

ASPIRE's

Parent/Carer Wellbeing Newsletter



February 2025

Hello Everyone,

I hope this finds you well.

Welcome to this term's newsletter, which has lots of guidance, information and support, as well as highlighting lots of ideas for the February half term which starts Monday 17th February. Hopefully you'll find lots of useful resources, guidance and ideas to take us into Spring!

But first, this term's Wellbeing email has been sent with Children's Mental Health week 2025 in mind, where the theme is 'Know yourself, Grow Yourself' in partnership with Here4You, supported by the Walt Disney Company and the characters of Inside Out 2! Children's Mental Health Week is from 3rd February to 9th February 2025. There are links below if you'd like to find out more...



<https://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk/#disney>

Parent/Carer Resources

<https://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk/families/>

There are lots of organizations supporting Children's Mental Health week this year from the BBC to The School of Kindness, where you can find an array of different resources, videos and guidance to ensure we are all looking after our own Mental Health and each other's.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/articles/zk37bdm#zsby9ty>

<https://schoolofkindness.org/childrens-mental-health-week-2025>

Mental Health.org has some really helpful advice and guidance on their website to support parents/carers, from helping their children with their wellbeing and mental health to helping a neighbour. It also highlights further links for resources and guidance.

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

Mental Health.org are the founders of Mental Health Awareness Week which they promote every May - this year it will be 12th - 18th May 2025.

They also have a very useful A-Z directory if you need initial advice, or further support, from understanding mental health to diagnosed mental health issues.

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/explore-mental-health/a-z-topics>

Looking after ourselves and others when we become in a heightened state of panic or anxiety has been a big focus, especially after COVID-19.

Breathing is a wonderful way of regulating our heart rate in these moments of stress and it is something we have been promoting at school for the last few years.

When we become anxious, worried or stressed, our heart rate is often elevated and our breathing can become panicked and irregular. Controlling our breathing not only helps us to lower our heart rates, but it also helps us to reach a state of feeling calmer and more relaxed in that moment.



Research conducted by Stanford University demonstrates that 'taking two sharp inhales and a long exhale is the fastest way to regulate the nervous system during moments of high stress and anxiety.'

You can find more information on Andrew Huberman's website and YouTube channels to follow his essential guide from how to improve brain function and wellness, to exploring how foods can impact our mood and emotions.

Staying with the breathing theme there are some breathing techniques and guidance below if your little ones become anxious or stressed, as well as some great signposts for adults from the NHS.

Below is a link to 10 ways of helping children and adults to breathe when feeling anxious or upset. At ASPIRE, we focus on Mindfulness Breathing, which combines both 9 and 10. It helps the heart rate to calm and the mind to focus on your

breath, rather than 'the worry'. This way, you can then calmly talk about whatever it is you might need support with at that moment.

<https://www.goodto.com/wellbeing/breathing-exercises-for-anxiety-adults-kids-techniques-56902>

<https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/guides-tools-and-activities/breathing-exercises-for-stress/>

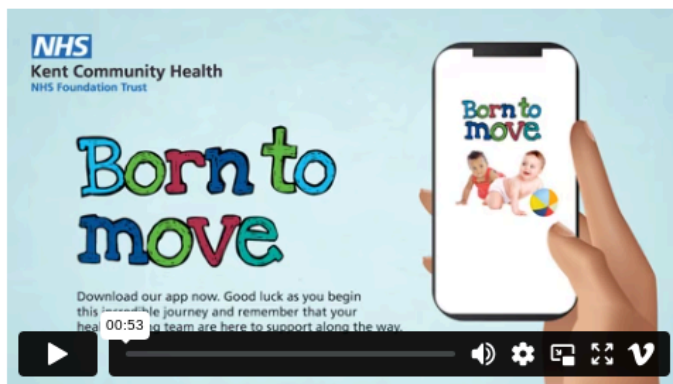
Kent Community Health via the NHS Foundation Trust has support and guidance for all things Mental Health and Wellbeing for your children or young adults. There's information on Managing Feelings to support Body Image and Eating.

<https://family.kentcht.nhs.uk/support/emotional-health-and-wellbeing/supporting-your-childs-emotional-wellbeing/>

They also have an array of different parenting courses and video sessions to offer support and guidance for expectant mothers to fussy eaters - a parents' survival guide!

