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NEURODEVELOPMENTAL TEAM



Five ways to Wellbeing

There are lots of things that impact on our health. It is important to look after not just our physical health but also our emotional and mental health. Evidence suggests that there are 5 key things we all need to include in our lives to support our physical, emotional and mental wellbeing. Try giving some of these things a go and see how it affects your wellbeing.

1. Connect with other people



Good relationships are important for your mental wellbeing. They can:

- Help you to build a sense of belonging and self-worth.
- Give you an opportunity to share positive experiences.
- Provide emotional support and allow you to support others.
- There are lots of things you could try to help build stronger and closer relationships.

Helpful ideas

- If possible, take time each day to be with the people that are important in your life, for example you could try arranging a fixed time to eat dinner together.
- Arrange to do something with friends you have not seen for a while.
- Try switching off the TV to talk or play a game with your children, friends or family.
- Have lunch with a friend from school, college or work.
- Visit a friend or family member who needs support or company.
- Volunteer at a local school, hospital or community group. [Find out how to volunteer](#) on the GOV.UK website.
- Make the most of technology to stay in touch with friends and family. Video-chat apps like Skype and FaceTime are useful, especially if you live far apart.
- Search and download [online community apps](#) on the NHS apps library.

- Try not to rely on technology or social media alone to build relationships. It's easy to get into the habit of only ever texting, messaging or emailing people.

2. Be physically active and eat well

Being active is not only great for your physical health and fitness. Evidence also shows it can also improve your mental wellbeing by:

- [Raising your self-esteem](#)
- Helping you to set goals or challenges and achieve them
- Causing chemical changes in your brain which can help to positively change your mood

For children and young people, evidence shows that daily exercise contributes to general wellbeing in the following ways:

- Improves attention and concentration both at home and in school.
- Evens out their mood by the body producing natural endorphins (these make us feel good).
- Improves sleep patterns
- Builds self-confidence.
- Helps burn off excess energy that some young people have (hyperactivity).
- Makes them feel generally good about themselves.

[Find out more about getting active](#)

Helpful ideas



- Find [free activities to help you get fit](#)
- If you have a disability or long-term health condition, find out about [getting active with a disability](#).
- Start running – there are many [couch to 5k podcasts](#)
- Find out [how to start swimming, cycling or dancing](#)
- Find out about [getting started with exercise](#)
- You do not have to spend hours in a gym. It's best to find activities you enjoy and make them a part of your daily life.

Healthy eating is important for both you and your child. Eating healthily is essential for a child's health, growth and development.

Healthy eating in childhood also helps to set the foundations for healthy eating in adulthood which means your child will have less chance of developing chronic diseases like **heart disease, type 2 diabetes, obesity and some cancers when they get older**. It will also mean they feel better and enjoy life more.

Helpful ideas

- Make meal time family time, without any screens.
- Make healthy foods fun, for example by cutting fruit or sandwiches into interesting shapes.
- Encourage your children to sit with you at the table.
- Try to eat a healthy breakfast every day.
- Try out new foods and show your children where food comes from; let them help you buy food from the shops.
- Cook and try new recipes together.
- Try not to keep lots of junk food in the house.
- Keep a bowl of fruit handy for snacks.

The following link is a helpful guide to healthy eating tips [Healthy eating tips](#)

3. Learn new skills

Research shows that learning new skills can also improve your mental wellbeing by:

- Boosting self-confidence and [raising self-esteem](#)
- Helping you to build a sense of purpose
- Helping you to connect with others

Even if you feel like you do not have enough time, or you may not need to learn new things, there are lots of different ways to bring learning into your life.

Some of the things you could try include:

- Try learning to cook something new. Find out about [healthy eating and cooking tips](#).
- Try taking on a new responsibility at school, college or work, such as being a buddy at break time, improving your presentation skills or mentoring a junior staff member.
- Work on a DIY project, such as fixing a broken bike, garden gate or something bigger. There are lots of free video tutorials online.
- Consider signing up for a course at a local college. You could try learning a new language or a practical skill such as plumbing.
- Try new hobbies that challenge you, such as writing a blog, taking up a new sport or learning to paint.

It's not necessary to learn new qualifications or sit exams if this does not interest you. It's best to find activities you enjoy and make them a part of your life

4. Give to others

Research suggests that acts of giving and kindness can help improve your mental wellbeing by:



- Creating positive feelings and a sense of reward.
- Giving you a feeling of purpose and self-worth.
- Helping you connect with other people.

It could be small acts of kindness towards other people, or larger ones like volunteering in your local community.

Some examples of the things you could try include:

- Saying thank you to someone for something they have done for you.
- Asking friends, family or colleagues how they are and really listening to their answer.
- Spending time with friends or relatives who need support or company.
- Offering to help someone you know with DIY or a work project.
- Volunteering in your community, such as helping at a school, hospital or care home.

5. Pay attention to the present moment (mindfulness)



Paying more attention to the present moment can improve your mental wellbeing. This includes your thoughts and feelings, your body and the world around you.

Some people call this awareness "mindfulness". Mindfulness can help you enjoy life more and understand yourself better. It can positively change the way you feel about life and how you approach challenges.

Read more about [mindfulness](#), including steps you can take to be more mindful in your everyday life.