



Headteacher's Message

Dear Parent/Carer,

Balancing winter, lockdown, home learning and family commitments has been a tremendous challenge for us all since 2021 began. It is almost impossible to not have had an emotional wobble of some sort during these last five weeks; coming immediately after increasingly tougher restrictions and the disappointment of not spending time over the Christmas period with family and friends.

Thankfully, we are all becoming much more aware of the importance of looking after our mental health so we can build our resilience to help us through such tough times. This week is Children's Mental Health Week, with websites etc. publishing supportive information and guidance on how to keep ourselves and our children mentally healthy.

Last Wednesday, we posted a link to a Free Certificated Course designed for parent/carers with a child in primary school; <https://www.creativeeducation.co.uk/courses/you-can-support-your-worried-child/lessons/introduction-160/>. We have had excellent feedback from parents who have tried it.

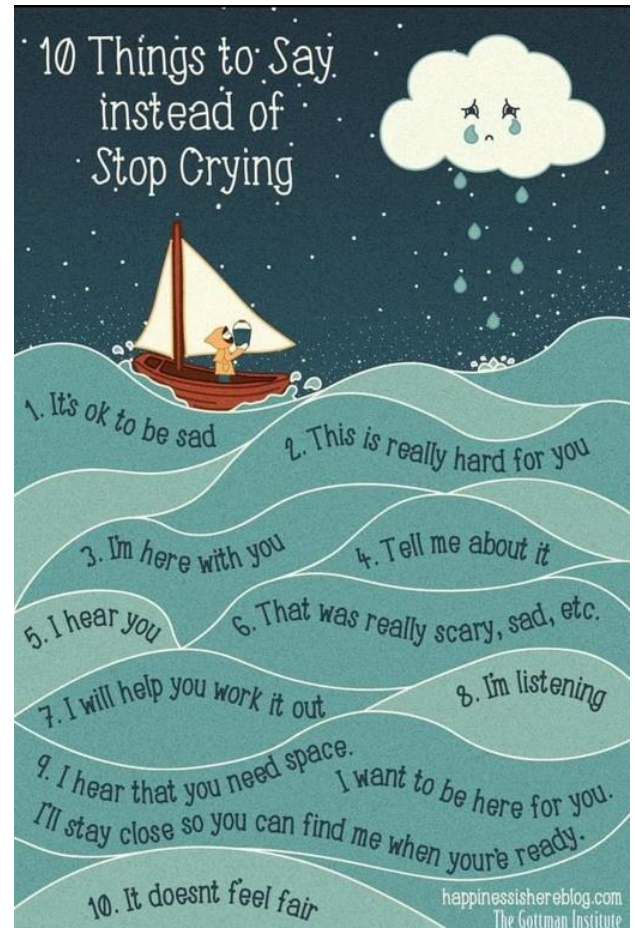
One said, "This has made me feel a lot more positive about how I am getting through the day." Another parent commented, "It has provided me with the clarity that what I am doing is the right thing."

The course is still available until Sunday the 7th February, and it is designed to help us support our children in communicating about mental health as they miss socialising with friends and wider family, and grapple with remote learning through a computer.

I have included a poster that I find useful to help open up communication with a pupil who is upset, or indeed, with my own son. Sometimes when we are stressed or tired (which is increasing with the many demands mentioned at the beginning of this letter), we snap and say something that stops our children telling what is really upsetting them. The comments in the, 10 Things to Say Instead of Stop Crying poster, helps confrontation from developing and allows our children to explore how they are feeling.

Finally, it is vital that we adults look after our physical and mental health to allow us to support and nurture our children. I wish you all good mental health and a happy weekend.

Best wishes,
Selina Frazer,
Headteacher.



Communication

We continue to use our ParentHub and/or Twitter feed <https://twitter.com/Huntershallps> to communicate messages during the time that the school is closed to most pupils in order to provide childcare to critical workers' children. Home Learning activities, which are updated weekly, can be located here: <http://www.huntershallprimary.org.uk/home-learning/489.html>

Remember that each year group has an email address:

Reception@hunters-hall.bardaglea.org.uk
Yone@hunters-hall.bardaglea.org.uk
Ytwo@hunters-hall.bardaglea.org.uk
Ythree@hunters-hall.bardaglea.org.uk
Yfour@hunters-hall.bardaglea.org.uk
Yfive@hunters-hall.bardaglea.org.uk
Ysix@hunters-hall.bardaglea.org.uk

You can send questions or work to the relevant year group. (Responses will be given during working hours Monday to Friday)

Work should be submitted daily to the relevant year group email. Where applicable, feedback will be provided to the children.

