

# A dose of Health & Wellbeing

A bitesize guide to a healthier lifestyle, from your School Nursing team

Parents of Secondary School Edition (July 2025)


## Hello and welcome from your School Nursing team

This newsletter is full of  
useful information, hints and  
tips for keeping healthy.

### What do you think of our newsletter?



Do you find this newsletter  
helpful? What would you like  
to hear about?

 [School Nursing Newsletter  
feedback form](#)

Thank you!



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# Does your child sometimes feel anxious or worried?

Anxiety means when you worry about something. It is a normal emotion – it's one of our body's natural reactions to stress. Some level of anxiety is normal as your child grows up and learns to navigate the world.



However, it's important that they have the **tools to manage feelings of anxiety** and can tell the difference between normal emotions and more severe anxiety which is interfering with their everyday life.



- Anxiety triggers adrenaline, which leads to a fight, flight or freeze response when we feel unsafe.
- Physically we can feel uncomfortable and unwanted sensations like a rapid heartbeat, faster breathing, and nausea.

## Some good strategies to try if your child is feeling anxious or worried:

### 5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1 GROUNDING EXERCISE



**5** Things you can  
**SEE**



**4** Things you can  
**FEEL**



**3** Things you can  
**HEAR**



**2** Things you can  
**SMELL**



**1** Things you can  
**TASTE**



Positive  
**self-talk**

### SQUARE BREATHING

rest 2... 3... 4

inhale 2... 3... 4

breathe



hold 2... 3... 4

exhale 2... 3... 4

Sometimes we feel threatened even when there's no real danger. If anxiety interferes with your child's daily life, there are many strategies you can use to help them manage it.

**For more help and advice contact:**



 [Childline.org.uk](https://www.childline.org.uk)

Childline are available online,  
on the phone, anytime

 [Tellmi](#)

Download the Tellmi app, Mental Health Support for Teenagers

 [YoungMinds](#)

Young Minds offers a range of online  
support and information for children and  
young people

 [The Mix](#)

The Mix are there if you need advice, connection or just someone to listen. Share what's on your mind on discussion boards, join a support group or chat one-to-one with their trained team.



ChatHealth

Your School Nurse can help –  
please text us via ChatHealth or see our  
contact details at the end of this  
newsletter.

**Young people Text: 07312 263266**

**Parents/Carers Text: 07312 263194**

# Five ways to wellbeing

**Encourage your child to spend time engaging in the following areas:**

**Connect** – Talk to and have fun with friends and family. Staying in touch with others enables you to share positive experiences and support each other.

**Be Active** – Being active is important for physical and mental health, it releases endorphins that help to put you in a good mood. Remember try and be active for 60 minutes a day.

**Keep Learning** – You don't just learn at school, be an active learner and grow by researching your interests. Challenge yourself to new experiences and gain new skills.

**Give to Others** – Do something kind for someone you care about. Helping others can give you a sense of purpose and achievement.

**Take notice** – Take the time to be aware of your surroundings and what you are feeling. Being present and taking time for self-care is important in the busy world we live in.



Here are some ideas to share:



- Watch your favourite sports game with other friends.
- Share your cooking or baking creations with family and friends.
- Share a Spotify playlist with your friends.
- Get motivated with the Couch to 5k app.
- Take a walk around your local park.
- Visit an outdoor gym.
- Watch a movie in a different language with subtitles.
- Learn how to draw something new.
- Show kindness through everyday acts (holding doors, smiling and saying thank you).
- Complete some mindfulness and meditate.
- Make a selfcare routine.



# Screen Time

Be aware of adult use of technology around young people.

Ask yourself - are you more distracted and less tuned into your child and their needs when focusing on your own phone?



