

**SUPPORTING YOUR
CHILD WITH THEIR
WELL BEING AT
HOME**



DEAR PARENTS

- Many of you approach us to ask for advice on how you can best support your child with their wellbeing at home. We've put together this guide which we hope you'll find helpful. It outlines several strategies that you can use, and organisations who can provide additional help. It also provides information about what we do as a school and how your child can access additional support should they need it.



WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?

Mental health refers to our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It is all about how people think, feel, and behave.

Mental health also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others and make choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through to adulthood.

Over the course of your life if you experience mental health problems, your thinking, mood, and behaviour could be affected.

Mental health problems are common but help is available. People with mental health problems can get better and many recover completely.

Mental health problems are not permanent. Some are, but many difficult times can be travelled through and we come out the other side.



POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH ALLOWS PEOPLE TO:

- Form and keep good relationships with friends and family.
- Realise their full potential such as do well at school or football.
- Cope with the stresses of life, things like friendship worries or difficulties at home.
- Concentrate when doing things like schoolwork or homework.

THERE ARE THINGS WHICH WE CAN ALL DO TO HELP MAINTAIN POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH INCLUDING:

- Talk with trusted adults or friends.
- Ask for professional help if you need it (like Mindworks Surrey, and many more organisations)
- Spend time talking and being with other people.
- Reframe our thoughts.
- Do something relaxing like listening to music or watching TV.
- Do some mindfulness or breathing exercises.
- Do something active, like walking, swimming or playing sport.
- Get enough sleep.
- Eat a healthy diet and drinking plenty of water.
- Developing coping skills.
- Avoid caffeine, drugs and alcohol.



RESILIENCE



- Resilience isn't about being emotionless or not feeling. It is the ability to feel and to recover quickly from difficulties. Children with resilient features are able to explain their feelings and give reasons to why they are feeling that way.
- Some days we are more resilient than others. On those days when we don't feel as 'bounce backable' resilience can be developed!
- However much we try to protect our children, they will face everyday challenges. It is important that they learn the skills to navigate these challenges, but also that they learn to be adaptable and to 'bounce back' when needed.



RESILIENCE FRAMEWORK

- The Resilience Framework summarises a set of ideas and practices that promote resilience.



RESILIENCE FRAMEWORK

The Resilience Framework summarises a set of ideas and practices that promote resilience. It is based on a body of research and practice development called Resilient Therapy (RT).

This was originally developed by Angie Hart and Derek Blincow, with help from Helen Thomas and a group of parents and practitioners.

Basics

- Good Housing
- Money to live
- Being safe
- Transport and getting to places
- Healthy diet
- Exercise and fresh air
- Enough sleep
- Play and hobbies
- Not being judged

Belonging

- Find somewhere you feel like you belong
- Find your place in the world
- Spend time with good people and in good places
- Keep relationships going
- More healthy relationships the better
- Take what you can from relationships where there is some hope
- Get together with people you can rely on
- Responsibilities & obligations. For example: looking after your brother/sister or going to school
- Focus on good times and places
- Understand what has happened in your life
- Predict a good experience of someone or something new
- Make friends and mix with other people

Learning

- Make school or college work as well as possible
- Engage mentors
- Plan out your future
- Organise yourself
- Highlight achievements
- Develop life skills

Coping

- Understand right from wrong
- Be brave
- Solving problems
- Focus on the good things in life. Put on your Positivity Glasses!
- Find time for your interests
- Calming down and making yourself feel better
- Remember tomorrow is another day
- Lean on others when necessary
- Have a laugh

Core self

- Instil a sense of hope
- Understand other people's feelings
- Know and understand yourself
- Take responsibility for yourself
- Find time for your talents
- There is existing help and solutions for problems, use them

