

Hayes Meadow Primary School Well-being Newsletter

Supporting the Emotional Well-being and Mental Health of Our School Community

Autumn 1 2023

This term's newsletter focusses on how we can talk to children about their well-being and mental health. If you have any worries or concerns about your child's emotional behaviour or well-being, then please contact Mrs Morgan n.morgan@hayesmeadow.staffs.sch.uk. There will be things we can do to help further and support you.

How you can speak to your children about Mental Health

If your child asks about their mental health, you can tell them that it is about our feelings, our thinking, emotions and our moods. Explain to them that looking after our mental health is important.

Tell them that we all have small feelings every day; these can sometimes feel strong and overwhelming, whether happy or sad, but they go away before too long.

Sometimes we experience big feelings; these feel strong and can feel overwhelming.

Let them know that it's okay to feel however they feel, whether that's sad, angry, worried or something else, and that you can work together to find new ways of managing these feelings.

Tips for talking to your child about their Mental Health

1. Make conversations about mental health a normal part of life: Anywhere is a good place to talk - in the car, walking the dog or cooking together. Model everyday talk about feelings such as by talking about a TV character's feelings
2. Give your full attention: We all know it's not helpful to be half listened to. Keep eye contact, focus on the child and ignore distractions.
3. Check your body language: Try to keep it open and relaxed and make sure you come down to the child's level.
4. Take it seriously: Don't downplay what the child is saying or tell them they're "just being silly". Resist the urge to 'brush off' their concerns, or to instantly reassure them that everything is fine without discussion.
5. Ask open questions: Such as "How did your day go today?" This will help to extend the conversation.

Places to go for help and support



This website from the NHS offers help you look after your child's mental health and wellbeing as well as the rest of the family.

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

The NSPCC are offering support and advice if you feel your child is struggling with their mental health and anxiety. More information and advice can be found on their website:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk>

NSPCC

Young Minds

<https://youngminds.org.uk/>

YOUNGMINDS
fighting for young people's mental health

Action for Children

www.actionforchildren.org.uk



6. Calmly stay with the feelings that arise: It can be our automatic reaction to steer away from difficult emotions.
7. Offer empathy rather than solutions: Show that you accept what they are telling you but don't try to solve the problem.
8. Remember we are all different: Respect and value the child's feelings, even though they may be different to yours.
9. Look for clues about feelings: Listen to the child's words, tone of voice and body language.
10. Some ways to start a conversation about feelings might be: "How are you feeling at the moment?" "You don't seem your usual self. Do you want to talk about it?" "Do you fancy a chat?" "I'm happy to listen if you need a chat."