It can be difficult to eliminate screen time completely, but here are some tips:

- **Set rules** e.g. time limits, screen free days. Ensure there are clear limits with children of all ages.
- **Supervise and share screen time** – sit and talk to your child about what they are watching to help them learn and understand. Choose things that you and your child can watch or play together.
- **Turn off background TV/devices** – these can distract young people and impact on listening skills even if the sound is low, for example when they are studying or revising.
- **Avoid screens before bedtime**- encourage reading a book instead.
- Set an example and **limit your own social screen time.**
- **Turn off screens during family meals** and when out and about spending family time together.
- **Discuss screens for school work and social media use** – personal screentime use with healthy boundaries for older children.
- Teach children about **online privacy and safety.**
- Learn about and use **parental controls.**



For more information please see links below:

 [Parental controls and privacy settings guides | Internet Matters](#)

 [Keeping children safe online | NSPCC](#)

 [Parents and Carers Toolkit | Childnet](#)

# Healthy bowel habits








Constipation is very common in all age children. **1 in 3** children are affected by constipation. It can affect behaviour and mood!

## How to check if your child is constipated

Use the Bristol Stool Chart shown here to help them identify their stool type.

Carry out the sweetcorn test to see if your child is constipated. The ideal time to see sweetcorn in your child's stool, is between 24hr-36hrs after eating sweetcorn.

**How fast are your bowels?  
Take the sweetcorn test to find out!**

THE BRISTOL STOOL FORM SCALE (for children)		
choose your		<b>POO!</b>
type 1		looks like: <b>rabbit droppings</b> Separate hard lumps, like nuts (hard to pass)
type 2		looks like: <b>bunch of grapes</b> Sausage-shaped but lumpy
type 3		looks like: <b>corn on cob</b> Like a sausage but with cracks on its surface
type 4		looks like: <b>sausage</b> Like a sausage or snake, smooth and soft
type 5		looks like: <b>chicken nuggets</b> Soft blobs with clear-cut edges (passed easily)
type 6		looks like: <b>porridge</b> Fluffy pieces with ragged edges, a mushy stool
type 7		looks like: <b>gravy</b> Watery, no solid pieces ENTIRELY LIQUID

**If you suspect your child has constipation, please visit your GP.**



Visit the [ERIC website](#) for more information about children's bowel health

# Staying hydrated

During hot summer months, it's important to stay hydrated to maintain good health and overall wellbeing.

Not being hydrated enough can lead to headaches, fatigue, and difficulty concentrating.

Make sure your child drinks water regularly throughout the day, aiming for 6-8 cups or about 2000 ml. Encourage increased intake to replace the fluids lost through sweating, if they are very active.

## Signs of dehydration:

- Thirst
- Dry mouth
- Tiredness
- Having dark coloured, strong-smelling urine or passing urine less often than usual
- Feeling dizzy or lightheaded
- Dry mouth, lips and tongue
- Sunken eyes



[To read more visit the NHS website.](#)

# Don't get in: you might not get out

Swimming is great fun and good exercise.

But death from drowning or lifelong injuries because of accidents in the water are far too common.

