

Wakefield Future in Mind Mental Health Support Team - Family Newsletter

Welcome to your Autumn 2023 newsletter full of wellbeing info and tips!

We hope you find it helpful to learn a little bit more about our team and what we do. We've also included calm family activities that might be fun to do over the holidays.

Introducing the Team

and what we do!



The Future in Mind mental health support team offers early support for mental health and emotional wellbeing for children and young people.

Practitioners from the team visit all mainstream schools and colleges across the Wakefield district.

Each school or college has one of our senior practitioners linked to it. They run sessions in schools to improve emotional wellbeing for children and young people.

Some schools also have support from one of our education mental health practitioners who can support children using

a cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) approach to help with things like worry management, low mood, simple phobias, and sleep difficulties.

We can offer support in lots of different ways such as one to one sessions, discussions with parents / carers, assemblies, classroom sessions, parent / carer information sessions and training for staff.

If school staff feel that your child would benefit from this type of emotional wellbeing support, then they will talk to you and may make a referral to our team. If you feel that your child would benefit from some support around mental health and emotional wellbeing, you can also speak to a member of staff at school such as the class teacher, SENDCO, or senior mental health lead and they will make contact with our team.



Childrens Mental Health Week 5th-11th February 2024



The theme of next year's children's mental health week is **"My voice matters"** and it is all about empowering children and young people have the tools to be able to express themselves.

Parents and carers play a vital role in this. There are lots of great resources for parents and carers on the website including tips on how to talk to your child about mental health and conversation starters, and activities to prompt conversations about what matters to them.

[Families - Children's Mental Health Week
\(childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk\)](https://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk)



Sleep for Wellbeing

Sleep is **essential** for our physical and mental health. When we sleep well

- ◇ we feel energised
- ◇ we can manage our emotions
- ◇ we can concentrate
- ◇ physically we feel healthier.

This is exactly the same for our children. When we are struggling to sleep or not getting enough sleep our bodies and minds do not get a chance to recover and this results in us feeling irritable, emotional, even angry and often feeling unwell physically. Again, it is just the same for our children.

Children and young people need more sleep than adults, for example for a 9 year old, an average of about 10 hours sleep per night is about right. It can be particularly difficult through school holidays to stick to a regular sleep routine, including waking around the same time and going to sleep around the same time on a night but it really helps to strengthen our body clocks and results in us and our children having a better night's sleep and feeling refreshed during the day.



Sleep Tips



Go to sleep and wake around the same time each day, even on weekends and holidays,

Get outside in natural light first thing on a morning – this will set your body clock for the day!

Avoid caffeinated products including energy drinks

Keep your bedroom cool (around 18 degrees) and dark on a night

Boost your bedtime routine! That means switching devices off an hour before bed, doing relaxing activities such as reading or drawing and having a warm bath, and have a light supper of sleepy foods and drinks.

Did you know? Some foods may actually help us to sleep well – these include **cheese, yoghurts, milk and bananas!**

For more information go to:

[Home - The Sleep Charity](#) and [Home - Teen Sleep Hub](#)



The Future in Mind Mental Health Support Team also deliver class sessions, assemblies and parent / carer workshops on sleep in schools throughout the Wakefield District. Ask the class teacher, SENDCO,

Year Head or Senior Mental Health Lead in your child's / Young Person's school for further information, they can contact the link FIM MHST senior practitioner for the school.



As a parent / carer, if you are struggling with your own sleep or emotional wellbeing and mental health you can also get support from Turning Point talking therapies, Wakefield, for over 16s. [Mental health | Talking therapies \(turning-point.co.uk\)](#)



ADHD Medication Shortage Update!

For many families the current ADHD medication shortage in the UK is

having a big impact

You can find out more information about the shortage along with advice on what to do if you can't access medication for you or your child and how to manage yours or your child's ADHD during the shortage.

[Frequently asked questions :: West Yorkshire Health & Care Partnership \(wypartnership.co.uk\)](#)



WF Happy Healthy Holidays

WF Happy Healthy Holidays programme provide a winter holiday of **free** activities and food for school age children (from Reception to year 11) eligible for **income – related free school meals** throughout the district taking place on the 2nd-5th January.

To find out more and book free activities visit

<https://www.wakefieldfamiliesaltogether.co.uk/community-support/happy-healthy-holidays/>

Or scan the QR code



What is Interoception and why is it important?

Our brains and bodies are connected – Interoception for beginners!

Our bodies take in information about the world outside by using the senses of vision, sound, touch, smell and taste.

There are special cells called receptors in every part of our body. Receptors send messages to let our brain know what is going on outside our body as well as what is happening inside our body.

For example, when receptors in our eyes tell the brain we see a friend, our brain tells us we are safe. Or when receptors deep in our body send messages that it is low on energy, our brain will let us know it is time to eat. This communication between our brain and body helps us to take care of ourselves.

