



Bishop Walsh

Catholic School Newsletter

Safeguarding and Mental Health Newsletter – Term 3 2023 24

Forthcoming Dates

Stress Awareness Month - April
Mental Health Awareness Week 13th – 19th
May

Other topics

Useful websites
Exam Stress and Tips
Coping Strategies

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We keep adding to this for current Safeguarding and Mental Health related issues/stories

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Stress Awareness Month

Stress Awareness Month is held in April since 1992. Its aim is to increase public awareness about the causes of stress and some 'cures'.

Stress is not a bad thing, having stress in our lives can be a driving force to meet daily challenges and motivates you to reach your goals. A lit bit of stress is inevitable and a good thing. Bad stress, however, is the kind to look out for. Bad stress can wear you out and can lead to anxieties, confusion, poor concentration and decreased performance.

Bad stress can be short-term (acute) or long-term (chronic). Acute stress doesn't take a heavy toll on your body if you can find ways to relax quickly. However, chronic stress, when you repeatedly face stressors, can take a heavy toll on your body and can cause negative health effects. Chronic stress can cause headaches, insomnia, weight gain, anxiety, pain and high blood pressure.

Common chronic stressors include:

Relationships
Money
Work
Unmanaged health or mental health problems
Racial inequities
Perceived loss

Both good and bad stress result in your body releasing hormones, such as adrenaline and cortisol, that trigger common signs of stress: butterflies in the stomach, racing heart and sweaty palms. Ultimately, what distinguishes good stress from bad is how you react or feel about the experience.

How to Reduce Bad Stress

Stress becomes a problem when it starts to take over your life. The key to stress management is identifying the bad stressors in your life and developing healthy ways to deal with them. Such as...

Eliminate stress where you can. Learning how to say “no” more often, paring down your to-do list and avoiding people who stress you out is a great place to start. Once you learn to manage your time more effectively, your stress level will go down.

Accept there are events you can’t control. There are things in life beyond your control, such as someone else’s behaviour. Instead of stressing about what you can’t control, focus on what you can control and how you react to the problem. That way, you are expending your energy where it can be more effective.

Think positive thoughts. Negative thoughts can lead to negative behaviour, while a positive attitude can help offset difficult situations. Make an effort to think positively by looking for the upside in every situation, whether you learn from your mistakes or use major challenges as a time for personal growth. In addition, thinking about all the things you appreciate in your life, including your own positive qualities, can change your perspective.

Get support. Confide in family and friends, or turn to someone professional. Expressing how you feel can be cathartic. Also, it’s important to express your feelings, instead of bottling them up because that can add to your stress.

Add relaxation techniques to your everyday routine. Relaxation promotes overall health and gives you a chance to step away and clear your head. It doesn’t have to be a big time commitment; it can be accomplished with deep breathing exercises, meditation or even yoga.

Stay healthy and fit. A well-balanced diet and staying active ensures your body is better prepared to fight stress. Exercise relaxes your body and mind, while improving your mood. In fact, physical exercise has been proven to play a key role in preventing and reducing the effects of stress.

Get a good night’s rest. Getting enough rest is important because it gives your body time to recover from stressful events and sets you up to fight new challenges the next day.

The key is identifying good stress from bad stress. As long as it’s not chronic, stress can be a positive addition to your life. Make an effort to reduce your chronic stress as much as possible, and add positive activities to promote good stress. It creates a healthy balance and a better quality of life.

For more information click [here](#).

Mental Health Awareness

Mental Health Awareness Week 2024 will take place from 13 to 19 May, on the theme of “Movement: Moving more for our mental health”.

Movement is important for our mental health. But so many of us struggle to move enough. We know there are many different reasons for this, so this Mental Health Awareness Week we want to help people to find moments for movement in their daily routines. Going for a walk in your neighbourhood, putting on your favourite music and dancing around the living room, chair exercises when you're watching television – it all counts!