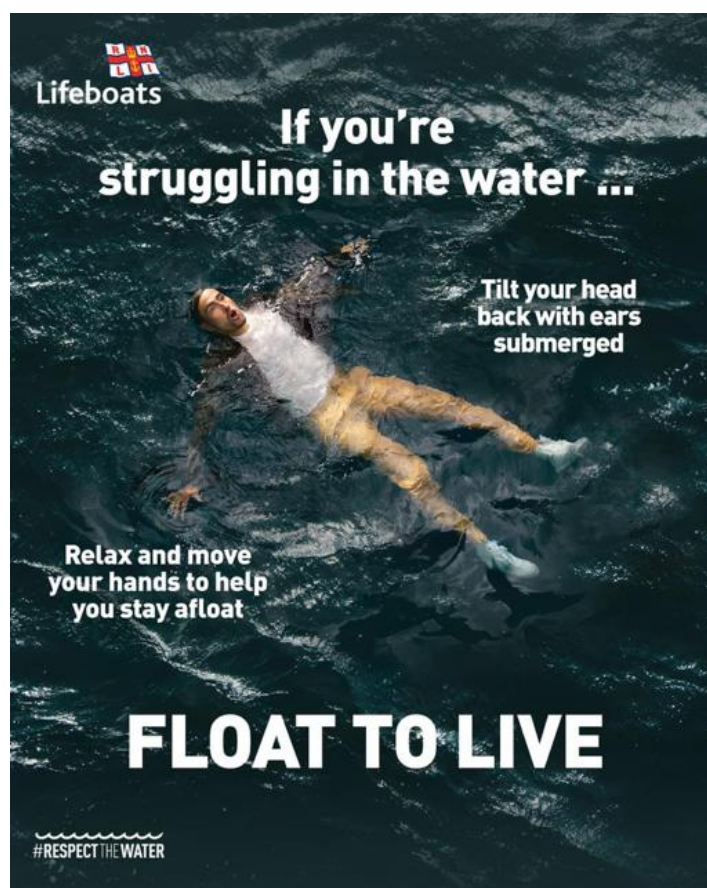
53% of the children and young people who died by drowning were aged 8-17yrs and were believed to have known how to swim!

Watch the hugely popular campaign video ['Drowning It's Up To You'](#)

If you come into trouble in water:

## Float To Live.

- Tilt your head back with your ears underwater
- Relax and try to breathe normally
- Move your hands to help you stay afloat
- Once you are over the initial shock, call for help or swim to safety



For further water safety advice for all the family at home, on holiday, at the beach, or in swimming pools visit the [Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service](#)

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# Staying Safe in the Sun



Three simple things advise your child to stay safe in the sun:

## 1. Plan ahead

- Check the weather forecast
- Plan to avoid the hottest time of the day, usually between 11am-3pm when the UV and air pollution is at its highest.
- Wear lightweight, loose-fitting clothing to keep cool and comfortable in the sun. Dark colours absorb more heat, so lighter colours are better.

## 2. Keep yourself cool

- Drink plenty of fluids (WATER is best!)
- Use sunscreen with SPF 30 or higher to protect your skin (Reapply sunscreen every 2 hours).
- Wear a hat, and sunglasses
- Cool your skin by having regular breaks in the shade or inside.

## 3. Be safe

- Be mindful of hot surfaces like metal furniture or car interiors. They can quickly become too hot and cause burns.
- If you start feeling dizzy, lightheaded, or nauseous, find a cool, shady spot to rest and drink water. These could be signs of heat exhaustion.

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# Advice to give young people to stay safe in water



## Look out for lifeguards

Never swim unless there is a lifeguard present



## Don't go too far

Swim parallel to the shore so you are never too far away from it



## It's stronger than it looks

Currents in water can be very strong. If you get caught in a rip tide don't try and swim against it, swim with it and shout for help



## Bring a friend

Always bring a friend so if you get into difficulties someone is there to help



## It's colder than it looks

Check the temperature of water before you enter. Cold water shock can affect your ability to swim and self-rescue. Most water in England is below 15 degrees and can cause cold water shock.

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# Don't smoke? Don't start to vape.

*“cigalikes, e-cigarettes, e-cigs, e-hookah, e-liquids, vape pens...”*



Vapes contain a liquid that is heated by a battery and evaporates, creating a chemical vapour which the user inhales. Most vapes or vaping liquids contain nicotine and other toxic chemicals.



**In the UK, it's illegal for anyone to sell or buy nicotine vaping products under the age of 18**

## Risk factors of vaping products:

- **Nicotine addiction** – a highly addictive stimulant, which can also have detrimental effects on brain development in under 25's.
- Increases your heartbeat and can often make you feel sick.
- People with lung conditions like Asthma can be more sensitive to the vapour, triggering asthma attacks or breathing difficulties.