<https://family.kentcht.nhs.uk/support/your-family/health-visiting-services-for-you/parenting-courses-to-support-you-and-your-child/>

They even offer a 'Born to Move' app for new parents to download.



The Born to Move app supports you and your child on the amazing journey from pregnancy, all the way to starting school.

Finance support

KCC offer a Household Support Fund. The link below outlines the criteria needed to qualify and ways in which you can refer yourself for this. They also include the link for Free School Meals if you need it for your school-age children. They also signpost you to the KCC free school meal email to check your eligibility and a contact email if you are awaiting Home Office approval if you do not qualify for means tested benefits. We've added them below:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/leisure-and-community/cost-of-living-support/urgent-financial-help-and-extra-support/household-support-fund#tab-1>

freeschoolmeals@kent.gov.uk

kcc-hsffoodandenergysupport@kent.gov.uk

Resources for older siblings

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, carers and guardians, with help and guidance to support young people.

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

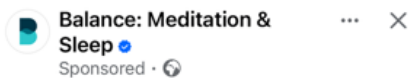
Young Minds is a UK charity that supports young people, as well as parents/carers with mental health and emotional wellbeing. The link below takes you to their homepage, which offers the options at the bottom of the screen to access information, guidance and advice tailored to whether you are a young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

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

Resources for you

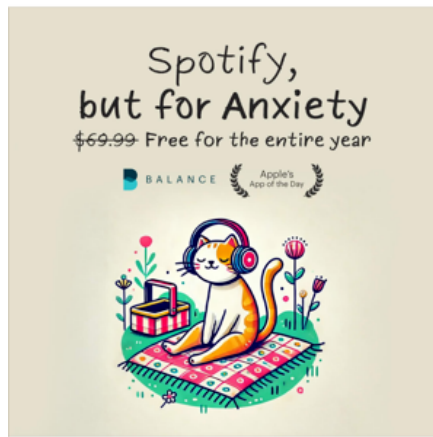
As a parent or carer, we know you put your family first and yourself last... However, you need to remember that if you're not recharging your batteries and looking after yourself once in a while, you may not be able to look after loved ones in the way you want to... Remember, you're important too.

The Balance app is free for a year when you sign up through Apple. It says it supports improving sleep, stress and more... by adapting meditation to your daily needs.



Start prioritizing your well-being with Balance, Apple's App of the Day.

<https://balanceapp.com/>



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.

<https://mentalhealth-uk.org/support-and-services/find-local-support/>

There's also Rethink Mental Illness which has support in and around our local area and support groups if and when needed.

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

BBC Bitesize have a Parents' Toolkit where you can find all sorts of advice and tools to support with parenting, from rainy/winter days to school anxiety.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/parents>

We all know that we're different when it comes to what we individually need to make ourselves feel better, more positive or more energised. Each Mind Matters has a wonderful page on 5, 10 and 15 minute self-care tips, because they understand we all have different availability of time. But even 5 minutes could help with our self-care.

<https://emmresourcecenter.org/resources/self-care-tips-people-kids>

Half Term fun for the family

<https://kentattractions.co.uk/outing-ideas/february-half-term/>

<https://www.visitkent.co.uk/visit-kent-blog/february-half-term-in-kent-2025/#:~:text=Fun%20filled%20days%20out%20in%20Thanet&text=While%20the%20subterranean%20worlds%20of,curiosities%2C%20mysteries%20and%20wartime%20heritage.>

<https://bloomstays.com/things-to-do-in-kent-this-february-half-term>

<https://familiesonline.co.uk/kent/whats-on-kent-february-half-term/>

There's also the opportunity to download a family app which gives you money off Kent Attractions over the school holidays, approved by Money Saving Expert.

<https://www.dayoutwiththekids.co.uk/hub/parenting/kent-school-holidays>

And these are 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 it's raining and not very nice this February half term, there's always Crayola's Rainy Day crafts if needed - let's hope we don't!

<https://www.crayola.com/crafts/rainy-day-crafts/>

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

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 February Half Term, starting Monday 17th February!

Take care,

The ASPIRE Wellbeing Team