There are lots of examples of activities we can pay to do such as go to the gym or a class but there are also lots of free and low cost activities we can do to get us moving more

Such as

Walk more

Health professionals recommend that we should aim to do 30 minutes of moderate exercise at least five times a week. Walking counts as moderate exercise, so it often takes just a few changes to your lifestyle to achieve this target. If you're keen to explore your area on foot, there are lots of free walking groups, some run by local councils, others by fellow walkers keen to meet like-minded people. Ramblers Wellbeing Walks and Meetup are good places to start.

Outdoor Gyms

There are at least 10 outdoor gyms, click [here](#) to find some near you. Fitness trails – also known as outdoor gyms, trim trails or activity trails - feature exercise equipment and can be found in parks and recreation areas around the country. They are great places to do DIY circuits sessions, where you rotate around the different pieces of equipment and work on your strength and co-ordination.

Team Sport:

Get involved in a team sport, this usually does have a small charge but it benefits from both getting exercise and being part of team to socialise with more people. Doing what you enjoy makes exercise a fun activity and not a chore.


Alternatives

[Green Gyms](#) are free outdoor sessions doing practical activities


[GoodGym](#) is a running based initiative where members get fit doing good in their community.

Other things you can get involved in can be found [here](#)

Or do some exercise at home



School of Hard Knocks
Wellbeing Pack



Move Your Body

Why move your body?

You will be used to exercising and moving around which is a good way of helping with emotions and stress. Even though you can't do your usual sporting activities, it's very important that you keep moving your body.

SOHK weekly challenges

Keep an eye out on our SOHK Youtube page for our weekly physical challenges. You can even record yourself doing it and tag us on social media!

Home Workout

1. Pick six exercises from the list below
2. Do each exercise for 40 seconds with a ten second break
3. Rest for two minutes
4. Do each exercise for 30 seconds with a ten second break
5. Rest for two minutes
6. Do each exercise for 20 seconds with a five second break

PRESS UPS BURPEES BEAR CRAWL SIT UPS
AIR SQUATS CHAIR SQUATS STAR JUMPS
PLANK SHADOW BOXING LUNGES SKIPPING
JUMP SQUATS LYING LEG RAISES TABLE PULL UPS
FOOTBALL KEEP UPS WALL SQUAT HOLD
RUN UP AND DOWN THE STAIRS

Useful websites from organisations we work closely with

1. Urgent mental health help line: ring 0121 262 3555 for advice and support. This line is available 24hours, 7 days a week and can be used whether you are known to the service or not.
2. Foodbanks: https://www.findfoodbanksbrum.org.uk/project_category/food-banks
3. Domestic Violence: Birmingham & Solihull Women's Aid www.bswaid.org and Helpline: 0808 800 0028. Open 7 days a week 9.15am – 5.15pm (closed bank holidays)
4. There is a lot of other early help in the city for all young people and families. Click here for see a whole range of offers: Birmingham Children's Partnership -Resources | Birmingham Children's Partnership - Resources | Birmingham City Council
5. If you are a student, or parent in need of support, Childline is available for 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Calls are not recorded, and their number does not show up on any phone bills, or records. Childline - 0800 1111
6. Hub of Hope - this is a website that shows all the help that is available in your locality.

For Children and Young People

1. Kooth: www.kooth.com (Online chat, resources and direct help for 10-25yr olds)

2. Pause (Mental health and emotional wellbeing support): to register and request support online via <https://www.forwardthinkingbirmingham.org.uk/services/13-pause> or call the registration line 0207 841 4470.
3. Childline is available for 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Calls are not recorded, and their number does not show up on any phone bills, or records. Childline - 0800 1111
4. Samaritans Whatever you're going through, a Samaritan will face it with you. We're here 24 hours a day, 365 days a year call 116 123
5. Shout – text SHOUT to 85258 Shout 85258 is a free, confidential, 24/7 text messaging support service for anyone who is struggling to cope.
6. HopelineUK call 0800 068 4141 or Text 07860039967 HOPELINEUK advisers want to work with you to understand why these thoughts of suicide might be present.
7. Hub of Hope - this is a website that shows all the help that is available in your locality.
8. MindSafe – log into mindsafe to explore the site and use their mood diary
9. Log a concern on the worrybox: <https://forms.gle/JP3i4nd73frKPUeh8> - you must be signed into your Bishop Walsh account.