## Advice for young people about coping with peer pressure (Don't vape just because your friends are!)

1. Practice being assertive – clearly and confidently stating to others your boundaries.
2. Talk to someone outside the situation – a trusted adult like parents, teacher or a health professional.
3. Take time away from those people – If someone makes you feel bad because you are not doing things, then take time away from them and focus on yourself.

## Need more support or advice?

### **SmokeFreeLife Berkshire**

Phone: 0800 622 6360

Text: Quit to 66777

### **FRANK:**

Phone: 0300 123 6600

Text with a question: 82111

Website: <https://www.talktofrank.com/drug/vapes#the-risks>



## Skin care

As you go through puberty, your body starts producing more hormones. This can lead to oilier skin, which might cause spots or acne. Spots are really common during this time but if you're noticing that spots are sticking around, getting bigger, or across the face, chest or back, it could be a sign of acne.

### What should you do?

If their skin is bothering them or not getting better, it's a good idea to speak to your GP. They can help find the right treatment to manage acne and skincare.

Remind your young person that looking after your skin is part of looking after your health!


### Skincare tips for Clearer, Healthier Skin:

1. Cleanse Gently – Wash your face twice a day using a mild, fragrance-free cleanser. This helps remove oil and dirt without drying or damaging your skin.
2. Moisturise After Cleansing – Pat your skin dry (Don't rub) and apply a thin layer of light moisturiser.
3. Use Sunscreen Every Day – even on a cloudy day. Sunscreen of at least SPF 30, will protect your skin from harmful UV rays and keep it looking healthy.

## Sleep

A good sleep routine is crucial for overall health and development. During sleep, the body and brain undergo essential processes that support physical growth, cognitive development, emotional regulation, immune function, memory consolidation and helps you to retain new information.

Adolescents need between 9-11 hours sleep each day but some may need less and others more; sleep needs vary.

 [Teen Sleep hub](#) – have lots of resources to help you with sleep and help ensure your young person is getting an effective sleep routine.

 [Sleep | Berkshire Healthcare Online Resource](#)



# Positive eating habits

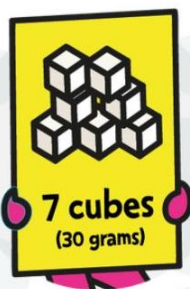
Over the summer holidays it can be easy to fall into unhealthy snacking and eating habits, especially when you may have a change in routine.

Remind your young person the importance of three regular meals a day and to choose healthier snacks in between as needed.

 [How to make healthy choices | Health For Teens](#)

For homemade snack ideas, advice and choosing healthy snacks ideas and other recipes go to:

 [NHS Healthier Families](#)



11+ Years Old

**Try not to have more than 7 cubes of sugar a day!**

**High sugar foods to watch out for...**



Up to 2-3 cubes



Up to 5-6 cubes of sugar

## The importance of breakfast

Healthy breakfasts make a difference to the quality of your diet, your mood and help to support your learning. Skipping it makes it harder to get all the nutrients needed within your day.

For some easy breakfast ideas visit:

 [Healthy breakfast ideas \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)

# Parkrun

junior parkrun

parkrun

## What is a Parkrun?

A free, fun and friendly weekly 5k community event. Walk, jog, run, volunteer or spectate, it's up to you! Simply turn up and take part. Everyone is welcome! It's a great introduction for all the family to be physically active outside together, have fun and just join along at your own pace.

Junior parkrun is 2k, dedicated to **4-14 year olds** and their families, every **Sunday morning starting at 9am**.

## Where?

Our local Parkrun events take place at:

-  Prospect Park, Liebenrood Road, Reading RG30 2ND
-  Dinton Activity Centre, Sandford Lane, Hurst RG10 0SU
-  Woodford Park, Headley Road Woodley RG5 4JZ
-  Great Hollands Recreation Ground, South Road, Bracknell RG40 3EE

Children are given **FREE** wrist bands for when they complete 11 half marathons, 21 marathons, and 50 Ultra! Marathons.