Noble truths

- Accepting
- Conserving
- Commitment
- Enlisting

Blackpool Council



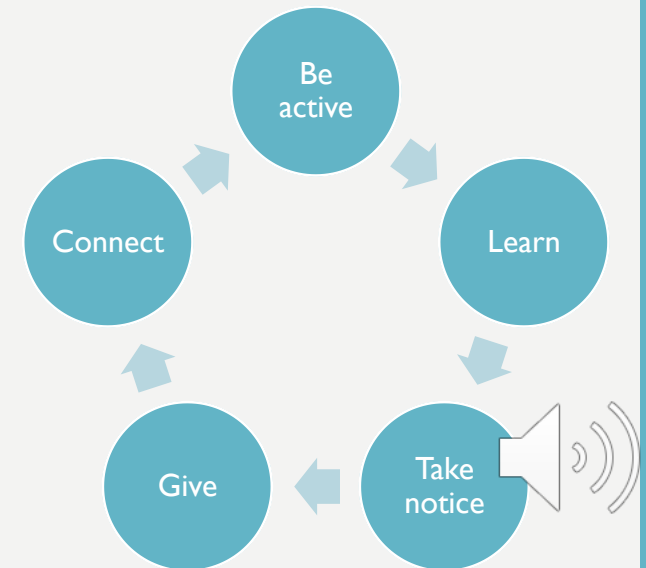
THERE ARE A NUMBER OF THINGS YOU CAN DO TO HELP YOUR CHILD DEVELOP THEIR RESILIENCE:

- Do not expect them to be perfect – Everyone makes mistakes or finds themselves in situations they didn't expect. Be rational, how much of an issue is it and can it be resolved?
- Encourage them to be more independent – If they are facing a challenge, don't try to solve it for them. Talk the issue through and encourage them to come up with their own solutions. They may need a little guidance but it is important that they have the opportunity to solve it themselves if they can.
- Share your experiences with them – Children find it really helpful if you can give them examples of when things haven't gone as planned and how you overcame them. They need to know that you didn't just give up!
- Encourage a growth mindset – This can either be by encouraging your child to try new things or through use of language. 'I can't do XXXX yet' is much better than 'I can't do XXXX'
- Healthy 'struggle time' is important for children. Many children give up if they cannot do something immediately, or as parents, we try to step in and help too soon. Children need to learn that there are a number of ways to do things and if the first approach doesn't work, they can then try something else.



SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD : THE FIVE WAYS TO WELLBEING

- Good mental health and good well being doesn't mean that you will never experience situations or times that you find difficult. Everyone experiences a time when they have felt challenged, dysregulated or struggling to cope.
- Experiencing these feelings and times means that we have experience and resilience to cope when things do get tough.
- Scientists and researchers have developed the 5 ways to well being.





Connecting with the people around us is a great way to remind ourselves that we're important and valued by others. Reminding ourselves of stories and memories is a good way to remind ourselves of times when we have felt good.

Here are some suggestions for staying connected:

- Arrange to meet people regularly. Regular play dates, coffee mornings or dinners is a good way to regularly see the people we are connected with.
- Reach out to somebody you've lost contact with. Send them an email or give them a call to let them know you are thinking about them.
- Take some time to get to know your neighbours. Invite them around for a cup of tea.
- Spend some time in local places that you enjoy, for example: the park, to build new relationships and do activities you enjoy together.
- Join local groups and create or establish new hobbies with similar people.
- Every classroom as a worry box. Talking to a teacher shares your worries and helps them know your feelings.





We know that there's a link between staying active and positive mental health and wellbeing. By making sure we are regularly moving our bodies, we can look after our mental and physical health at the same time.

Here are some ways to be active:

- Go for a walk together as a family. Maybe meet up with another family member or friend too.
- Try activities that bring your focus to the mind-body connection or activities which get the heart racing.
- Make time for joyful movement, such as dancing.
- Join a local sports club - is there a sport you or your child has always wanted to try?



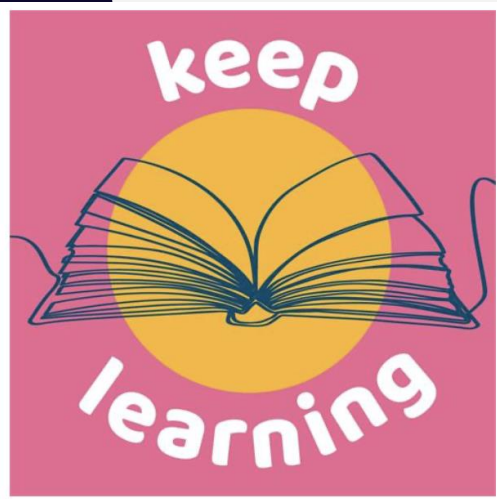


Taking notice of our thoughts, emotions and surroundings is a great way to stay present and pay attention to our needs. Taking notice of things we're grateful for, big or small, is a great way to boost our mood and appreciate our surroundings.