Please send any Covid related queries to: covid@hunters-hall.bardaglea.org.uk

A parent's guide to creative expression of emotion at home



Often, when a big feeling happens for children and young people, it pops up with no warning. These helpful tips on how to use arts and creativity alongside your children and young people at home will help you find ways to safely express and manage emotions, create 'feel good' brain chemicals, help reduce stressful feelings and develop thinking skills.

These activities are designed for you to do together. This is important as it helps build a strong, supportive relationship, enabling you to explore emotion and develop a shared language for communicating feelings.

Many favourite memories relate to one or more of our senses. For example, during a walk through the woods, the smell of a campfire might stimulate your brain to bring back a memory of a similar time, maybe a cub camp or toasting marshmallows on the fire, in turn this could make you smile or have a warm feeling. All of the activities below will engage different senses and help to develop expressive, emotional language during the activity.

Activities

Key phrases to try out during the activities are: "Show me", "I'm curious about...", "Let's try it together"

Sensory words to try:

bright, shiny, dim, sparkly, scary, crunchy, squelchy, hard, soft, cold, warm, slimy, mushy, rough, scaly, sour, sweet, bitter, spicy, fruity. Feel free to add your own words to this list.

Sensory exploration

From birth through childhood and beyond, sensory exploration helps to make sense of the world around us by using our senses of tasting, smelling, seeing, touching and hearing. Engaging our senses will help us to learn and retain information well, it is crucial for brain development.

Activities to try: Baking using store cupboard ingredients, kneading bread dough, making a calm bottle, creating a sensory garden/tub, for older children and young people they enjoy making slime, creating new culinary dishes or natural fruity facemasks to invigorate the senses.

Music and movement

Helps to increase body awareness, spatial awareness and co-ordination. This allows children freedom to communicate all sorts of emotions without judgment or expectation. Music can offer us the opportunity to experience loudness, quietness, energy, calm and everything in between.

Activities to try: Dance, percussion, creating playlists linked to a feeling, rough and tumble play, tai chi, yoga, silly walks, silly faces, follow my leader. Music is one of the most fundamental ways we can express emotion, older children and young people could be supported to compile playlists to reflect a range of feelings and emotions. Music has a fundamental impact on the reward pathways of the brain and can trigger "feel happy" chemicals which can help to calm and regulate.

Animals and nature

Nature exists as a free, magical and endless source of calming and soothing. Within nature and in our homes, animals offer an instant source of joy, unconditional love and increase our levels of oxytocin, the love hormone.

Activities to try: Spending time looking, listening, foraging, smelling and touching the things that nature offers us. Just remember to wash hands, remove your rubbish and forage safely. Try sand play, mud play, water play, mini beasts, hugging/stroking pets, cloud watching, star gazing, rain drop races, dancing in the rain, running along a beach, walking through the woods. For teenagers, they enjoy seeking out risk taking behaviour and trying new things. The outdoors is great way to enable teens to take calculated risks and push their boundaries to the limits. Fishing, hiking, rock climbing are some great ways to support them in this way.

Drawing and painting

Getting messy is a great way to engage the senses and helps children to create shapes and images for fun and to explore emotion.

Activities to try: Painting rocks, mandala colouring, painting an image to show a feeling, hand or foot painting, landscapes, self portraits.

Our adolescents too need to have a creative outlet to explore emotions. Journaling is an excellent way to allow them to express emotions through drawing, scribbling or even painting.

Story telling, writing and drama

Using a puppet to tell a story or act out an event that has happened will help with sequencing, order sorting and problem solving.

Activities to try: Puppet theatre, comfy corner for reading together, writing stories together, telling funny stories.

Make and model

Encouraging children to make something out of nothing will help them to explore sensation, switch on their imagination and feel pride in what they have created.

Activities to try: Junk modelling, play dough, clay, shaving foam shapes.

"It is in playing and only in playing that the individual child or adult is able to be creative and to use the whole personality, and it is only in being creative that the individual discovers the self."

Donald Woods Winnicott

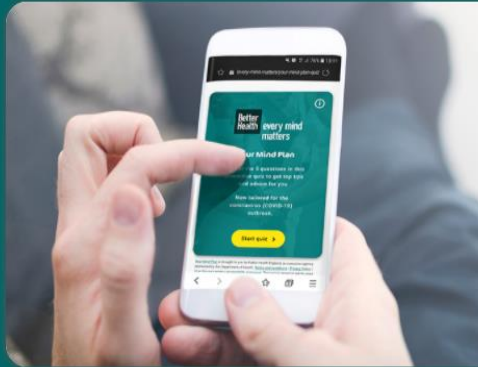
Every Mind Matters

The impact and experience of the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak has been different for everyone, as has how we have reacted, but there's no doubt it's been a really difficult time for us all.

