

Health & Wellbeing Bulletin

Summer 2024

Sue Howard – Health & Wellbeing Champion

01803 762113 hr@thelink.academy



Welcome to the Summer issue of your Mental Health & Wellbeing bulletin

Well, the summer may have finally arrived at last and hopefully everyone is able to take advantage of some sunny days now.

With the end of term and this academic year getting ever so much closer, it's been a very busy term for all. The days and weeks just seem to fly by so quickly and it is so important to therefore make time for YOU, by whatever means you can. Be it a little walk round the block at lunchtime or straight after work, making yourself a rule to not check work emails out of hours!! Or taking up a new hobby like reading, swimming or maybe knitting.

Any little changes you feel able to make to your life will help with your mental health and wellbeing.

Take Care everyone and look after each other – Sue

Thank you from the Editor

I just wanted to say a huge thank you to all of you for your support and cooperation in my mission to 'talk menopause' and bring this important subject to the forefront of our workplace.

The response to our survey earlier this year was amazing and with a massive 121 of you taking part, it really helped to focus my attention on what the next steps were. We already had a Menopause policy in place, but more literature providing resources, help and advice should now be on display in your staff room and our senior leaders have also been provided with some insightful documents to enable them to support you and an online awareness course to complete. Thanks again, your enthusiasm and eagerness to contribute to this subject is so very much appreciated.

What are the benefits of alone time?

It's no surprise that there are several benefits to finding time to be alone on your sofa curled up with a book, or going on a solo walk in your neighbourhood. One study found that thinking about alone time and then spending time alone actually boosted the mood of participants. And the same study also uncovered that alone time has the potential of helping us regulate our emotions. Another study found that highly creative people actually seek out alone time to help get the creative juices flowing.

For some, this solitude often comes up in activities like reading, writing, or creating art, where a quiet environment encourages deep thinking and new ideas. In these moments, people can connect with their inner selves, discovering insights that might otherwise remain hidden. Creativity is one way that alone time lets us experience the world with curiosity – bringing a sense of fulfilment and purpose, while driving both personal and collective growth.



Useful and Handy Apps for Daily Life



Drinking Water Reminder



To-Do List



Runna – Running plans and Coaching

Supporting friends, family and colleagues – 8 tips for talking about mental health

Set time aside with no distractions
Let them share as much or as little as they want to
Don't try to diagnose or second guess their feelings
Keep questions open ended
Talk about self-care, exercising, diet, sleep patterns etc.
Listen carefully to what they tell you
Offer them help in seeking professional support and provide information on ways to do this
Know your limits!

Step-by-step guide to setting mental health goals

Creating mental health goals might seem challenging at first, but with this clear, step-by-step approach, you can achieve it. Remember, the goal is progress, not perfection. Each small step you take is a positive move toward a healthier, happier you.

1. Identify the details of what you want to change

This is your starting point. Take a moment to think about your mental health and what you want to work on. It could be anything from reducing anxiety, improving your mood, to building stronger relationships with those around you.

2. Get SMART about your ideas to make them attainable

Once you have an idea of what you want to achieve, it's time to make your goal specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART). For example, instead of saying, "I want to be less stressed," a SMART goal would be, "I will practice 10 minutes of mindfulness meditation each day for the next month to reduce my stress levels."

3. Break goals down into smaller steps to avoid becoming overwhelmed

Large goals can be overwhelming. Break them down into smaller, more manageable tasks. For instance, if your goal is to improve your relationships, start with a simple task like spending 10 minutes a day having meaningful conversations with a loved one.

4. Create an action plan to fit changes into your daily life

Now that you have your steps, make a plan to execute them. If your goal is to meditate daily, decide when and where you'll do it. Will it be in the morning before work, or in the evening before bed? Having a clear plan makes it easier to stick to your goals.

5. Write your goals down to keep motivated

Writing down your goals can make them feel more real. Keep them in a place where you can see them often, like on your fridge door or as a reminder on your phone.

6. Review and adjust your goals as often as needed—without judgment

Your goals aren't set in stone. Life changes—and so can your goals. Regularly reviewing your goals helps you stay on track and make any necessary adjustments to ensure they continue to be relevant and achievable for you.

Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) with Education Support

Don't forget our confidential employee benefit designed to help you deal with personal and professional problems that could be affecting your home life or work life, health, and general wellbeing. 08000 856 148

Recipe idea for you

Summer Meatballs & Spaghetti – A quick and easy meal for two perfect for those summer evenings

Ingredients

2 tbsp olive oil
1 onion, finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1 tsp fennel seeds
250g pork mince
Large handful parsley, chopped
1 large courgette, peeled into ribbons around the edge and centre finely chopped
200g spaghetti
½ a lemon zested & juiced
Grated parmesan to serve

Method

1. Heat ½ tbsp. oil in large frying pan medium heat
2. Add onion and soften 5mins, add garlic and fennel, cook for further 2 mins. Tip into a bowl
3. Add pork, parsley and chopped courgette to the bowl, season, mix and shape into 10 balls
4. Heat remaining oil, add meatballs and fry 5-8mins, turning occasionally until golden brown, set aside
5. Cook spaghetti according to pack instructions
6. Transfer to pan of meatballs adding some of the cooking water
7. Add courgette ribbons and put back on heat. Toss altogether adding lemon juice
8. Season well and tip into bowls to serve with zest and parmesan



Summer Bucket List – fun & simple ideas for all the family

- Build a sandcastle
- Pick strawberries
- Run in sprinklers
- Have a picnic
- Build a fort in the garden
- Visit a farmers market
- Make ice-cream
- Press flowers
- Blow bubbles
- Watch an outdoor movie
- Fly a kite
- Have a water balloon fight

Inspiring Quote

"However difficult life may seem, there is always something you can do and succeed at." – *Stephen Hawking*