Here's some suggestions around taking notice:

- Take up a mindful hobby like knitting or journaling.
- Everyday, write down three things in your life you feel grateful for.
- Allocate time in the evening to reflect on what went well that day.
- Change the question 'how was your day?' to what made you laugh today? Tell me one fact you learnt today? This makes your questions more specific to take notice.





Learning new things is a good way to meet new people and boost our self confidence, which in turn improves our mental health and wellbeing. Learning with our children helps us make connections and build stronger relationships.

Here are some ideas to keep learning:

- Try out a new recipe and cook together.
- Listen to new music, watch a film or new television programme together to see a different point of view. Discuss what you have watched together and ask questions.
- Learn a new skill together, perhaps attend a new class to learn something like knitting or a sport.





Research has found a link between doing good things and an increase in wellbeing. Giving back to your communities both local and national can create a positive sense of self.

Here are some suggestions to give more

- Acts of kindness, daily.
- Recycle your waste and give back to the environment.
- Fundraise or create and build awareness for school or a charity that is close to your heart.
- Help local people or offer your time, volunteering for those in need.



SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD: THE POWER OF PRAYER



As Christians, the importance of prayer is a really effective tool in helping children and adults when they are worried or have thoughts racing through their mind. Taking a moment to be still and calm allows us to pass on our worries to God and can bring a sense of relief.

“Therefore let everyone who is godly offer prayer to you at a time when you may be found; surely in the rush of great waters, they shall not reach him.” *Psalm 32:6*

“But truly God has listened; he has attended to the voice of my prayer.” *Psalm 66:19*

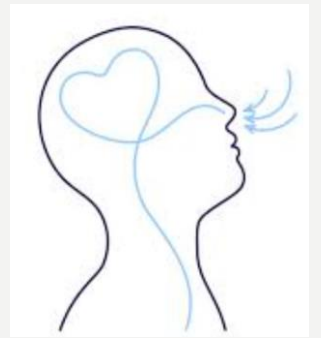
The image of the Holy Spirit is seen as the breath of God. In time of need, when we need a little extra the power of our breath is valuable. The word ‘inspiration’ means to breathe in.

Sometimes our prayers need fewer words and more being silent and allowing God’s breath to breathe into us.



BREATH PRAYERS

THE POWER OF BREATH



- Breath prayers combine deep breathing exercises with prayers of meditation on Gods Word to help clam our bodies and focus our minds on truth.
- When you are feeling anxious or panicky, the sympathetic nervous system kicks in, increasing your heart rate and triggering rapid, shallow breathing that can lead to hyperventilating. Deep breathing exercises help engage the parasympathetic nervous system, slowing your heart rate and breathing, and helping you to calm down. Breathing is the bridge between the brain and the body. Your breathing is in part dictated by your thinking. Focusing on negative thoughts and worries can increase anxiety, but by turning your thoughts to Truth, you can calm your mind, shift your focus and “let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think.” **Romans 12:2**

How to do breath prayers?

- Inhale & exhale very slowly as you recite the words of each prayer to yourself. Breathe in deeply & slowly through your nose & feel your lungs fill completely. Try to focus on filling your lower lungs (your diaphragm) so that your stomach expands while your upper chest remains still. Then slowly breathe out. The exhale should be the longest. Empty your lungs slowly & fully. Meditate on the words of the prayer as you breathe. Repeat at least 10 times. Optional: hold your breath for a count of 3 between the inhale and exhale.

