



Welcome

Welcome to this Mental health and Wellbeing newsletter.

We are heading closer to the end of 2024, and the days are getting shorter and shorter!

We must look after ourselves and focus on self-care. We hope this newsletter will be useful to you.

PCS news

Thank you for your invaluable feedback on the weekly "top tips". The majority of responses said they were useful but not easy to read and that they got lost in the many emails you receive from school. We have therefore decided to stop this initiative but will instead focus on this type of termly newsletters.

As you know, PCS is applying for a Mental Health and Wellbeing Award. This accreditation will allow us to showcase what we offer to support our students and families, but also reflect on ways to improve. Our first review is in December and we will update you on the outcome in our next newsletter.

Last year we founded a new team of representatives from students, staff and parents/carers who meet once a term to discuss Mental Health and Wellbeing priorities and initiatives.

Our Mental Health Ambassadors (students representatives) have brought up some excellent ideas that we will put in place in the next couple of months.

If you are interested in participating, please email:

mat.verniol@swale.at

We have a lot of beautiful and exciting activities in school in the run up to Christmas, keep an eye on the school website for some updates!

Parent Mental Health & Wellbeing Workshops

In response to parents' feedback, we are going to organise more events around the mental health and wellbeing of teenagers, as well as understanding their brain development.

Our school counsellor, Nick Pope, will invite representatives from the different support groups and associations that are available in the community. These events are a great way to understand more about what is normal and what should be a concern when it comes to teenagers' mental health.

Children & Young People Book Recommendation

Teenagers & Their Parents

Turtles all the way down: by John Green

The acclaimed author of *Looking for Alaska* and *The Fault in Our Stars*, returns with a story of shattering, unflinching clarity in this brilliant novel of love, resilience, and the power of lifelong friendship.

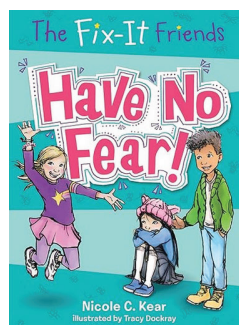
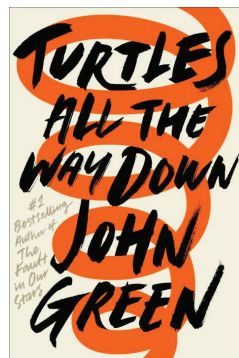
Younger children

As we know that some of you have younger children, we thought it would be a nice idea to share a book recommendation for primary school aged children.

The Fix-It Friends: Have No Fear!

Written by Nicole C. Kear, illustrated by Tracy Dockray

Seven-year-old Veronica wants to help her classmate Maya conquer her fear of bugs, which is preventing her from playing at recess. Veronica comes up with a step-by-step plan that starts with drawing a spider. "Showing gradual exposure to anxieties is a great approach," says an expert at the Child Mind Institute. Ages 7-10.





Peacehaven
Community
School

Aspire • Believe • Contribute • Achieve

Mental Health and Wellbeing Newsletter

Autumn 2024



What is a family hub?

Family hubs are a one-stop-shop for families to access activities or receive support in their local community.

Who are family hubs for?

You can get support if you are:

- pregnant
- a parent of a child aged 0 to 19
- a parent of a child aged 0 to 25 with special educational needs or a disability
- aged 19 or under
- aged 25 or under with special educational needs or a disability

<https://familyhubs.eastsussex.gov.uk/about/what-is>

Feeling overwhelmed? Read this fact sheet to learn whether it's stress or anxiety, and what you can do to cope.

Is it stress or anxiety?

Life can be stressful—you may feel stressed about performance at school, traumatic events (such as a pandemic, a natural disaster, or an act of violence), or a life change. Everyone feels stress from time to time.

What is stress? Stress is the physical or mental response to an external cause, such as having a lot of homework or having an illness. A stressor may be a one-time or short-term occurrence, or it can happen repeatedly over a long time.



I'M SO STRESSED OUT!

From the NATIONAL INSTITUTE of MENTAL HEALTH

Feeling overwhelmed? Read this fact sheet to learn whether it's stress or anxiety, and what you can do to cope.

Is it stress or anxiety?

Life can be stressful—you may feel stressed about performance at school, traumatic events (such as a pandemic, a natural disaster, or an act of violence), or a life change. Everyone feels stress from time to time.

What is stress? Stress is the physical or mental response to an external cause, such as having a lot of homework or having an illness. A stressor may be a one-time or short-term occurrence, or it can happen repeatedly over a long time.

What is anxiety? Anxiety is your body's reaction to stress and can occur even if there is no current threat.

If that anxiety doesn't go away and begins to interfere with your life, it could affect your health. You could experience problems with sleeping, or with your immune, digestive, cardiovascular, and reproductive systems. You also may be at higher risk for developing a mental illness such as an anxiety disorder or depression. More information about anxiety disorders is available at www.nimh.nih.gov/anxietydisorders.

