

## Top tips:

**Notice small changes:** Subtle shifts in mood or behaviour might point to deeper feelings. A gentle "You seem a bit quiet" can help start a conversation.

**Support problem-solving:** Guide them to think through challenges rather than jumping in with solutions - this builds confidence.

**Praise effort, not just outcomes:** Recognising patience or creativity helps foster a growth mindset.

**Talk openly about feelings:** Use everyday moments to normalise emotional conversations.

**Create calm at home:** A low-pressure space helps them unwind and feel safe.

**Encourage connections:** Friendships and clubs support belonging and self-worth.

**Be realistic:** Every child grows at their own pace - avoid comparisons.

## Starting the chat:

### How to talk about mental health

- Ask open-ended questions like "How have you been feeling lately?"
- Listen without rushing to fix things.
- Be calm and non-judgmental - this builds trust.
- Normalise emotions: "It's okay to feel anxious sometimes."
- Remind them that you're there, no matter what.

## Looking after you:

### Self-care for parents and carers

Parenting a teenager is not without its challenges at times! Caring for someone else's well-being is easier when you care for your own:

- Make time for things that recharge you.
- Talk to other parents and carers - it helps to share.
- Take short breaks for yourself, even if it's just a walk.
- Ask for support if you're feeling overwhelmed. You're not alone, and your well-being matters too.
- Be kind to yourself! Parenting is tough - acknowledge that you're doing your best, even on the hard days.

## Are you concerned?

If you have concerns about your young person and would like to discuss them with a member of staff in school, please contact one of the following;

- The Pastoral Manager or Head of Year for your young person
- Mr Todd (Student Mental Health and Personal Development Lead)
- A member of the school's safeguarding team

# Mental Health Support

## Leaflet 1



Information about  
how you can support  
your young person at  
home

# Family connection:

## Connection and communication

Family connection and good communication are integral to supporting children's well-being as they enable them to feel valued and heard.

- **Shared meals:** Use mealtimes as an opportunity for open conversations and to strengthen family ties.
- **Regular check-ins:** Schedule times to discuss each family member's day, feelings, and any concerns that they may have.
- **Collaborative activities:** Engage in group activities that everyone enjoys to foster a sense of unity and support.

## Screen time management

Managing screen time helps young people maintain a healthy balance between online and offline life, supporting better sleep, focus, and emotional well-being. Encouraging regular breaks from screens can reduce stress, improve mood, and create more time for meaningful, real-world connections.

- **Set Boundaries:** Establish specific times for device use to prevent overexposure and promote other activities.
- **Tech-Free Zones:** Designate areas or times, such as during meals, to be free from screens to encourage face-to-face interaction.

# Useful routines:

## Morning routines

The following routines can help with a positive start to the day;

- **Hydration:** Start the day with a glass of water to boost brain function.
- **Emotional check-in:** Encourage expressing feelings aloud, such as saying "I feel excited about today."
- **Visual schedules:** Use checklists or visual aids to streamline morning tasks and reduce stress.
- **Physical activity:** Incorporate 5 minutes of movement (such as stretching, dancing, or walking) to energise the body.
- **Nutritious breakfast:** Consume a protein-rich meal to support positive mood and concentration.

## Evening and sleep routines

- **Consistent bedtimes:** Maintain regular sleep schedules to support mental and physical health.
- **Relaxation techniques:** Incorporate calming activities before bed, like reading or gentle stretching, to ease the transition to sleep.
- **Dim lighting:** Reduce light exposure in the evening to signal the body it's time to wind down.
- **Shut off screens:** Turn off all screens at least 30 minutes before going to bed in order to avoid brain stimulation before falling asleep.

# Social media:

and gaming

## Managing online behaviour

Whilst the internet is a great resource, it also presents challenges that can impact mental health and well-being.

### Why online behaviour matters

Children's online actions can shape their self-esteem, friendships, and even their future opportunities. Exposure to cyberbullying, unrealistic body images, or harmful content can contribute to anxiety, low mood, and social withdrawal.

### How parents and carers can help

- **Start open conversations:** Encourage your young person to talk about their online experiences. Ask what apps they use and how they feel about them.
- **Set healthy boundaries:** Help your young person to create a balance between screen time and offline activities.
- **Be a role model:** Demonstrate thoughtful online behaviour in your own life (what you post, how you respond, and how often you engage).
- **Use tools wisely:** Parental controls can support safety, but they work best when paired with trust and understanding.

### When to seek support

If your young person seems unusually withdrawn, anxious, or upset after being online, it could be a sign they're struggling. Talk to your school's pastoral team or consider reaching out to a mental health support service.