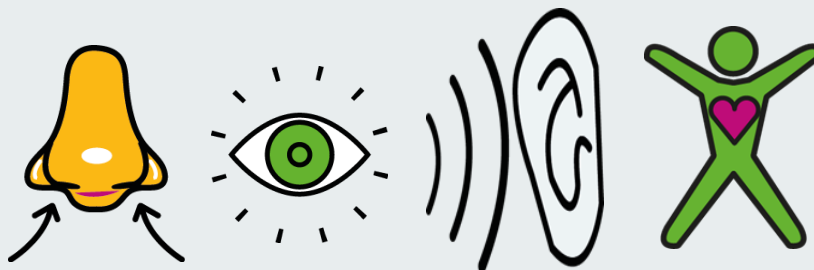
It helps us answer the question “**How do I feel?**”

Learning to recognise body sensations and body messages is one of the first steps to being able to recognise our emotions and how to take care of them. If you would like to know more about interoception, you can start with these resources:

A book to read together with your child - *Listening to My Body* by Gabi Garcia (also available as read aloud on YouTube)

An article by an Occupational Therapist - <https://www.kelly-mahler.com/what-is-interoception/>

Thank you Tracey Jones, Education Mental Health Practitioner, FIM MHST for this interesting newsletter article!



Where to get extra help!

If a child or young person needs to talk they can call **Childline** Open 24/7. Chat to a counsellor online at www.childline.org.uk. Call them on **0800 111**.

If a young person or adult needs to talk to someone they can call the **Samaritans** on **116 123**. It's open 24/7.

If a child, young person or parent/carer needs to talk to someone at night time they can call **Night Owls** (between 8pm and 8am) on **0800 1488244** or text **07984392700**.

If you need to access help from a **food bank or other services** you can find more information about what's available here [wakefield-food-aid-guide2-copy.pdf \(wordpress.com\)](#). You could also ask school if they know about other local practical support in your area.

Welcome Spaces are places in your local community where people can gather for free in a warm welcoming space and enjoy a drink and some food. Find out more here; [Welcome Spaces - Wakefield Council](#)

If you need free confidential and impartial advice you can call **Wakefield District Citizens Advice** on **0800 1448848 (freephone)** or visit [Wakefield's Citizens Advice Bureau \(wakefielddistrictcab.co.uk\)](http://wakefielddistrictcab.co.uk)

Team Charity Donations - The Clothing Bank



As a team, we like to get involved where we can with our community and give something back.

Nic White, our team Project Manager came up with a great idea to do a team collection and donation to a local charity, The Clothing Bank.

The Clothing Bank collect good quality preloved clothing and re-home it to those who need it and who can benefit from the donations to help stop clothing poverty.



The clothing bank was started in January 2020 by two local women in their garden, setting up volunteer drop off points at friends' houses and creating a Facebook page, this has quickly grown to a massive clothing bank community of 84,000 people who are actively spreading their message, volunteering as drop off points and donating clothing.

In 2023 they now have 130 (and growing) drops of locations throughout Yorkshire and have provided over 5400+ packs of preloved clothing and this is still on the rise due to the current circumstances



Nic kindly filled up her car and spare room with all our teams generous donations of preloved clothing and made plans to drop them off with The Clothing Bank Founders Sue and Sally.

Nic and Charlotte Kirk, senior practitioner, FIM MHST, visited The Clothing Bank HQ on the 5th December to drop off the massive amount of bags donated from the team and to see the great job Sue, Sally and their team of volunteers do in all weather from their garden.



You can find out more about the clothing bank by visiting their website [The Clothing Bank](#) or their [Facebook page](#). You can find drop off points [DROP OFF POINTS | The Clothing Bank](#) on the website if you would like to donate any preloved clothing or shoes, or if you need support you can also find it on the website.

Holiday Period Wellbeing

For some of us Christmas and the holiday season can be an exciting time but for many it can be a time of emotional and sensory overload. It is important to take care of ourselves and our children during this period, making time for slowing down too. What are your family's favourite ways to take care of yourselves and feel calm through the hectic holiday period?



Here's a few ideas that you might like to try:

A snuggle on the sofa.

Get wrapped up in a soft fluffy blanket.

Have a walk outdoors in nature.

A warm bubble bath.

A cuddle and a story – even for adults!

A hot chocolate with marshmallows.

Being wrapped up in a duvet and listening and singing along to your favourite songs.

Ask your child if there are any more ideas that they can suggest for feeling relaxed during the busy holidays.

For children, young people and adults who find the holiday period particularly difficult, take a look at the following link for ideas on how to manage the sensory overload at this time: [Managing The Christmas Sensory Overload! \(beaconhouse.org.uk\)](https://beaconhouse.org.uk/Managing-The-Christmas-Sensory-Overload/)

Festive Favourites

Relaxed Breathing

Taking some time to take deep, calm breaths is easier than you think, and the best thing is you can do it anywhere. Use this star to help by tracing around its edge with your fingers. Follow the instructions and let each side take 3-6 seconds.

Relaxed breathing works best with practice, so try to do it



Festive Yoga

Take some time to notice how your body feels when you practice some simple yoga stretches.

Imagine and practice what your body would look like if you were;

Standing tall like a Christmas tree

Curled up like a snowball

Curvy like a candy cane

Stretched out like a gingerbread man

**Happy Holidays & a Happy New Year from
the Future in Mind Mental Health Support
Team**