

ASPIRE's

Parent/Carer Wellbeing Newsletter



2nd October 2024

Welcome to our first Parent/Carer Wellbeing email of the new academic year.

If you are a new parent or carer to the ASPIRE Federation, then we'd like to welcome you and introduce you to our Parent/Carer Wellbeing email. This was something we designed and sent out fortnightly during COVID and we felt it was so important, that we have continued to send out a newsletter every term since.

The newsletter aims to bring you guidance, information and links to support all things Wellbeing and Mental Health, which we hope you find useful. They'll be uploaded to each school's website so you can access it as and when you may need it. Each term we try to cover a different theme, topic or focus to bring you an array of information and guidance. With every newsletter, we try to cover a diverse range of areas which we hope will be helpful.

This term's Wellbeing email comes ready for World Mental Health day, which is held on the 10th October every year. Next Thursday's theme for 2024 focuses on **Workplace Mental Health**.



It's widely known that mental health in the workplace factors in many industries/sectors and so they're bringing it to the forefront this year.

We know we have many working parents and carers across ASPIRE, so we wanted to share some important links below, from supporting your own mental health to ways of supporting a colleague:

Your mental health in the workplace and ways to support it

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/explore-mental-health/publications/how-support-mental-health-work#paragraph-53151>

Ways to support a colleague

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/explore-mental-health/publications/how-support-mental-health-work#paragraph-53211>

Short, evidence-based guides

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/explore-mental-health/publications>

We don't know who CBeebies will ask this year, but it's always good to watch out for bedtime stories guests, as they always seem to ask someone to celebrate World Mental Health Day this year. The CBeebies link is below:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/shows/bedtime-stories>

Parent/Carer Resources

With this year's World Mental Health Day, we receive a range of information, support and guidance for both schools and our parents/carers, so we wanted to share with you the link from the Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families' website. The links below you may find useful, as the guidance supports conversations about Mental Health for all ages.



Self-care guidance:

<https://www.annafreud.org/resources/family-wellbeing/self-care-for-parents-and-carers/>

We have also included a link for foster carers and parents who have adopted children, who may find the following guidance useful:

<https://www.annafreud.org/resources/family-wellbeing/>

We have also resourced information from the UK Trauma Council, as we understand how important it is to try to support families who have experienced a bereavement in the family.

<https://uktraumacouncil.org/resource/traumatic-bereavement-guide-for-parents-carers?cn-reloaded=1>

CBeebies' website has a wealth of information and guidance from helping your child to focus to support regarding talking to your child about emotions. We understand helping your child to focus can be challenging, especially when they are little.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/joinin/dualwa-listening-concentration-focus>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/grownups/talking-to-your-child-about-emotions-love-monster>

Another useful website which I have been signposted to by KCC, and I hope might be useful to you, is the Kent Community Health website. There are a number of different leaflets with advice and guidance offering support, starting from during pregnancy to guidance on supporting your child up to the age of 19. There is also a page on how to stay well in winter - link below - and whilst the drop-in sessions are in Canterbury, Folkestone and Dover, the information and guidance is very useful wherever you live.

<https://www.kentcht.nhs.uk/community-health-online/helping-you-stay-winterwell/>

The NHS also launched after COVID, Every Mind Matters, which frequently changes its advice and guidance to support mapping out your own mental health and wellbeing so you can tailor the information and guidance to meet your exact need.

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

Families can visit the link below and register for a free account with the access code 'Invicta' and courses can be completed at an individual's own pace. There are courses from supporting your child with additional needs starting secondary school, to a taster course in understanding your child's feelings. Courses are as little as £4.99 and are all on-line to access. There's also a 'free access checker' at the bottom left hand side of the page to see if you qualify for their free courses!

www.inourplace.co.uk

The Kent Resilience Hub also has an array of information, as well as local support which may be of use to children, adults, family and/or friends.

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

Mental Health UK have launched 'Bloom', which is a programme based around supporting 14-18 year olds. They have now launched a resource library for parents and carers, with help and guidance to support young people. They've now even included videos to share and conversation guides to support to have with your teenage children if needed.

<https://mentalhealth-uk.org/help-and-information/advice-for-parents-and-guardians/>

Support for you and Self-Care

Returning to the Anna Freud Centre, there is a fantastic link which supports self-care and guides parents and carers with ways to just take time for you.

