

# Children and Young People's Newsletter

Brent, Wandsworth and Westminster

Welcome to our newsletter. We hope that you enjoyed your half term break and are now ready for the next six weeks of school ahead. If this time becomes stressful you are in the right place to find some tips on how to manage your worries.

## PARENT SECTION

### Are you worried about your child being at school?

Since England have entered second lockdown and cases of coronavirus are increasing you might be worried more about your child going to school. As in most schools parents and guardians aren't allowed in the building, it can be more difficult to communicate with the teachers and school staff. Some schools might also be facing further closures due to cases of Covid-19 in schools and this is also very anxiety provoking.

There are a lot of different challenges which might be affecting parents and carers during this time and it is absolutely understandable to be worried and concerned in this situation.

Apart from using all precautionary measures and communicating as best as you can with the school and your child, it's important to think about how you can look after your own wellbeing during this time to manage your anxieties and worries. It might be helpful to think about your diet and exercise and how this affects your mood and your own health. Why not try a relaxation technique or a grounding exercise such as 54321 technique to bring you back to a present moment?

- Think about **5** things you can see
- 4** things you can hear
- 3** things you can touch (and touch them)
- 2** things you can smell/ like the smell of
- 1** slow, deep breath.

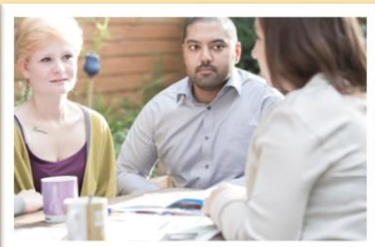


### Are you worried about your child's mental health?

If you notice that your child might be showing signs of emotional distress such as sadness, tearfulness, worries, fears, anger, lashing out or disorganisation, it is important to try and understand what is going on for them. Speak to your child and show that you are listening. Offer opportunities for talking and show empathy, be understanding and avoid judgement. Communicate with your child and check on them but stay respectful of their space. Try to make sure your child has a good sleep routine and diet, that they have time for their hobbies and some exercise during their day.

If you notice that signs of distress last longer, work together on a plan which can help them manage those feelings. School will be able to help you to refer you to further services if required such as our team who supports children and young people in school who experience anxiety, low mood and behavioural difficulties.

### Do you want to share your voice with other parents?



Join our Parents Forum where you will have an opportunity to voice your opinions on current mental health needs and challenges young people face. If you as a parent/carer or your child had an experience of working with our team we would love to hear from you. You will be able to meet other parents who have similar experiences and engage in interesting conversations.

Next forum will take place on the **10<sup>th</sup> of November at 4:30 PM** on ZOOM.

This time we will be offering **£10 Sainsbury's voucher** for your attendance!

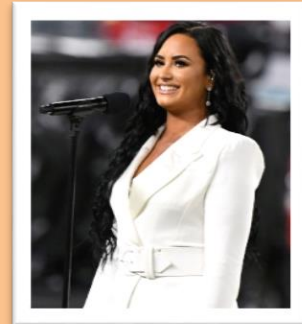
To get more information and to join please email:

[abogdanowicz@bwwmind.org.uk](mailto:abogdanowicz@bwwmind.org.uk)

This autumn might be a difficult time for everyone considering the coronavirus outbreak, restriction changes and uncertainties about the future. Due to these and many other reasons it is absolutely understandable to be experiencing feelings of anxiety, worry or feel overwhelmed and stressed. Hopefully you can find some ideas and useful information below on how you can stay well and control your anxiety.

## You are not alone

Anxiety affects many of us and statistics show that this emotional difficulty is very common across young people. It certainly affects anyone, regardless of age, gender and social status. Did you know that many famous people are struggling with anxiety? Some of them have spoken out about their experiences and what have helped them to overcome it: Demi Lovato, the American singer said in an [interview](#): "Exercising is [one] way I deal with anxiety. Painting, and writing music and expressing myself through art are other ways that I can release emotions. Meditation is another one. Whatever it is, it's important to find what works for you."



Ed Sheeran has shared that he struggles with social anxiety: "I get anxiety every day. It creeps up on you. I've been working on it for eight years and I closed off from reality.". In the [interview](#) he also shared what he does to keep his anxieties at bay: "Whether it's getting rid of your phone or only looking at emails twice a day, or cutting down my friendship group to the bare minimum just so I can trust everyone.".

## Try to find what works for you

Demi Lovato and Ed Sheeran are not wrong about the ways to tackle anxiety. Research, in fact, shows that exercise is a helpful way to alleviate symptoms of anxiety. Meditation and relaxation techniques can knock down the anxiety levels. Recent studies also show that social media are linked with increase of anxiety levels. Thus, cutting down on social media use can help decrease your anxiety. Having emotional support from those who we love and who we trust can be a huge help too.

There are many different things that can work for different people. If you don't know which ideas to start with try this simple breathing exercise which you can use anywhere. Any time you start to feel like you're on the edge:

Find somewhere comfortable to sit or lie down.

1. Put one hand on your chest and one hand on your stomach.
2. Take a deep breath in slowly through your nose for 7 seconds; both your hands should rise gently
3. Hold the breath for 2 seconds.
4. Release the breath slowly for 11 sec.
5. Repeat



## Don't fear to ask for help

Our team is here for you, so if you feel like you need more support, speak to someone in your school to find out more about the work that we do. If you want to speak to someone outside of your school you can contact: <https://www.kooth.com/>, <https://www.childline.org.uk/> or <https://youngminds.org.uk/>.

For more information on how to manage anxiety and other emotional difficulties you can access these websites:

<https://www.good-thinking.uk/>, <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/ever-mind-matters/>

If you have been involved with our service and are interested in taking part in further discussions around wellbeing and meet likeminded people, you can join our Young People's Forum. This time we will offer £10 Amazon voucher for your attendance! Email [kbentivoglio@bwwmind.org.uk](mailto:kbentivoglio@bwwmind.org.uk) for more information.

We wish you all the best for the second half of the school term!

**Mental Health Support Team**