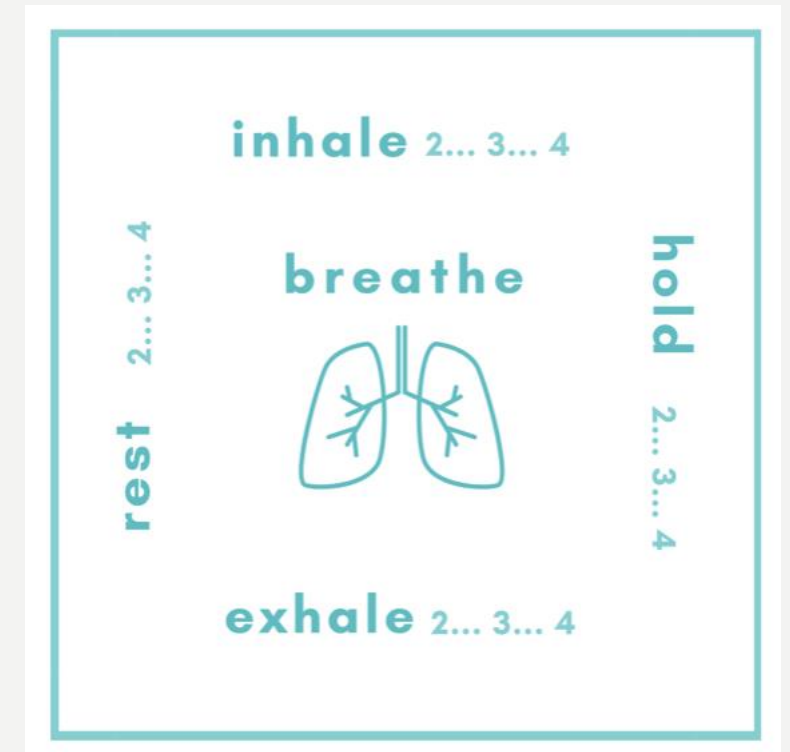


SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD: BREATHING TECHNIQUES.

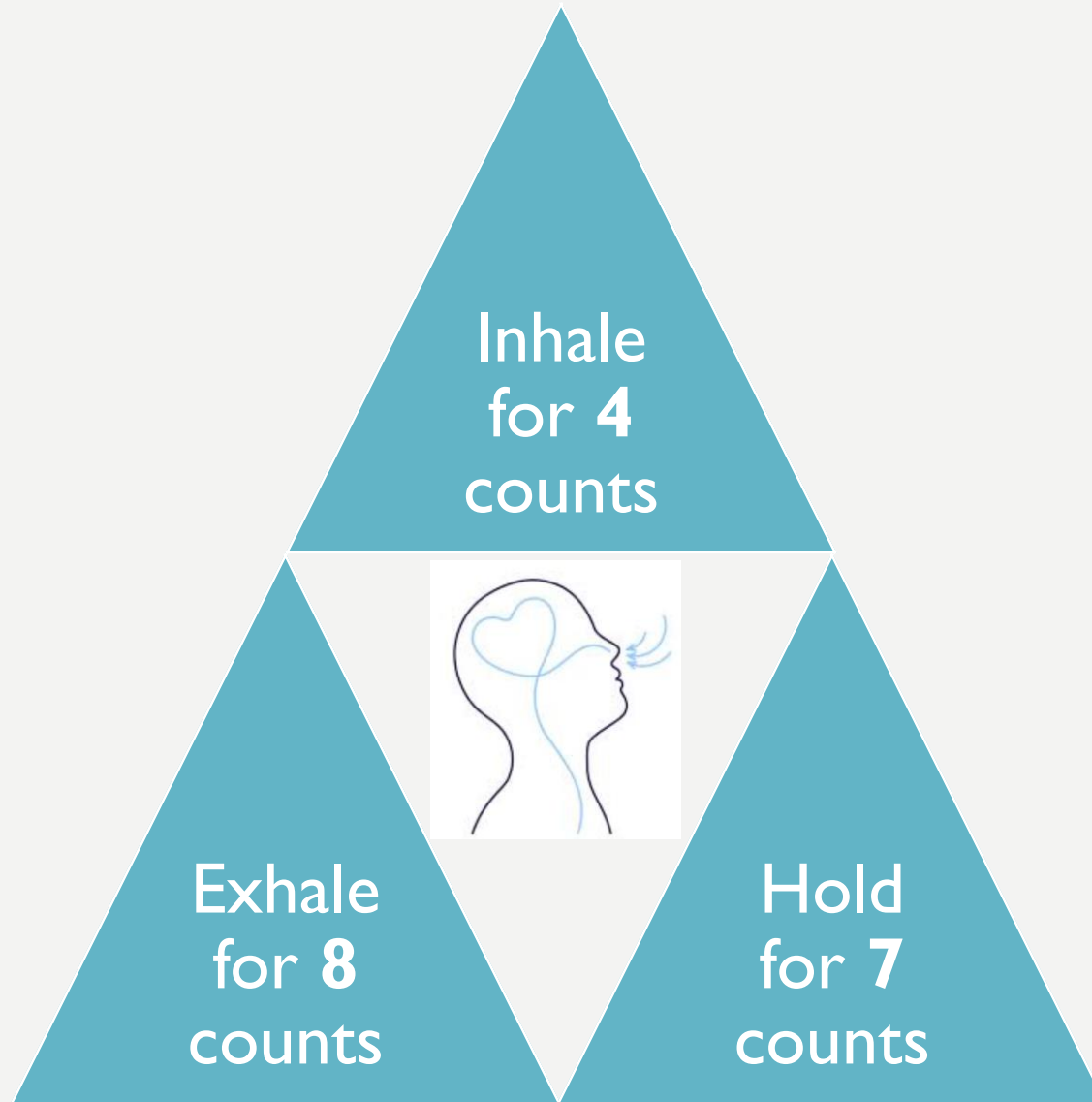
Other breathing techniques.

