeling this way as many of us feel anxious during stressful times. You can also try some of the techniques listed below:

Breathe

Learning how to slow our breathing down can be a really helpful way of calming down and reducing feelings of general anxiety and stress. Put one hand on your chest and one hand on your stomach
Breathe in slowly for 4 seconds
Hold for 2 seconds
Breathe out slowly for 6 seconds
Repeat a few times.

Imagine your safe space

Finding safe place in your mind - somewhere that you feel relaxed and happy, can help you to relieve stress. It may be a grandparent's or friend's house or a holiday beside the sea which you can picture when 'difficult thoughts' come into your head or you are feeling anxious. Use all your senses to imagine your safe place: taste, smell, sight, touch and hearing. Stay in this place for a few minutes and notice how this feels.

Ground yourself

Helping to find ways to focus on the here and now when you are feeling anxious and lost in your worries can be really helpful, so you can try the 54321 technique to bring your mind back to the present moment:

Describe/name 5 things you can see
Describe/name 4 things you can touch
Describe/name 3 things you can hear
Describe/name 2 things you can smell
Describe/name 1 thing you can taste

Test your worries

Test your worries by asking yourself questions which would help you to eliminate negative thinking:

- Am I confusing a thought with a fact?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of thinking this way?
- Am I jumping to conclusions?
- Am I overestimating the chances of the worst case scenario?
- What would I say to my friend if they were in this situation?

OPPORTUNITY

Our service thrives to support everyone best we can but in order for us to do that we need your help. We are currently organising our forums which are a fantastic opportunity for both young people and parents to get involved:



Parent's Forum is a place where your voice will be heard. If you as a parent or a guardian or your child had an experience of working with our team we would love to hear from you. If you are happy to share your views about children and young people's mental health services this forum is a great opportunity for you to get involved. To get more information and to join please email: abogdanowicz@bwwmind.org.uk



The Children and Young People's Forum aims to give young people voice for a positive future. This is a unique opportunity for you to help us improve the experiences of young people in Westminster. We would like to hear your own views and experiences about mental health services in your community and how we can make them better and more accessible. To get more information or to join please email: kbentivoglio@bwwmind.org.uk

Mental Health Support Team