That's why it's so important to do what we can to look after our mental health and wellbeing – now more than ever – and to reach out if you need support.

Having good mental health helps us relax more, achieve more and enjoy our lives more. The NHS website <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters> has expert advice and practical tips to help you look after your mental health and wellbeing.

Do something now...



Get Your Mind Plan

Answer 5 quick questions to get your free plan with tips to help you deal with stress and anxiety, improve your sleep, boost your mood and feel more in control.

Try the quiz >

<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/your-mind-plan-quiz/>

Parent Hub



We would like all parents/carers to join us on Parent Hub. Parent Hub is a FREE app that helps keep you up to date with what's going on at school. You'll receive messages, pictures, documents and newsletters, all in one handy place.

1. Download the Parent Hub app from your app store (iPhone or Android).
2. Create yourself an account.
3. Choose "Add a School" and enter:
@HuntersHallIPS

Useful Links During Lockdown

- Parent Zone: articles and resources to help you navigate parenting during a pandemic – www.parentzone.org.uk/lockdown-advice-and-resources
- Ollee: a digital friend from Parent Zone and BBC Children in Need, helping children to talk about difficult topics with their families – www.parentzone.org.uk/Ollee
- Place2Be: advice and tips from educational psychologists plus a wealth of creative ideas – www.place2be.org.uk/coronavirus
- Relate: relationship support – www.relate.org.uk
- Kooth: an online counselling and emotional well-being platform for children and young people – www.kooth.com
- Childline: telephone and online support – www.childline.org.uk
- Refuge: support for victims of domestic abuse – www.refuge.org.uk

Home learning on our website

We have added a new home learning tab on our website opening page. This will enable you to navigate to the remote learning provision for each year group.

Click the image to be taken directly to the page.



Hunters Hall
Primary School

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Privacy/GDPR

IN THIS SECTION

there is a reason for every behaviour.



Let's help every child thrive

Home Learning

In preparation for any remote learning that may be needed during the year. Click the following link:

[Remote Learning 2020–2021](#)

[ARP](#) [EYFS \(Tapestry\)](#) [Year 1](#) [Year 2](#) [Year 3](#) [Year 4](#) [Year 5](#) [Year 6](#)

Remote Learning Research EEF

Remote Learning Policy



ACTION CALENDAR: FRIENDLY FEBRUARY 2021



| MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY | SUNDAY |
|---|--|---|--|--|--|---|
| 1 Send someone a message to say how much they mean to you | 2 Ask a friend how they have been feeling recently | 3 Do an act of kindness to make life easier for someone else | 4 Organise a virtual 'tea break' with colleagues or friends | 5 Show an active interest by asking questions when talking to others | 6 Get back in touch with an old friend you've not seen for a while | 7 Make an effort to have a friendly chat with a neighbour |
| 8 Share what you're feeling with someone you really trust | 9 Thank someone and tell them how they made a difference for you | 10 Look for the good in people, even when they frustrate you | 11 Send an encouraging note to someone who needs a boost | 12 Focus on being kind rather than being right | 13 Send a friendly message of support to a local business | 14 Tell your loved ones why they are special to you |
| 15 Smile at the people you see and brighten their day | 16 Check in on someone who may be struggling and offer to help | 17 Respond kindly to everyone you talk to today, including yourself | 18 Appreciate the good qualities of someone in your life | 19 Share a video or message you find inspiring or helpful | 20 Make a plan to connect with others and do something fun | 21 Actively listen to what people say, without judging them |
| 22 Give sincere compliments to people you talk to today | 23 Be gentle with someone who you feel inclined to criticise | 24 Tell a loved one about their strengths that you value most | 25 Thank three people you feel grateful to and tell them why | 26 Give positive comments to as many people as possible today | 27 Call a friend to catch up and really listen to them | 28 Make uninterrupted time for your loved ones |



"The best way to cheer yourself up is to cheer somebody else up" - Mark Twain



"The only way to have a friend is to be one" - Ralph Waldo Emerson

ACTION FOR HAPPINESS



www.actionforhappiness.org

Learn more about this month's theme at www.actionforhappiness.org/friendly-february

Happier · Kinder · Together

5 Outdoor Activities



Children's Mental Health Week 5 Outdoor Activities



Go outside and close your eyes.
What can you hear?

