Safeguarding Update Issue 12

The Hollybrook School's Safeguarding Team


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Mental Health and Wellbeing

www.childline.org.uk

Southampton Safeguarding Partnership

If you have concerns about a child or wish to receive some form of support, please come and talk to a member of the safeguarding team.

What do we do at Hollybrook to Promote Wellbeing and How do we Support the Mental Health of Staff and Pupils?

At Hollybrook we have a range of policies to support the mental health and wellbeing of both staff and pupils; we have a mental health and wellbeing policy, a relationship policy, a communication policy and clear codes of conduct and behaviour policies. Having all of these policies helps people understand what is expected of them at all times. This supports their mental health and wellbeing.

We have also started Reflect and Reset days to support children's wellbeing as they come back to school following a holiday. This softer start to the term helps to settle children faster into routine and reminds them of the school rules and ways.

Mental Health and Wellbeing Working Party

Across the Hollybrook Schools we have a Mental Health and Wellbeing working party. The working party consists of pupils, new staff, staff who have worked at the schools for a long time, parent Governors, members of the senior leadership team, a member of the office team as well as members of staff from the cleaning and lunchtime supervisors. This ensures that when we are talking about mental health

and wellbeing, we have a full cross section of children and staff who can give their opinions and ideas.

So far, we have created an action plan and we have been working hard to deliver our ambitions. We have also held an assembly across both schools about how to support your wellbeing. In the assembly, we suggested 5 things that people could do to help their own mental health and wellbeing:

1. **Connect with other people** – good relationships are important for your mental wellbeing. They can help you to build a sense of belonging and self-worth, give you an opportunity to share positive experiences and provide emotional support and allow you to support others.
2. **Be physically active** – being active is great for your physical health and fitness as well as improving your mental wellbeing. It can raise your self-esteem and causes chemical changes in your brain which can help to positively change your mood.
3. **Learn new skills** – research shows that learning new skills can improve your mental wellbeing by boosting self-confidence and helping you connect with others.
4. **Acts of giving and kindness** can help improve your mental wellbeing by creating positive feelings and a sense of reward, giving you a feeling of purpose and self-worth and helping you connect with other people. It could be small acts of kindness towards other people, or larger ones like volunteering in your local community.
5. **Paying more attention to the present moment** can also improve your mental wellbeing. This includes your thoughts and feelings, your body and the world around you. It can positively change the way you feel about life and how you approach challenges.

What can you do as parents?

Parents play a crucial role in promoting physical activity among children. Here are some strategies that can help:

1. **Lead by Example**: Children are more likely to be active if they see their parents engaging in physical activities. Parents can set a positive example by participating in sports, going for walks, or exercising regularly.
2. **Make it Fun**: Encourage activities that children enjoy, such as playing games, riding bikes, or swimming. Making physical activity enjoyable can help children develop a lifelong love for being active.
3. **Create a Routine**: Establishing a regular schedule for physical activities can help children incorporate exercise into their daily lives. This could include setting aside time for family walks or sports.
4. **Provide Opportunities**: Ensure that children have access to sports facilities, parks, and playgrounds. Enrolling them in sports teams or classes can also provide structured opportunities for physical activity.
5. **Encourage Outdoor Play**: Spending time outdoors can naturally lead to more physical activity. Encourage children to play outside, explore nature, and engage in activities like hiking or gardening.

Parents also play a crucial role in supporting their children's mental health. Here are some strategies that can help:

1. **Open Communication**: Encourage your children to talk about their feelings and listen to them without judgment. Creating a safe space for open communication can help children feel understood and supported.
2. **Be Involved**: Show interest in your children's activities and be actively involved in their lives. This can help build a strong bond and provide emotional support.
3. **Teach Coping Skills**: Help your children develop healthy coping mechanisms for dealing with stress and emotions. This can include mindfulness, relaxation techniques, and problem-solving skills.
4. **Promote a Healthy Lifestyle**: Encourage regular physical activity, a balanced diet, and adequate sleep. These factors can significantly impact mental wellbeing.
5. **Set a Positive Example**: Model healthy behaviours and attitudes towards mental health. Children often learn by observing their parents, so demonstrating positive mental health practices can be beneficial.

By implementing these strategies, parents can help their children develop resilience and maintain good mental health.

If parents are worried about their children's mental health, there are several steps they can take to provide support and seek help:

1. **Talk to the Safeguarding Team**: If you have concerns about a child or wish to receive some form of support, you can talk to a member of the safeguarding team.
2. **Seek Professional Help**: There are various useful websites and organisations that can provide guidance and support or you can start by taking your child to the doctor and discussing your concerns.

Further Help and Useful Websites:

Children's mental health - Every Mind Matters - NHSMental health and wellbeing

How to improve your mental wellbeing | Info & support | Mind - Mind

Improving mental well-being and resilience

Promoting mental health and wellbeing | NSPCC Learning

Mental health and emotional wellbeing | Barnardo's