



Five ways to wellbeing

Dear Parents/Carers,

You might be feeling worried about your child during the coronavirus outbreak and want to know more about how to help look after their wellbeing and mental health.

We will continue at St Benedict's to provide a support network for our pupils, parents and staff as best we can. We have put together information and advice on how to talk to your teen and support different aspects of their wellbeing.

What is mental wellbeing?

Your mental wellbeing is about how you're feeling right now, and how well you can cope with daily life. Our wellbeing can change from moment to moment, day to day, or month to month.

Sometimes it changes because of things that happen to us and sometimes it changes for no reason at all. It can affect the way we feel about ourselves and others, and about the things we face in our lives.

Why is my wellbeing important?

Having good wellbeing can help you to:

- ▶ *feel and express a range of emotions*
- ▶ *have confidence and positive self-esteem*
- ▶ *have good relationships with others*
- ▶ *enjoy the world around you*
- ▶ *cope with stress and adapt when things change.*

Good wellbeing doesn't mean you'll always be happy. It's normal to feel sad, angry, or low sometimes. But if you have poor wellbeing for a long time you might start to find things more difficult to cope with.

What can affect my wellbeing?

We're all different, so what affects your wellbeing may not be the same for somebody else. But some common things are:

- ▶ Difficult or stressful life events
Your relationships with the people around you the care and support you get at home and school
- ▶ Your physical health – how much sleep you get, what you eat and drink, if you take drugs or alcohol, and if you have any health problems
- ▶ Your environment – housing conditions, how you are treated by others, money problems
- ▶ Being able to recognise and communicate your emotions.

You may experience difficulties in one or more of these areas, or even experience problems not listed here. That's okay. Everyone is different.

How can I look after my wellbeing?

However your wellbeing is at the moment, there are things you can do to look after and improve it.

What helps you now may not be the same as what helps you in the future. Try what you feel is comfortable and right for you, at this moment.



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Five ways to wellbeing

At St Benedict's we encourage our pupils to engage in the [five ways to wellbeing](#) and we want to encourage this even more so during this time of social distancing. The Five Ways framework will help you to talk about the things that matter to your own family under each of the headings, we suggest you set yourselves the challenge of doing at least one of each of these every day. Here are some ideas of the ways in which you can interpret the "five ways to wellbeing" for the current crisis.



Connect - This is particularly important and challenging during this crisis. The guidance is clear that self-isolating means that we must only socialise face-to-face with those that we are living with. Online platforms have sprung up to enable us to see friends and family. You can also encourage your children to write postcards (real and virtual) and stick messages in your window to say Hi to your friends and neighbours - community ethos is very important.

Be Active - The current guidance says that everyone is able to go out each day for a walk, cycle or run. A host of free online group workouts are available, from dance classes to yoga. This exercise will work for some, but being active is not only about 'working out' and there's a huge range of different physical capabilities due to health conditions, age and ability. Finding a way to be active that suits you and your family is best. Finding an active activity that can be sustained is critical. Have fun - maybe teach your children the games you used to play when you were younger!

Take Notice - This is often taken to be mindfulness and if that works for you that's great. In current circumstances it's hard not to worry about the future, of our home, our family, our community, our workplace. Taking some time each day to talk to your child about how they are feeling will be helpful, noticing the feeling of fresh air, feeling the sunshine on our faces or the sound of the rain can be relaxing. You could plant some seeds with your children and watch them grow each day. Help your children take notice of the simple things in life that can boost their mood.

Keep Learning - Learning something new or improving a skill you already have is a way of shutting out the outside world for a bit and giving you a sense of achievement. Maybe let your son/daughter teach you new things. It isn't about grades or qualifications but setting yourselves a challenge and attempting to master it. Some healthy family competition always works well!

Give - There are ways that you can help others while still following the guidelines. Virtual support can be provided to your friends and family. Hand made Thank You notes and painted rainbows to stick in your window – the latter a message of hope started by children and taking hold around the world. 

I hope this leaflet will help support you and our young people of St Benedict's. I will be updating the StBenedictsHWB twitter page with useful links in addition to the information above.

We are all in this together and will be supporting each other.

Take care,

Miss Campbell - Health and Wellbeing Project Leader