

# Children and Young People's Newsletter



**Welcome to our Newsletter. We hope you had a great summer break, you have recharged your batteries and squeezed out every bit of the summer time!**

## Welcome back

School term is getting closer and now it's a good time to start returning to our usual routines. It can be stressful to think about school but hopefully it is also exciting as you're going to see your friends or make new ones if you are changing schools, learn and gain new experiences and opportunities. To make this a smooth and enjoyable process here are a few things you can do beforehand to have a smooth transition back to school.

### 1. PREPARE YOURSELF

Think of the daily routine and plan your day. If there are many changes to your routine, prepare for them: How are you getting to school? Do you know your route? If not, take time to familiarise yourself with it and have enough time in the morning to get to school and perhaps have extra time for possible challenges on the way. Think about getting up early enough to have a good nutritious breakfast so you have enough energy for the day ahead.

Do you have your uniform ready? Maybe it's worth preparing that in the evening in case if you don't have enough time in the morning.

Do you have everything you need packed and all your stationery ready? The more prepared you'll be, the less things you will need to worry about.



### 2. ADJUST YOUR SLEEP ROUTINE

Holidays are often a time when we give ourselves a break from getting up early and it might become a problem in the first few weeks of school. Good sleep will ensure you have energy throughout the whole day and will make you more productive.

To get your sleep back on track you need to start going to bed roughly at the same time every night. Try to have a good hour before bed to wind down after a busy day. You can do this by going to your bedroom and reading a book, listening to relaxing music or having a shower or a bath.

Additionally, staying off digital devices an hour to two before bed will aid your sleep quality as our brain associates the light from your device with daylight, so putting your phone aside will help you to fall asleep earlier.



### 3. QUIET YOUR MIND

If there are many things you're worried about when coming back to school take some time to relax. This can be done by doing a mindfulness exercise, listening to music or doing something that is enjoyable. You can try some relaxation exercises such as this one:

Flower and Candle - This is a simple exercise that encourages deep breathing – a way to relax. Pretend you have a nice smelling flower in one hand and a slow burning candle in the other. Breathe in slowly through your nose as you smell the flower. Breathe out slowly through your mouth as you blow out the candle. Repeat a few times.

You can also try [Calm kids](#) app with sleep, mindfulness and yoga exercises.

# Our interventions

Our team has been working very hard over the last school year to support families, children and young people in Westminster. During the 2021/2022 school year we have worked with 33 primary and secondary schools in Westminster and we completed the following:

- [424](#) children, young people and parents interventions
- These included: Anxiety and Low mood 1:1 interventions for young people, Anxiety group intervention for young people and Transition intervention for Year 6 students, Parents 1:1 support on Child anxiety and Behavioural difficulties
- [403](#) psychoeducational workshops across all schools out of which 326 were delivered to children and young people, 60 to parents and 17 to staff members
- [7](#) staff reflective practice sessions to school staff



We have also expanded and now have on board an Infant Mental Health Practitioner working with 0-5s and Youth workers who support young people in Westminster Youth Clubs. We hope we can continue our work this upcoming academic year and access more young people, children and families to provide them with the support they need and promote mental health and wellbeing in all Westminster schools.

## Meet Our Team corner



**In this issue I am happy to introduce to you Mary, who is our Infant Mental Health Practitioner.**

### Meet Mary:

I have an undergraduate degree in psychology, a masters in neuropsychology, and I am currently training in under 5's IAPT therapy at UCL. I've worked with children for the last 12 years in lots of different settings, including residential care homes. Due to my experience working with children in care I am really passionate about the importance of early intervention, which is handy given my current training in under 5's! I have always loved children, and maintain that they are the most interesting of people. My role involves supporting parents with their parenting, through helping them to bond with their child, or to manage challenging behaviour. It is extremely rewarding, and I love being involved in a small way at such a crucial point of development.

### A few things Mary likes:

My biggest (and most unexpected) accomplishment thus far is that I ran the London marathon a few years ago with some of my siblings. It was a lot of effort for a tin foil blanket, but an amazing experience. My favourite pastimes are finding furniture on the street (and fixing it, badly), and being outside, in water. I also love to read, and frequently force other people to read books that I've loved so I can discuss them in detail.

### Mary's perfect day:

My perfect day would be a full day of walking up somewhere beautiful and mountainous, let's say the Swiss alps, with all my favourite people. We would intersperse the uphill climbs with very cold and crystal-clear lakes to swim in, which would magically appear at the perfect moment (as it is the perfect day). There would of course be all the best wildlife on the journey – goats and cows on the footpath, and seals lying by the lakes. There would also be a series of mini concerts from my favourite artists on the way up, to boost morale. The perfect end to the perfect day would be an enormous ice-cold spicy margarita, and hundreds of vegan tacos. We would sit at the top of the mountain, eating and drinking and watching the sun set. When it gets dark, I would teleport into the most comfortable bed available and sleep for three days.



**Thank you Mary for sharing this with us!**