

Primary School Health Nurse Team Newsletter

Term 5 May 2018

This newsletter aims to provide families and young people with some useful tips for keeping healthy. Childhood is an important time to instill healthy habits and learn crucial life skills. Establishing these habits early on will help to improve your child's quality of life in the future and enable them to reach their full potential educationally.



www.nhs.uk/change4life



National Childhood Measurement Programme

The school health nurse team visit all primary schools to measure children in Reception and Year 6 every year. The school health nurse service can support you and your child to make small sustainable changes to improve your health and well-being. If you would like to discuss your child's result letter or access support from a trained nurse, please contact us on **07824 498744**.

If your child was absent on the day of your child's school visit there may be an opportunity for them to be measured at a later date.

If you would like ideas on how the whole family can achieve a healthy lifestyle, why not register with [Change 4 Life](http://www.nhs.uk/change4life) to keep up to date with their latest campaigns.

Top Tips

Wellbeing during tests



Your child may have school tests or exams over the coming weeks. Exams in primary school are used for a variety of reasons, not just to determine how well a child has scored in a test.

Schools use exams and tests to produce a class average, so they can assess how well an aspect of the curriculum has been taught, or to consider what students have found difficult learning, and need additional teaching.

It can be useful to remind young people exams are used for these reasons; and is not always about how well a child performs as an individual. This kind of perspective can allow the child to alleviate pressure from themselves and improve performance.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/coping-with-exam-stress/>

- Encourage a good night's sleep
- Turn off all screens before bed, approx. 45 mins prior to going to sleep. Lights from screens create alertness, as the eyes confuse this for day light!
- Avoid caffeinated and sugared drinks, and high sugar food before bed (these can keep you awake and act as a stimulant)
- Encourage regular exercise daily, exercise induces endorphins (feel good hormone), and can help alleviate tension and anxiety
- Understand and listen to your child's concerns. Being available even for five minutes to listen to your child's worries about school can really help them feel supported and manage their emotions

Resilience

may be described as the

ability to positively cope and adapt despite stress and adversity. An individual who is resilient possesses emotional strength which acts as a preventative measure against tension and pressure they may face in their everyday lives. Even small improvements in mental well-being can help a person to be more resilient.

The Government publication entitled 'Five ways to mental well-being' may help young people, and indeed all individuals, to build resilience. The document focuses on the following key areas to develop emotional strength:



Connect

Connect with family and friends.

Building strong relationships and connections with people will support and enrich you every day.

Be active

Exercise makes you feel good and has the added advantage of being good for your physical health too.

Take notice

Savour the moment.

Be curious and notice your surroundings.

Remark on the unusual, notice the changing seasons and be aware of the world around you, notice tastes, smells and what you are feeling inside.

Reflecting on your experiences will help you appreciate what is important to you.

Keep learning

Try something new and set yourself challenges.

Learning new things will increase your confidence and self-esteem.

Give

Do something nice for somebody else.

Thank people, smile at people, volunteer for things, this can all help create connections with people around you.

<https://www.mind.org.uk/workplace/mental-health-at-work/taking-care-of-yourself/five-ways-to-wellbeing>

Alcohol Advice

An **alcohol-free childhood** is the healthiest and best option for young people.

If children **drink alcohol underage**, it should not be until at least the age of 15 years.

As a parent you have more influence over your child than you may realise. Evidence shows that meaningful conversations between parents and their children, help the child develop a sensible relationship with alcohol.

Even young children are aware of alcohol and its effects.

Talking to younger children about alcohol

Answer questions and introduce the subject as part of normal conversation so it doesn't build up to a taboo subject by the time they reach their teens. Don't sit your child down for a lecture; consider discussing alcohol in 'bite size' chunks at appropriate times. Often it can be easier to use prompts like soap story lines, adverts, TV programmes or magazine articles as a great way of getting conversations started. See the attached PDF leaflet for advice on how to talk to your kids about alcohol.

For more information, check out:

drinkaware



To contact the SHN Team in your locality
Tel: 01865 901295

Email: oxfordhealth.witneysnhs@nhs.net

The school health nurse for your school is
Faustina Ofori

<http://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk>

<https://www.facebook.com/oxschoolnurses/>