So, how do you know when to seek help?

Stress vs. Anxiety

Stress	Both Stress and Anxiety	Anxiety
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Generally is a response to an external cause, such as taking a big test or arguing with a friend..• Goes away once the situation is resolved.• Can be positive or negative. For example, it may inspire you to meet a deadline, or it may cause you to lose sleep.	<p>Both stress and anxiety can affect your mind and body. You may experience symptoms such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Excessive worry• Uneasiness• Tension• Headaches or body pain• High blood pressure• Loss of sleep	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Generally is internal, meaning it's your reaction to stress.• Usually involves a persistent feeling of apprehension or dread that doesn't go away, and that interferes with how you live your life.• Is constant, even if there is no immediate threat.

What is anxiety? Anxiety is your body's reaction to stress and can occur even if there is no current threat.

If that anxiety doesn't go away and begins to interfere with your life, it could affect your health. You could experience problems with sleeping, or with your immune, digestive, cardiovascular, and reproductive systems.

You also may be at higher risk for developing a mental illness such as an anxiety disorder or depression.

<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/so-stressed-out-fact-sheet>



CALM App

Calm is an app featuring a variety of mindfulness, wellbeing and guided activities specifically designed to help you relax, ground yourself and stay calm.

Designed to be a soothing way of managing your mental health, it features something for every situation, including work-related stress, coping with anxiety and easing the symptoms of depression.

Best feature: Daily Calm. Taking time for yourself every day is important. Daily calm is a 10-minute mindfulness session you can do anywhere, at any time. In these few moments, you can forget about any tasks you have to do, acknowledge your feelings, and be in the present moment. It's a great mind-clearer and opportunity to refocus on your emotions.

Other features:

Sleep Stories to help you get a good night of rest.

Soundscapes to help you focus

Check-ins to help you stay on track and monitor your emotions

Price: Calm offers both free and premium options. The free version features Daily Calm and a limited selection of other features, including Sleep Stories, Soundscapes and guided meditations.

<https://www.calm.com/>



family
lives

Online Parenting Courses

Being a parent has never been easy. There are no manuals for it, and previous generations may not be able to provide the insight you're looking for.

The family unit is more dispersed than ever, with some families existing hundreds of miles from what may be called a 'core unit'. The rapid pace of societal change in the UK rapidly outstrips the knowledge of the immediate past.

The result is that many parents may find themselves lost in a maelstrom of contradictory advice. For adults, time has never been more compacted.

Family Lives has produced a series of online parenting courses, to make this challenge a little easier. If interested please follow the link below:

<https://www.familylives.org.uk/how-we-can-help/online-parenting-courses>

Family Lives offers a confidential and free* helpline service for families in England and Wales (previously known as Parentline).

They can be contacted on 0808 800 2222 for emotional support, information, advice and guidance on any aspect of parenting and family life. Their website is also a rich source of useful support and advice.



5 steps to mental wellbeing

Evidence suggests there are 5 steps you can take to improve your mental health and wellbeing. Trying these things could help you feel more positive and able to get the most out of life.

1. Connect with other people
2. Be physically active
3. Learn new skills
4. Give to others
5. Pay attention to the present moment (mindfulness)

For more details visit:

<https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/guides-tools-and-activities/five-steps-to-mental-wellbeing/>

Further information

Five Ways to Wellbeing: a report researched and developed by the New Economics Foundation

Find out more about the 5 ways to wellbeing on the MIND website

SAFEGUARDING

OUR SAFEGUARDING TEAM



Mathieu Verniol - Assistant Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) at PCS

Mathieu has overall responsibility for the management of child protection and safeguarding concerns and referral to appropriate agencies, including East Sussex Children's Services



DEPUTY DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEADS WILL MANAGE SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS IN THE ABSENCE OF MATHIEU VERNIOL DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

ALL OF THE STAFF ON HERE WORK TOGETHER WITH OTHER PCS STAFF TO ENSURE THE SAFETY AND WELLBEING OF OUR STUDENTS



Ann-Marie Waite - Deputy Headteacher for Inclusion, Culture and Ethos and Deputy DSL

Josie Turner - Assistant Headteacher is a Deputy DSL



James Broadbent - Assistant Headteacher is a Deputy DSL

Kate Leggett - Pastoral Lead is a Deputy DSL



Jenna Tucker - Early Help Co-ordinator is the Safeguarding Officer

Clare Murphy - Safeguarding Support Officer is a Deputy DSL



Look Out For Our Orange Lanyards

PARENTS / CARERS

If you have a concern about the safety or wellbeing of a student at PCS email us at:
pcs-safeguarding@swale.at
or contact 01273 581100 and ask to speak to one of the above

STUDENTS

If you have a worry about your safety or wellbeing email:
pcs-safeguarding@swale.at
or come and speak to one of us