

Dear Parent/Carer

Please find below information from Sam Tyrer, Prevention and Engagement Lead for the Nursing & Quality Directorate at the Lancashire & South Cumbria Foundation Trust. He is offering support webinars to help and encourage young people to have positive mental health and wellbeing. I hope you find this information useful and can share some of Sam's suggestions with your son or daughter to help them. I will also send this out to all students as well as details of Sam's other webinars for Mental Health Family Hour which he did in the first national lockdown.

Yours sincerely

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Your Word is a lamp for my feet and a light on my path. (Psalm 119, vs 105)

Good morning all,

Firstly, I hope you are all ok and had a wonderful New Year (as good as can be in this current situation). Over the coming weeks, I will be offering your school guidance for both pupils and staff regarding taking care of our mental health. I have received a lot of emails regarding pupils feeling anxious, unmotivated and also worried about losing family/friends to the coronavirus. Myself and Dave will be hosting a number of webinars which will be available for you all to access at one time. If you have any particular questions or topics you or the pupils would like us to talk about then please do send them to me via email.

A fantastic initiative called 'Be A Winter Friend' which has been promoted by individuals such as comedian Steve Royle, Lancashire Rugby League star, Josh Charnley (Warrington Wolves) and Leader of the House of Commons, Sir Lindsay Hoyle, could potentially really benefit your pupils. The aim is firstly for individuals to look after themselves and then to support someone or others throughout winter (and this lockdown) who may be feeling lonely and struggling. I am personally supporting this initiative and I am supporting a neighbour who lives on their own. Your pupils may be able to do some of the below to support each other through this tough period, as I know numerous university students have, and it has really helped their well-being.

Study Buddy: interacting with friends and learning through online resources e.g. FaceTime, Microsoft teams, zoom or other ways of contact.

- This can be applied to all young people -school, college and university.

- Also spending leisure time with friends over FaceTime, discord or online party gaming such as Xbox, PlayStation, Nintendo Switch etc. Also playing multiplayer games on phones or tablet devices e.g. multiplayer monopoly, among us, Minecraft, psych. This will allow you to connect with others and to feel less lonely.

Social Check in: Setting a time with friends or family and updating each other on your emotions, experiences and tasks or activities you have done throughout the day or week. This can be done through social contact or verbal one to one communication. Another example is a young person could keep a motivational journal/diary entry of their days in lockdown.

Social Check out: take time away from social media to:

- Exercise inside or outside as this helps to raise self-esteem, reduces stress levels and can cause chemical changes in the brain to positively change your mood.
- Get fresh air: walk to clear your mind with a family member or friend
- Do something you enjoy this could be different hobbies or learning a new skills as this boosts self-confidence and self-esteem, helps build a sense of purpose. e.g. read a book, bake, gardening or paint.

Be in the moment: Work on staying mindful in the present, instead of worrying about the past or future.

- Try meditation to focus on breathing and reduce stress or anxiety levels
- Take time to self-reflect on how you've been feeling emotionally, mentally and physically.
- Build and working on your self-esteem by challenging negative beliefs.
- Make a list about what you are grateful for and appreciate.

It would be great for them to support this initiative or even yourselves to, we really need to support each other through this. If they want to promote any of what they are doing to support themselves or each other on social media or to learn more, type in #beawinterfriend

I will be in touch again soon.

**Kind regards,
Sam Tyrer**

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