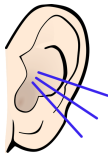


ASPIRE's

Parent/Carer Wellbeing Newsletter



Audio version of the newsletter

February 2024

<https://audiomass.co/?local=zz2dne>

Welcome to Term 3's ASPIRE Parents and Carers' Wellbeing newsletter. Every term, we try to signpost and highlight different websites, support groups and charities who can provide guidance and information to support all things wellbeing and mental health. We've also recently made sure to include some links where you can go for financial support and advice if and when needed - we all understand how difficult it is at the moment.

We've also added events in and around Kent over half term - some which are completely FOC.

We hope there's some information and guidance you may find useful.

Children's Mental Health Week

5-11 February 2024 is Children's Mental Health week 2024 - the theme: My Voice Matters!

Place2Be launched the mental health awareness week back in 2015 to empower, equip and give a voice to every child in the UK. Every year Place2Be hopes to encourage hundreds of children to understand about mental health and how to use strategies to support good mental health. Their aim is to promote that no child has to cope with worries or anxieties on their own.

The National Literacy Trust is promoting how reading and writing can support happiness and wellbeing for this year's Mental Health week. There's an array of activities you can access, from colouring to reading ideas, by clicking on the link below. It will take you to their parent portal and 'Words for Life'.

<https://wordsforlife.org.uk/themes/happiness-and-wellbeing/>

Place2Be also has a 'Families' page with lots of resources you can download to support your family's mental health and wellbeing for 2024. It covers both Primary and Secondary school age, so hopefully there's something for everyone if needed.

<https://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk/families/>

Support for your family

The Happy Confident Company is an online company who has an array of resources - free and to purchase - to support families with their child/ren's wellbeing. There's an abundance of information, as well as course/book bundles for parents and carers to buy, at a reduced rate. These are only offered at these rates to parents and carers, so may be useful to support your little ones.

<https://www.happyconfident.com/2020/11/19/helping-children-cope-with-worry-and-anxiety/>

Courses for 'the home' - only available at these prices to parents and carers - link below

<https://www.happyconfident.com/shop/online-courses/>

Support for the community

Living in small communities, we understand how important it is to look out for each other. If you're worried about someone else, a friend or neighbour, the link below may be able to provide information and/or support to help someone else if you think they are struggling.

<https://www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/if-youre-worried-about-someone-else/how-support-someone-youre-worried-about/what-do-if-you-think-someone-struggling/>

Another useful website with guidance and support groups is KCC's directory of local support, highlighting how and where to access it. There is also an A-Z directory offering information from organisations who support learning disabilities, to person centred care. The below link looks at Mental Health support groups in and around the Maidstone area, but the filters can be changed to meet any specific support you need.

<https://local.kent.gov.uk/kb5/kent/directory/results.page?qt=mental+health&term=maidstone&adultchannel=0&sorttype=distance>

Support for you

Whether it's actually your goal to do less this year for 2024 and not overload yourself with resolutions and impossible demands; and just make tiny daily changes to help your self-care routine, then that's fabulous! Self-care is very unique to the individual and it's all about taking care of yourself to ensure you stay healthy - mind and body - and happy. Sometimes, with our busy lives, it's easy to forget to take care of ourselves in order to make sure we can take care of our family - we often try to look after everyone else on 'half a battery'. It's OK to take a moment to look after yourself to recharge.

The following websites offer some nice self-care hints and tips for 2024...

<https://ethique.co.uk/blogs/diy-guides/self-care-goals-new-year-2024#:~:text=There%20are%20lots%20of%20ways,a%20few%20minutes%20a%20day.>

<https://www.photobox.co.uk/blog/all/self-care-ideas>

Financial support

Kent Together is a KCC website, which has an abundance of support and guidance with the cost of living in 2024. It offers lots of ways to help, from reducing spending, to urgent help and support.

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/leisure-and-community/cost-of-living-support>

As above, we all know how difficult it is at the moment with the cost of living. If your circumstance has changed and you think you may be eligible for receiving a free school lunch for your child/ren at school, we've added the link to apply for Free School Meals. If you're not sure, you also have an option to check to see if you qualify with the eligibility tool. *Please always feel free to ask your school office if you need help with this.*

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/free-school-meals>

Time to Talk day

On the 1st February 2024, it's Time to Talk Day, in association with Mind, Rethink Mental Illness and the Coop. The day highlights how important it is to connect with people and talk about things if you need to. It also focuses on how phrases like, 'not too bad' doesn't always mean everything actually is OK. We're promoting this on Thursday in school, so you may wish to have a chat with your child/ren about how it's good to talk.



What to do over the February half term

Make it! Crafts at Maidstone Museum has several daily sessions for child/ren to access for just £3.50 per child.

<https://museum.maidstone.gov.uk/whats-on/events/february-half-term-2024/>

Visit Maidstone over the half term week has a multitude of events advertised for both children and adults, from Jewellery making and wine tasting, to Crafts for children with SEND.

<https://www.visitmaidstone.com/whats-on/searchresults?sr=1&rd=on&stay=2024-02-12&end=2024-02-18>

And Muddy Stilettos always has some good ideas too...

<https://kent.muddystilettos.co.uk/things-to-do/whats-on-february-half-term-kent/>

What to do over the February half term - Freebies!

It's not quite free, but 'kids for a quid' definitely has some cheap ideas for a day out.

<https://www.visitkent.co.uk/events/february-half-term-kids-for-a-quid-115269/>

Tripadvisor always has some ideas for best free things to do in Kent

https://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/Attractions-g186310-Activities-zft11292-Kent_England.html

As does Kent Attractions with their Free places to visit in Kent

<https://kentattractions.co.uk/outing-ideas/free-outings/>

We hope we've covered a lot of useful information and guidance in this term's email and you have found it helpful.

Don't forget you can get in touch with your school regarding any support you may need via your school's office:

Kingswood - 01622 842674

Ulcombe - 01622 842903

Leeds & Broomfield - 01622 861398

Platts Heath - 01622 850316

We also have a Wellbeing email if you need any wellbeing advice, guidance or support!

Please do not hesitate to contact us.

Email:

wellbeing@aspire-kent.org.uk

Have a restful February half term and we will see you back on Tuesday 20th February 2024!

Take care,

The ASPIRE Wellbeing, Mental Health and Resilience Team