

# Children and Young People's Newsletter

Brent, Wandsworth  
and Westminster

Welcome to our newsletter. We hope you had great holidays and you are feeling ready to go back to school! As much as it can be very exciting to return to school for some, it can be very anxiety provoking for others, especially during the time of the coronavirus.



## PARENT SECTION

### Few words about our service

As September starts we are very excited to continue our work with young people, children, parents and school staff so we can support the emotional wellbeing of children and young people in Westminster.

Our team has been working very hard throughout the year. We have supported over 120 children from primary and secondary schools individually, who have experienced low to moderate anxiety or low mood and other emotional difficulties. We have also provided group interventions to young people and delivered a number of workshops to children, parents and staff in schools.

We remained flexible during the coronavirus outbreak and continued to deliver our work virtually. We are confident that we can continue supporting children and young people in the upcoming school year.

From now on we are going to be working with 33 schools across Westminster and we hope to get to more children and young people who need our support.

We hope to see you very soon!

### Help us help you

In these challenging times we believe that the need for emotional and mental health support can increase. In the new [Barnardo's report](#) over 90% of teachers agreed that the pandemic can have a negative impact on children's mental health. The report has also highlighted the need to treat mental health as a priority when the schools reopen. We also appeal to parents and carers to stay supportive and vigilant of the emotional difficulties young people and children can experience. If you feel like your child might need our support you can speak to the Head of Year in your school to find out how to make a referral to our service. We provide support for:

- Low mood: sadness, low motivation
- Mild to moderate anxiety: worries, irrational fears and concerns
- Common challenging behaviours
- Difficulty adjusting to change and transition

### Join our Parents' Forum

In order to further help us to improve the provision of mental health support in Westminster you can join our Parents' Forum.

If your child or you as a parent had an experience of working with our team we would love to hear from you.

To get more information and to join please email:

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





# CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SECTION



## Dear student,

We hope you had a good holiday! It is time now to go back to our usual routines. We believe that for many of us this can be a nerve-racking time and so here are a few things you can do beforehand to have a smooth transition back to school.

## 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. School equipment – 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.



## Quiet your mind

If there are a lot of things you're worried about when coming back to school take some time during the day to relax. This can be done by doing a mindfulness exercise, listening to music or doing something that is enjoyable. You can also try one of these relaxation exercises:

### 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.

### Lemon

This exercise releases muscle tension. Pretend you have a lemon in your hand. Squeeze the lemon hard to get all the juice out – squeeze, squeeze, squeeze. Throw the lemon on the floor and relax your hands. Then repeat, until you have enough juice for a glass of lemonade! After your last squeeze and throw, shake out your hands to relax!

## 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.



If you're struggling to fall asleep try to have a good hour before bed when you get to wind down after a busy day. This can be going to your bedroom and reading a book, listening to relaxing music or having a shower or a bath. Additionally staying off your phone or computer an hour to two before bed will aid your sleep quality. When using the phone our brain starts associating the light from your device with daylight and wants to stay awake, so putting your phone aside earlier will help you to start feeling sleepy.



## Talk to someone

Think about who you can talk to. Maybe someone from your family or a good friend can offer a listening ear? Or maybe you have a favourite teacher in your school who you can talk to?

Having someone who understands you and will be there for you can be very reassuring.

If you don't have anyone in your environment who you think will be able to understand what you are going through you can visit [www.elefriends.org.uk](http://www.elefriends.org.uk) which is an online community where everyone supports each other's emotional wellbeing. You can also join chats for young people on [www.kooth.com](http://www.kooth.com) where teenagers also share their difficulties and support one another.

Remember you are not alone! There are a lot of us who feel anxious or worried when things get difficult. And remember our team is here for you so if you feel like you need more support, speak to Head of Year to find out more about the work that we do.

And if you are interested in taking part in further discussions around the mental health provision in Westminster and would like to meet likeminded people, you can join our Young People's Forum. Email [kbentivoglio@bwwmind.org.uk](mailto:kbentivoglio@bwwmind.org.uk) for more information.

We wish you all the best for the new school term!

Mental Health Support Team