<https://www.annafreud.org/parents-and-carers/self-care-for-parents-and-carers/>

Young Minds is a UK charity that supports young people, as well as parents/carers with mental health and emotional wellbeing. The link below takes you to their parent page, to support you with supporting your teenage child. The second link takes you to their homepage, and at the bottom of the screen it offers the opportunity to access information, guidance and advice tailored to whether you are a young person or parent/carer and your exact needs.

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

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

As a parent or carer, we understand how daily life can be difficult to juggle the daily challenges and stresses... whether that's looking after your family, looking after other loved ones, as well as going out to work. We understand that life can be hard sometimes and so 'rethink' offers a multitude of support groups, services and guidance to help you look after yourself, whilst looking after everyone else... because you're important too.

There are 200 Mental Health services nationwide and the link below gives you the opportunity to find one local to you and access their services if needed, or support groups. There's also a 'get help' now button.

<https://www.rethink.org/help-in-your-area/about-services-and-groups/>

The website also has a link to access a Mental Health and Money advice service for anyone finding it hard at the moment with the current financial climate and cost of living crisis.

<https://www.mentalhealthandmoneyadvice.org/en/>

More finance support signposts...

Below is a link to KCC's website which can support any money worries or concerns you may be having, from benefits to electricity and gas bills. This page has several links to support with different areas you may want to seek support with.

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/leisure-and-community/cost-of-living-support/find-help-and-support-with-money-worries>

They also have a link to seek urgent support with the cost of living and there's a large purple/pink button at the bottom to find out about their Kent Support and Assistance Service.

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/leisure-and-community/cost-of-living-support/urgent-financial-help-and-extra-support>

If you are finding the cost of living difficult at the moment, don't hesitate to contact your school office, where they can go through the process of applying for your child receiving Free School Meals, or we can discuss ways of trying to offer different ways to support you if you don't qualify. Or, alternatively the link below takes you to the application page, where you can check your eligibility and apply online if you'd prefer.

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/free-school-meals>

Blue Light card!

If you're a key worker in front line services, you'll already know about the Blue Light Card. But back in August they announced that they would be opening up applications to those in Education, after recognising the work and contribution they make. So, if you are a teacher, TA/LSA or work in a school, then the BlueLight Card is now available to you! There is an initial waiting list, but the process of being able to apply is quite quick and you can register online. All you need is a screen grab of your school I.D., or a copy of your payslip to upload and you'll be approved over the course of 7-10 days. If verified, you'll then receive a digital card via the app, and then a physical card for your purse/wallet in the post. It costs £4.99 for 2 years, but the offers and discounts, in our opinion, are well worth the fee!

The link to register is:

<https://www.bluelightcard.co.uk/newaccount.php>

October Half Term fun for the family

Above are a wealth of ideas for days out for half term in and around Kent. Whether it's free ideas, or famous Kent attractions, the links below should hopefully give you access to an array of different events and places to access across the County this October and beyond. Autumn at Leeds Castle looks particularly lovely!

<https://www.visitkent.co.uk/visit-kent-blog/october-half-term-2024/#:~:text=Halloween%20Adventure,starting%20at%20just%20%2%A315!>

<https://kentattractions.co.uk/outing-ideas/free- outings/>

<https://leeds-castle.com/whats-on/>

<https://kent.muddystilettos.co.uk/kent/things-to-do/for-kids/october-half-term-family-kids-activities-events-autumn-2024/>

<https://www.primarytimes.co.uk/kent/listings>

And these are also completely free to visit...

- Viking Ship Hugin, Ramsgate.
- Biddenden Vineyards, Biddenden.
- Walks in Kent.
- Maidstone Museums.
- Rochester Cathedral, Rochester.
- Canterbury Norman Castle, Canterbury.
- Eynsford Castle, Eynsford.
- The Old Brook Pumping Station, Chatham

If staying at home is more your wish this October half term, then below is a link to 100 easy craft ideas for children!

<https://www.thebestideasforkids.com/indoor-activities-for-kids/>

We hope we've covered a lot of useful information and guidance in this term's email and you have found it useful.

Don't forget you can get in touch with your school regarding any support you may need via your school's office, or via our dedicated wellbeing email:

Kingswood - 01622 842674

Ulcombe - 01622 842903

Leeds & Broomfield - 01622 861398

Platts Heath - 01622 850316

We also have a Wellbeing email if you need any wellbeing advice, guidance or support!

Email:

wellbeing@aspire-kent.org.uk

We wish everyone of our ASPIRE families a safe and restful October Half Term when it gets here! (term ends Friday 25th October 2024)

Take care,

The ASPIRE Wellbeing, Mental Health and Resilience Team