You can REGISTER online beforehand, then track your progress and earn achievements by participating!

 Visit [www.parkrun.org.uk/register](http://www.parkrun.org.uk/register)



## Reading Directory

This is a great resource of all local services including things to do in the area:

**[My Reading Account information and advice - Reading Borough Council](#)**

Better leisure has made a great site with information about children clubs:-

**[Activities for Kids | School Holiday Activities and Clubs | Better](#)**

# Staying Active

Young people should be active for at least 60 minutes a day. This should include 3 sessions a week of activity that strengthens muscles and bones, so mix it up!

## Big Sister Project

### [Big Sister Project | Places Leisure](#)

The programme helps girls aged 9-15 in targeted areas feel 'sport ready' by recruiting a network of 'Big Sisters' – peer leaders and supporters from sport, school and community organisations. Sport leaders will be trained in the emotional and physical barriers girls face.



## Sport in Mind

Transforming the nation's mental health through sport.

Sport in Mind offer children, young people and family

programmes, to support and improve mental health through our free sports and physical activity programmes.



[Visit: Exercise | Lifestyle | Health for Teens](#)

Quizzes and information about keeping active

**Love your body, love yourself, #lovehealth**

[SIGN UP for next term here](#)

# Keeping each other safe – get vaccinated

We are worryingly starting to see outbreaks of diseases such as measles and whooping cough emerging locally.

Vaccines are free and help save lives. By getting vaccinated, you get protection and also help to protect others who may not be able to get vaccinated or have weaker immune systems.

Between the ages of 12-13, the **HPV** vaccination is given to both boys and girls and protects against numerous Cancers and genital warts.

In Year 9 the **3-in-1 teenage booster** is offered. This protects against 3 serious illnesses: Tetanus, Diphtheria and Polio.

In the Autumn term, the **Flu** vaccination is available to all school aged children.



Speak to your child's GP, or phone our local child health service (0300 5611851) to check whether they have received all their immunisations.

If your child was vaccinated outside the UK you will need to provide evidence to their GP practice so that they can check whether there are any others they need.



**For more information about the Flu vaccine visit:** [Flu vaccine](#)

**There is a dedicated Berkshire Healthcare Immunisation team:**  
[Immunisations | Children Young People and Families Online Resource](#)

## Is your child leaving school?

When entering new environments, such as starting university or work, they'll be mixing with a new, wide group of people which can make them more at risk of some infections.

Making sure they have caught up with any missed vaccines can help to keep them well.



**For more information**



[NHS vaccinations website](#)



# Chat Health



Young people aged 11-19 can contact a member of the school nursing team by text message for confidential, anonymous help and advice.

We can offer advice and support on many topics like:

- Sleep
- Low mood
- Bullying
- Self-harm
- Body changes
- Healthy eating
- Drugs, alcohol and smoking/vaping
- Anxiety and stress
- Emotional health and wellbeing
- Relationships

Open 9am - 4:30pm  
Monday-Friday  
(excluding bank  
holidays)

**Young people Text: 07312 263266**  
**Parents/Carers Text: 07312 263194**

## How to contact your School Nursing team

We are available Monday to Friday 9am-5pm.  
(There is reduced cover during school holidays)

### Bracknell Forest

0300 365 6000

[BracknellForest.SN@berkshire.nhs.uk](mailto:BracknellForest.SN@berkshire.nhs.uk)

### Reading

0118 9047320

[csnreading@berkshire.nhs.uk](mailto:csnreading@berkshire.nhs.uk)

### Wokingham

0118 9047330

[csnwokingham@berkshire.nhs.uk](mailto:csnwokingham@berkshire.nhs.uk)

### West Berkshire

0118 9047325

[csnwestberks@berkshire.nhs.uk](mailto:csnwestberks@berkshire.nhs.uk)

You can also use our website to make a referral to our service



[cypf.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/school-nursing](https://cypf.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/school-nursing)

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