

Every Mind Matters top tips

Every Mind Matters is part of the Better Health campaign, which aims to use this unique moment in time to help kickstart our health.

Good mental health can help us to relax more, achieve more and enjoy our lives more. This page provides advice and guidance for educators on how to use the Every Mind Matters resources, and other relevant content, to support students' mental wellbeing.

Supporting parents and carers to support their children

Every child, young person, parent and carer will have had different experiences as a result of the coronavirus outbreak, and many will have faced more challenges than usual. Students may need extra support as they make the transition back to education, and while schools and colleges will have a role to play, parents and carers are in a unique position to assist students with these changes.

The tips below provide advice for teachers and educators on supporting parents and carers with the mental wellbeing of their children at this potentially challenging time.

1. Revisit the importance of routine

Structure and routine can be helpful and reassuring in times of change. Physical and mental health are linked, so regular sleep routines, healthy eating and getting active can make a big difference. Dedicate time to discussing the benefits of routine with students – this could support parents and carers in their efforts to re-establish home routines too.

2. Normalise discussions about mental wellbeing

We all go through times of feeling happy, sad, angry, stressed, and overwhelmed. Understanding that these feelings are normal is helpful, even when they are confusing. Try to model open discussions about mental health in your communications with parents and carers and encourage them to do the same at home.

You can also talk openly about mental wellbeing in the classroom. For primary schools, [Mentally Healthy Schools](#) brings together quality-assured information, advice and resources to promote children's mental health and wellbeing, such as

this [short video from Anna Freud on starting conversations in the classroom](#).



3. Talk about being careful

Students (as well as their parents and carers) may have anxieties about the safety of returning to school or college. Communicate to parents and carers what is being done to keep students safe, and encourage them to spend time going over this with students at home to help minimise those anxieties. Students should also be reminded of what they can do in and around the school to keep themselves and others safe.

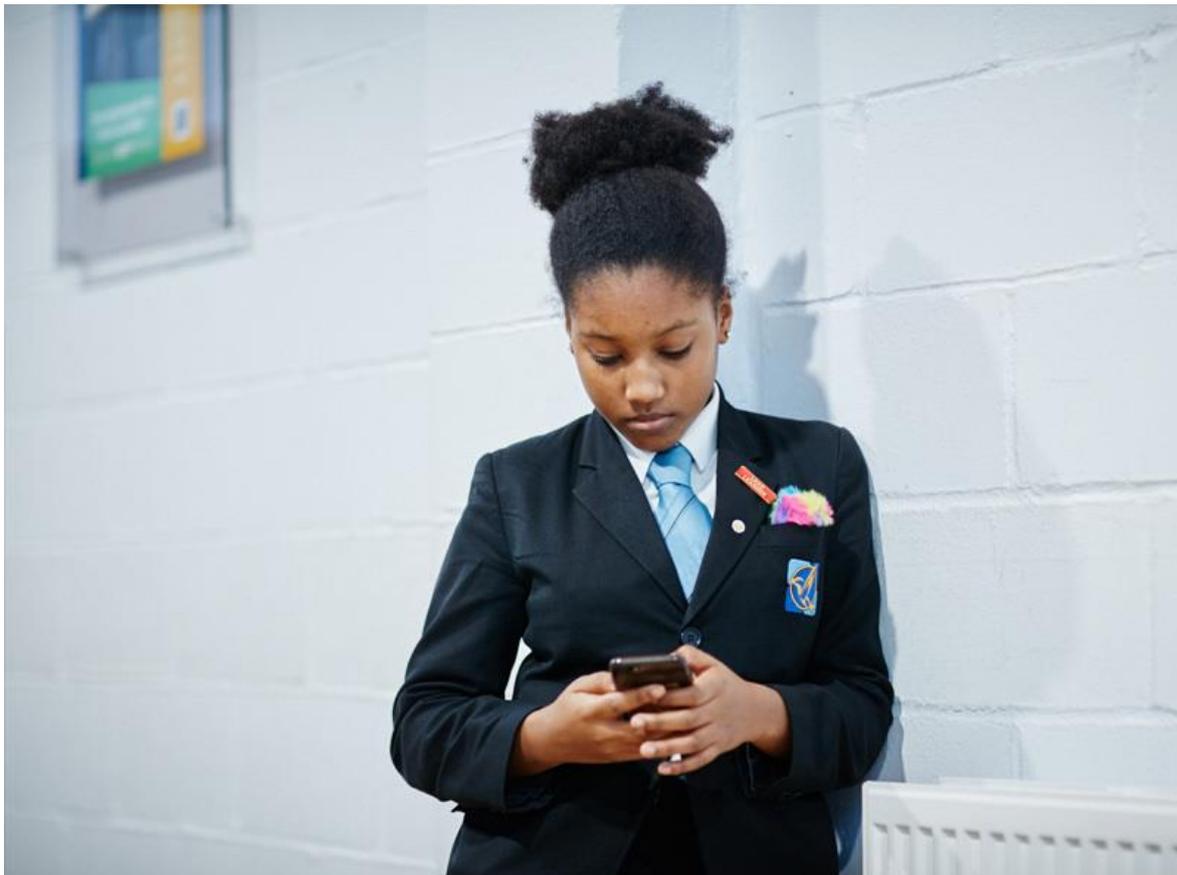
[Childline's Calm Zone](#) has resources for students who need further support with anxiety, stress or worry.

4. Start where students are

Students may need help to discuss how they feel about the impact that the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak has had on them and their personal circumstances. Parents and carers can help by checking in regularly and asking their child how they are doing so they will know they can talk if they need to.

Schools can also find ways of checking in with students about how they feel, for example during form time or perhaps with an anonymous survey that provides students with an opportunity to open up in a more private way. By understanding where students are, you and their adults at home will be in a better place to support their wellbeing.

For students who need further support, [Place2Be](#) has resources and mental health support for schools.



5. Signpost parents and carers to further support at Every Mind Matters

Every Mind Matters provides additional help to parents and carers supporting young people's mental health and is approved by the NHS. Use the following text in a school newsletter or on the school website to support parents and carers to talk to young people about their mental health:

Every child and young person will have had a different experience as a result of the coronavirus outbreak. For some, the impact of the outbreak may still be causing feelings of anxiety, stress, worry, sadness, boredom, loneliness or frustration.

For tips and advice on supporting the mental health during this time of your child or a child you care for, and ideas on looking after your own mental wellbeing, search "Every Mind Matters".

For further information on how parents and carers can support their children at this time, [visit Every Mind Matters](#).



Delivering Every Mind Matters lessons to students with SEND

The Every Mind Matters lessons have been designed to be clear, accessible and engaging for all students, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and autism.

For additional tips and guidance, read these [top tips for adapting Every Mind Matters lessons for students with SEND \(PDF, 293KB\)](#).

Teaching Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education

Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education will become statutory in schools in England from September 2020. The Department for Education is developing a series of teacher training modules to support subject leaders and teachers to deliver this statutory guidance.

The first of these teacher training modules focuses on [teaching about mental wellbeing](#) and provides practical materials for primary and secondary schools to use to train staff on this topic.

Looking after your own mental wellbeing

Now, at a time when you are busy supporting your pupils and their families through this challenging period, it's important that you look after your own wellbeing.

Every Mind Matters offers a free online action plan, approved by the NHS, that offers simple steps we can all take to care for our mental health.

The tool can help to deal with stress and anxiety, boost mood, improve sleep quality and take control of our wellbeing. Whilst you care for others, why not also [create your own self-care action plan](#)?