Exam Stress

It's normal to feel stressed and worried about exams. Stress is your body's natural response to pressure. While it can help you focus and feel motivated to get things done, sometimes it can feel hard to manage.

Year 11/13, remember to check the Pastoral Google Classroom where Miss Doyle and Miss Page have uploaded notes from Caroline from Managing Minds assembly.

YoundMinds have created the following [guide](#) for young people
It covers the following 5 areas

1. [Coping with exam pressure](#)
2. [How to deal with exam stress](#)
3. [Revision tips](#)
4. [Dealing with disappointment on results day](#)
5. [Get help now](#)

Exam stress can affect anyone and it can show up in different ways. For example, you might:

feel anxious or depressed
feel irritable and angry
struggle to sleep
notice changes to your eating habits
have negative thoughts about yourself
worry about the future
lose interest in the things you enjoy
struggle to focus and concentrate
feel unwell – for example, you might get headaches, feel sick or tired

You might experience symptoms of stress that aren't listed here, and that's okay. We are all different and cope with stress and pressure in different ways.

If you notice any of these feelings or you're worried that exam pressure is taking over your life, you are not alone.

Reach out to a teacher or your tutor for help.

Coping Strategies

Coping is a strategy to help us with challenging situations. People who are equipped with more strategies cope better.

Below are my top tips on Coping Strategies, having lots of different strategies means you can pick and choose the most appropriate for that moment (and work through them if one isn't working)

1. Breathing: (repeat for 5 to 10 mins)
 - 4 seconds breathing – breathe in for 4, hold for 4 and breathe out for 4
 - Candle – when breathing out, breathe softly as to not blow out the candle
 - Square breathing – breathe in, hold and breathe out as you trace out a square (or triangle).
2. Grip the floor with your toes (release and repeat) and do the breathing exercise above
3. Wrist Dragging ([Video](#))
4. Relax, starting at your feet, squeeze them tight, curling your toes and then release and these tensed muscles so your feet relax, and feel weightless. Continue this process through your ankles, calves, shins, knees, thighs, bottom, lower back, stomach, chest, shoulders, upper arms, lower arms, hands, neck, mouth and eyes.
5. Exercise
6. 5 Senses – 5 things you can see, 4 things you can touch, 3 things you can hear, 2 things you can smell and 1 you can taste.
7. Think about something positive – relive a Happy moment, imagine you are right back in that moment, focus on it and allow yourself to enter that positive state – be in the moment.

Useful Websites: (all hyperlinked)



Pause is here for you, if you are under 25 and have a Birmingham GP. We offer a non-judgemental listening ear, self-help strategies plus skills for managing difficult situations and feelings. We are open 10am-6pm, seven days a week.

Drop us an email on askbeam@childrenssociety.org.uk or call 0207 8414470 and we will arrange for one of our friendly team to call you back.



Your online mental wellbeing community (in Birmingham)



Things to do to help Mental Health

- **Stay active** – go for a walk or run
- **Talk with family/friends** – have a cuppa and don't think about school/work
- Take time away from electronic devices such as laptops and mobile phones
- **Do some colouring in**

<https://coloringhome.com/online-coloring-pages-for-teenagers>

- **Do some cooking/baking**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/food/recipes>

- **Play a board game and/or a card game**
- **Listen to calming/relaxing music**
- **Exercise**
- If you are new to **exercise** and don't know where to start, the [NHS has lots of advice](#) and guidelines you should follow as well as some gentle introductory exercises recommended for beginners.

Should you need to contact the school

Communication Flow Chart