SQUARE BREATHING

- Image a square. Breathe in whilst imagining walking or travelling along the first side, when they reach a corner pause, then deep breath in again for each side. This can be repeated as many times as needed.



4 – 7 – 8 BREATHING



5, 4, 3, 2, 1 GROUNDING

The 5-4-3-2-1 Grounding Exercise

This exercise will help your little one calm down and stay present when they're feeling anxious or overwhelmed.

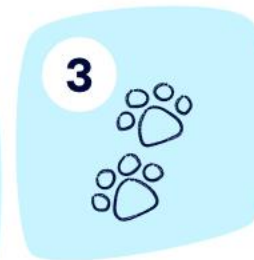
Things you can ...



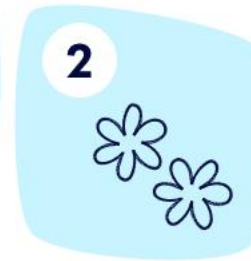
See



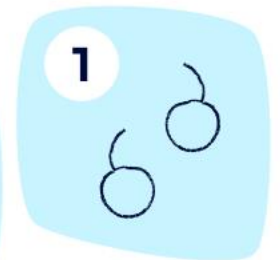
Hear



Touch



Smell



Taste



SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD : OTHER IDEAS

Thought Challenging

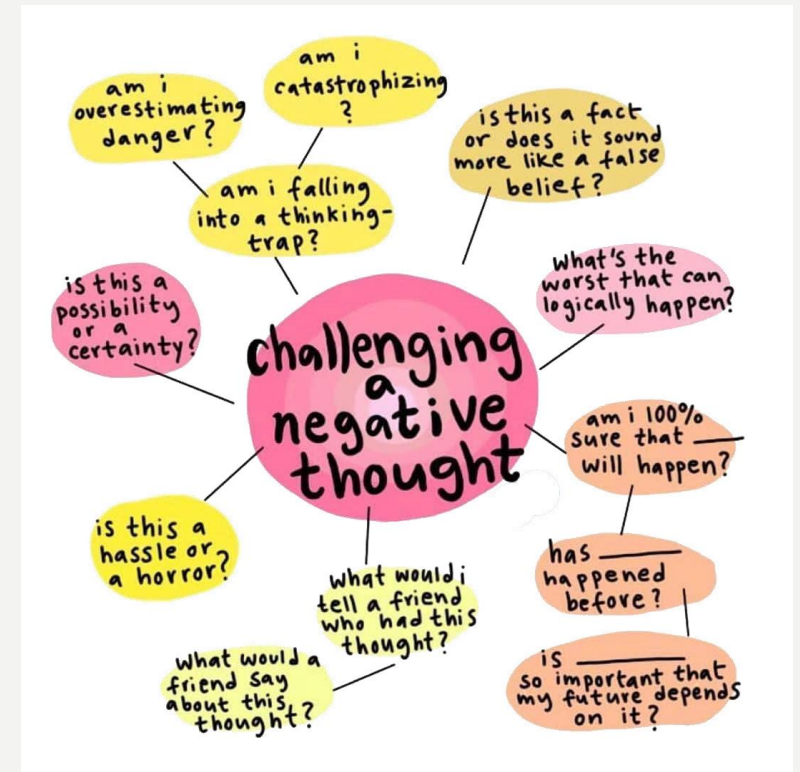
- Sometimes your child may become overwhelmed with negative thoughts. It can be helpful to try a thought challenging exercise with them.

Get Creative

- Research has found that being creative can boost self-esteem and provides a sense of accomplishment. It can help to produce dopamine, which makes children feel good, and improves concentration. There are a range of activities you can try with your child, even if it's just a doodle or using chalk outside or squirty water bottle painting.

