

## Mental health and wellbeing: information for parents and carers

Midsomer Norton Primary School and Nursery take the emotional health and wellbeing of every child seriously. We believe that schools and early years settings help children build resilience and support them to be mentally healthy. **We are especially aware of how important this is during the current Covid-19 pandemic when some of our children may be feeling extra anxious and struggling with the changes that are going on around them.** This is likely to be true for many of us adults too. We all want to try and protect our children from experiencing our own anxieties around the virus.

We all have ups and downs in life but in childhood it can be particularly hard to cope with sad feelings and worries that arise when things are hard or scary. There may be times when your child is unhappy, feeling anxious or struggling emotionally. You may notice that they seem low or worried or that their behaviour changes. We may notice that they seem withdrawn or upset at the setting.

If you are worried about your child's mental health, then you are not alone. Many parents and carers have similar worries and stresses. There is good support available from local and national organisations. The sooner you seek help the better for your child and you. There are several sources of help and these are listed below.

### Looking after your own mental health

In order to support your child, you need to stay strong and well yourself. It isn't easy being a parent or carer especially when you are experiencing problems of your own such as relationship difficulties, money worries, problems with work. **When you add the pandemic into the mix many of us are likely to be feeling anxious and upset ourselves. It is important though to not transfer these feelings on to our children as they will be taking their emotional cues from us.** Just as we say to children, so for adults it often helps to talk to someone, so don't be scared about doing this, with friends, family, your GP or a support service. There are several organisations that can offer parents and carers information and advice.

### Who can help you if you are worried about your child's mental health?

- The early years setting  
Talk to us about your concerns so that we can work together to help your child feel better. Your Nursery Lead: Mrs Smith or Mrs Farnham or your Reception class teacher
- School  
Your child's class teacher or Ms Biss our Deputy Head
- The Health visitor  
Parents/carers can contact their health visitor at any time for advice and support for their child relating to healthy lifestyle, toileting, emotional/behavioural issues etc. For more information visit the <https://bathneshealthandcare.nhs.uk/childrens/health-visiting/>

- Your GP  
A GP can check any physical symptoms linked to your child's health and talk with you about their emotional well-being making a referral to a specialist service if necessary
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)  
CAMHS is a free NHS service that assesses and treats 0-18-year olds with emotional, behavioural or mental health difficulties. For more information including referrals see the [B&NES CAMHS website](#)

### Services your child can access if they are aged 11 or over

- Children and young people aged 11 and over are also able to access support themselves from B&NES [Kooth](#). This provides links to advice as well as online counselling

### Websites that offer information and advice about mental health during Covid-19 pandemic

- The B&NES Council's [1 Big Database](#) provides a helpful page of sources of help and support for you and your child and family's mental health during Covid-19 including support following loss and bereavement
- The following may also be helpful
  - [You're Never too Young to Talk Mental Health](#) leaflet for parent/carers of primary aged children
  - [Mental Health Problems in Children and Young People: guidance for parents & carers](#) - leaflet for parent/carers with older children
  - [Happy Maps](#) Lots of information about health topics including mental health, organised under different age groups i.e. under 5's, primary age, secondary age, young adults.

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In order to support your child, you need to stay strong and well yourself. It isn't easy being a parent or carer especially when you are experiencing problems of your own such as relationship difficulties, money worries, problems with work. Often it helps to talk to someone, so don't be scared about doing this, with friends, family, your GP or a support service. The following organisations can also offer information and advice to help you.

[B&NES Council: Coronavirus latest information and advice](#)

[B&NES Community Wellbeing Hub](#) provides help for physical and mental health concerns. It can link you up with organisations that can help with money, housing or employment worries and provide some support if you are isolated during the Covid-19 pandemic

BANES [1BigDatabase](#) links to lots of services for local families.