

# WELL-BEING NEWSLETTER

## CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

THIS YEAR CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH WEEK RUNS FROM 5TH TO 11TH FEBRUARY. CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH WEEK IS A MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS WEEK THAT EMPOWERS, EQUIPS AND GIVES A VOICE TO ALL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE UK. THE THEME FOR THIS YEAR IS 'OUR VOICE MATTERS'.

OUR VOICE MATTERS IS ABOUT EMPOWERING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE BY PROVIDING THEM WITH THE TOOLS THEY NEED TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES.

WHEN WE FEEL EMPOWERED, THERE'S A POSITIVE IMPACT ON OUR WELLBEING. CHILDREN WHO FEEL THAT THEIR VOICES ARE HEARD AND CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE HAVE A GREATER SENSE OF COMMUNITY AND SELF-ESTEEM.

HOW CAN WE DO THIS?

SIMPLY BY HAVING A CONVERSATION WITH YOUR CHILD AND LISTENING TO THEIR ANSWERS WITHOUT DISTRACTION.

HERE ARE SOME CONVERSATION STARTERS:

TELL ME ABOUT YOUR DAY

WHAT WAS THE BEST THING ABOUT YOUR DAY?

ARE YOU FEELING OK?

HOW CAN I HELP YOU?

WHO WOULD YOU TALK TO IF YOU WERE WORRIED ABOUT SOMETHING?

SOME CHILDREN TOOK A POLL AND HERE ARE SOME OF THE THINGS THEY WISH ADULTS KNEW

- WE DON'T NEED TO HAVE 'SPECIAL CONVERSATIONS ABOUT OUR MENTAL HEALTH' – SOMETIMES AN INFORMAL CHAT ON A JOURNEY OR AT BEDTIME IS ENOUGH.
- I NEED TO KNOW IT'S OKAY TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT ANY AND ALL OF MY FEELINGS. PLEASE HEAR WHAT I HAVE TO SAY, WITHOUT INTERRUPTING ME.
- PLEASE LISTEN TO ME CAREFULLY AND ACKNOWLEDGE HOW I AM FEELING – IT MIGHT SEEM SILLY TO YOU BUT WHAT I AM GOING THROUGH IS IMPORTANT TO ME.
- PLAYING WITH PETS CAN MAKE ME FEEL BETTER. SAME WITH PLAYING FOOTBALL, BASKETBALL OR WHATEVER TYPE OF SPORT I AM INTO.
- DON'T COMPARE MY EXPERIENCES TO YOUR OWN WHEN YOU WERE A CHILD. SOMETIMES I JUST NEED YOU TO LISTEN AND HEAR WHAT I'M SAYING – I DON'T ALWAYS NEED ANSWERS (OR LECTURES)
- PLEASE DON'T WORRY ABOUT TRYING TO FIX THINGS FOR ME – I OFTEN JUST NEED TO KNOW YOU ARE THERE FOR ME AND UNDERSTAND WHAT I AM GOING THROUGH.
- IF YOU ARE OPEN WITH ME ABOUT YOUR FEELINGS, THIS CAN HELP ME TO BE MORE OPEN ABOUT MINE.
- SOMETIMES I DON'T WANT TO TALK. PLEASE TRUST THAT I WILL COME TO YOU (OR ANOTHER GROWN-UP OR SOMEONE MY OWN AGE) WHEN I'M READY. SOMETIMES IT'S EASIER FOR ME TO TALK TO SOMEONE NEARER MY OWN AGE – MY SIBLINGS, COUSINS, FRIENDS.
- SOMETIMES A HUG IS ALL IT TAKES TO MAKE ME FEEL SUPPORTED.