Monday

Tuesday

Stand in an outdoor space.
What is the weather doing?
What does it feel like?
How does it make you feel?



Can you spot any signs of spring?
How many can you find?

Wednesday

Thursday

Watch the clouds.
Look up at the sky in the morning, afternoon and early evening. How has it changed?



Have fun!
Go for a walk, play a game, run, jump, skip or hop.

Friday



www.teachoutdoors.co.uk

Facebook: @teachoutdoors Twitter: @teach_outdoors Instagram: @teach_outdoors

Although this week has been Children's Mental Health Week, we know that a focus upon mental health is vital every day of the year. Please access these resources with your children.

CALM ZONE

There are lots of ways to feel calmer. It's about finding what works for you. Try some of our breathing exercises, activities, games and videos to help let go of stress.

On this page

- Activities and tools
- Breathing exercises
- Expressing yourself
- Yoga videos
- Play games
- Ways to cope videos

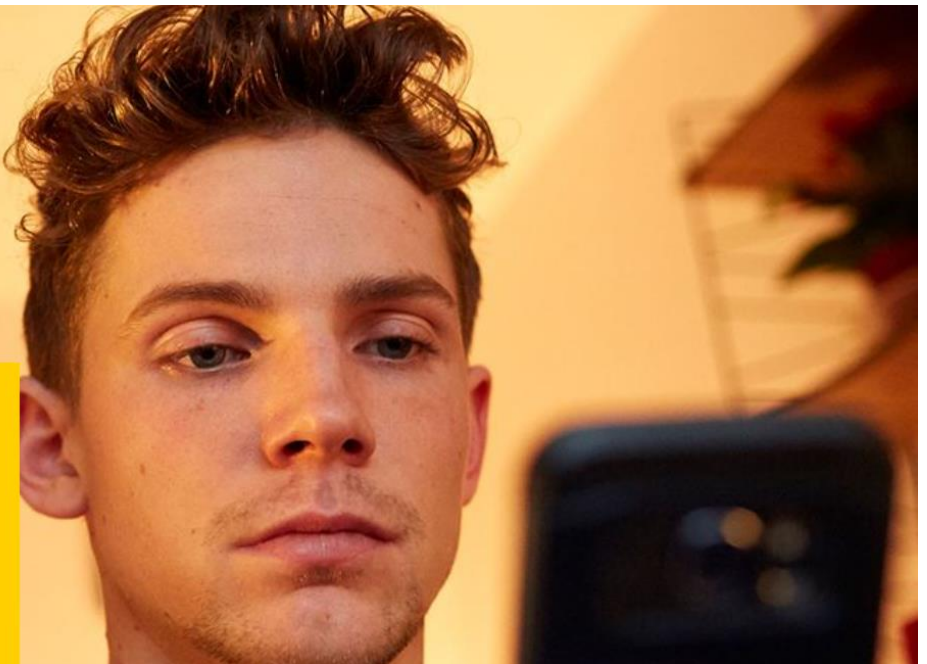


childline.org.uk/toolbox/calm-zone

Coronavirus and mental health

Tips, advice and guidance on where you can get support for your mental health during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic

- [I'm feeling anxious all the time](#)
- [My mood is low because of all the bad news](#)
- [I am anxious about all the changes](#)
- [I am struggling with self-isolation and social distancing](#)
- [I am struggling to manage my eating disorder](#)
- [I have lost a loved one due to coronavirus](#)
- [What else can I do to look after my mental health?](#)



youngminds.org.uk/find-help/looking-after-yourself/coronavirus-and-mental-health

Supporting your child's mental health



place2be.org.uk/our-services/parents-and-carers/supporting-your-child-s-mental-health

Big Garden Birdwatch

What did you see?

SUBMIT YOUR RESULTS →

Thank you for taking part in Big Garden Birdwatch 2021. Remember to submit your results by 19 Feb.

We hope you enjoyed taking part in Big Garden Birdwatch. Whatever you see - even if nothing at all - it matters as the more people who take part, the better the snapshot we will have of how our garden birds are doing. Please [submit your results](#) online by **19 Feb**, or **15 Feb** by post.

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/birdwatch/submit-results/>

Take our quiz!

Which
GARDEN BIRD
are you?



#BigGardenBirdWatch

Play our awesome game and find out your bird personality.

PLAY NOW

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/birdwatch/which-garden-bird-are-you/>