Quality Time

- Finally, when we ask the children what they feel helps them maintain their wellbeing, they often say that it is quality time with the people in their support network. They want time to talk and to share their feelings and concerns. Getting a young person to open up can be tricky so here are two methods that parents have found helpful in the past: going for a walk or a drive in the car.



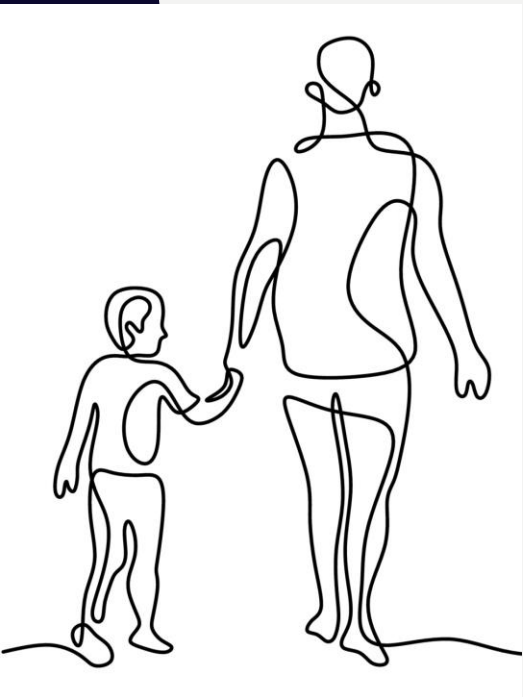
Go for a walk

Some children find movement calming and are more likely to open up while moving. Going for a walk also reduces the need for eye contact and can make opening up easier and more comfortable. It also allows for an easy distraction if things start to feel too much.

Take them out in the car

They don't have to make eye contact with you (which some struggle with), they can't go anywhere as they are in the car with you but other distractions are around for when things start to feel too much.

Remember to not force or pressure a child to speak to you, this may have the opposite effect to what you want.



ADDITIONAL WELLBEING RESOURCES

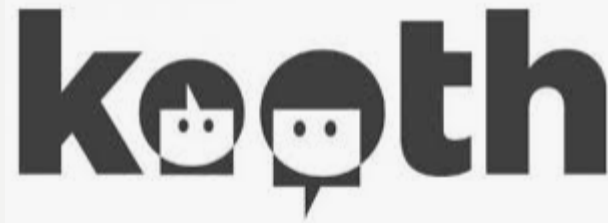
- If you are concerned about your child's wellbeing, there are a wide range of organisations who can help you.
- It is also important that you get in touch with your GP who can also provide additional support and resources.
- Here are some links to websites that provide support and advice to parents and students.





Mindworks is the new service set up by Surrey CC. It has an excellent website offering a range of services and information. It includes information on CAMHs and how to access additional support for your child.

<https://www.mindworks-surrey.org/>



Kooth are an online service who provide digital support to young people who are experiencing issues with their mental health. They provide articles, wellbeing ideas and online community support.



Childline has a wide range of resources which provide information to help your child understand how they might be feeling. They also offer a range of ideas of things that can be done to support wellbeing.



MindEd is a website produced by the NHS with a range of help and advice for parents who may be concerned about their child's mental health. MindEd For Families



Various charities, like Barnardo's have outreach programmes to support children at home and in school. There is also a range of resources on their website and people to reach out to.



Young Minds are an organisation who specialise in working with young people. They have a wide variety of resources on their website which cover a range of topics.

<https://youngminds.org.uk>



THE MARIST CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Our school website has further resources.

<https://marist.surrey.sch.uk/surrey/primary/marist/site/pages/ourcurriculum/well-being>



CRISIS

In a crisis situation should you find yourself in a situation where you need URGENT support regarding your child's mental health or wellbeing please use the following services:

- **Surrey Mental Health Service offer a Mental Health Helpline.**

They operate 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year 0800 915 4644.

If you cannot get an appointment with your GP and it is an emergency, take your child to A&E.



SUPPORT WE PROVIDE IN SCHOOL

- In school, we supplement the work you do as parents and carers to ensure the students are happy, healthy and prepared to learn. We have adopted Surrey CC THRIVE framework in the support we offer.



THRIVE



THRIVE FRAMEWORK



PSHE Programmes, Whole School Approach to Mental Health, Supporting resilience in vulnerable groups, Monitoring well-being, Staff training, Supporting parents, Promoting a culture of well-being

