



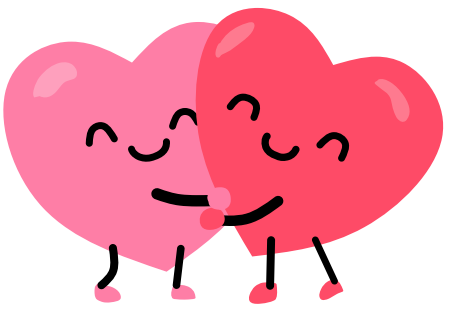
Leigh Academy
Ebbsfleet

MENTAL HEALTH



THE FIVE WAYS TO WELLBEING

It is often life events that are outside our control which can damage our mental health, and this is made worse if we feel powerless to do anything about them. One of the ways we can re-gain a sense of control and nourish our mental health is to remember the 'The Five Ways to Wellbeing' which have been found in research to improve mental wellbeing in children and adults.



GIVE TO OTHERS



CONNECT



BE AWARE



BE ACTIVE



KEEP LEARNING

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT YOUR CHILD'S MENTAL HEALTH



- 1 **Think about The Five Ways to Wellbeing**
Are there things you can encourage them to do, or do together, each day?
- 2 **Talk openly about mental health**
Just as you might encourage them to eat fruit and veg to keep their bodies healthy (and model this behaviour yourself), talk openly about, for example, staying connected with others or being physically active in order to take care of our minds.
- 3 **Model good habits**
Children often learn from copying what they see around them. If you are taking care of your own mental health, it's easier for them to see what good habits look like.
- 4 **Think about phone usage - both theirs and yours**
We don't fully understand the impact of social media on our mental health but using phones and laptops can impact on our sleep, which is important to our mental health. We're also more likely to listen to one another if we're not distracted by technology.
- 5 **Notice any changes in your child's behaviour**
Young people tell us how they're feeling in many ways, not always verbally. Learning what is normal for your child makes it easier to notice when things change, and if this might be a sign that they're struggling.

WHEN TIMES GET TOUGH



Let your child know that you're concerned

Explain why you feel that way, e.g. if you've noticed they haven't been interested in activities they usually enjoy.

Use activities that you do together to have conversations about how they are doing

Talking whilst doing something together, side by-side, such as cooking, can help them share their feelings more easily than a face-to-face conversation.



Let them know that struggling sometimes is normal and nothing to be ashamed of

Tell them about the mental health spectrum and that we all, including you, go up and down the scale throughout our lives. Reassure them that talking about difficult feelings with the people we trust is a brave thing to do.

Listen and empathise



Often the first step to feeling better is feeling connected and knowing that someone is alongside you. Empathy helps young people (and adults) connect. Empathy involves acknowledging what your child is feeling, trying to understand things from their point of view and avoiding judgement. Empathy is usually more helpful than giving advice or trying to 'fix' their problem.

If you're still worried



Talk to a trusted member of school staff or your GP who can point you towards sources of help.