

Therapy & Wellbeing Newsletter

Bromley Beacon Academy &
Bromley Trust Academy

Autumn Term 2017

Edition 2, Volume 1



Dear Parents and Carers,

For some people, the holidays are a time of celebration. For others, they can be a time of stress due to reasons including loneliness, bereavement, financial difficulties, and social relationships whose pain can be heightened at this time of year. In our newsletter, we

become more aware of our thinking and behaviours, we are more likely to understand how we can make changes.

Over the coming year, the therapy team will be participating in self-evaluation driven by the **Carnegie Centre of Excellence for**

Being aware of the stresses in your life and techniques you can use to overcome them will increase your sense of resilience. For more information, contact your school therapist:

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have focused on tips to address stress. Both the body and mind respond and are impacted by stress. Medical research has shown that short term stress may have positive effects. However, long term stress can have an impact on our emotional wellbeing and mental health. Identifying long term stress can be important to seeking support and making change. When we

Mental Health in Schools.

This project aims to celebrate and improve our well-being practices. We would welcome your input. To participate, please get in touch with your school therapist.

Warmest Wishes,

The Therapy Team

PARENT & CARER SUPPORT GROUP

Please make note of the upcoming Parent/Carer Support Group Dates. We look forward to welcoming you! Facilitated by creative arts therapists, the confidential sessions offer a chance to meet and connect with others within a supportive, relaxed environment. Depending on interest, we do host occasional guest speakers. If you do have a particular interest or something that you think could be helpful, please get in touch.

Friday 23rd Feb 1.00-2.30pm

Friday 23rd March 1.00-2.30pm

Friday 27th April 1.00-2.30pm

Friday 18th May 1.00-2.30pm

Friday 22nd June 1.00-2.30pm

What is Stress?

We all know what it's like to feel stressed, but it's not easy to pin down exactly what stress means. When we say things like "this is stressful" or "I'm stressed", we might be talking about:

- **Situations or events that put pressure on us** – for example, times where we have lots to do and think about, or do not have much control over what happens.
- **Our reaction to being placed under pressure** – the feelings we get when we have demands placed on us that we find difficult to cope with.

Taking steps to look after your wellbeing can help you deal with pressure, and reduce the impact that stress has on your life. This is sometimes called developing **emotional resilience** – the ability to adapt and bounce back when something difficult happens in your life.

Make some lifestyle changes:

General changes to your lifestyle can help you feel more able to cope with pressure and stressful situations.



Give yourself a break:

Learning to be kinder to yourself in general can help you control the amount of pressure you feel in different situations, which can help you feel less stressed.

- Practice being straightforward in communicating
- Use relaxation techniques
- Develop your interests and hobbies
- Make time for your friends
- Find balance in your life

Look after your physical health:

Taking steps to look after your physical health can help you manage stress and lessen the impact on your overall mental health.

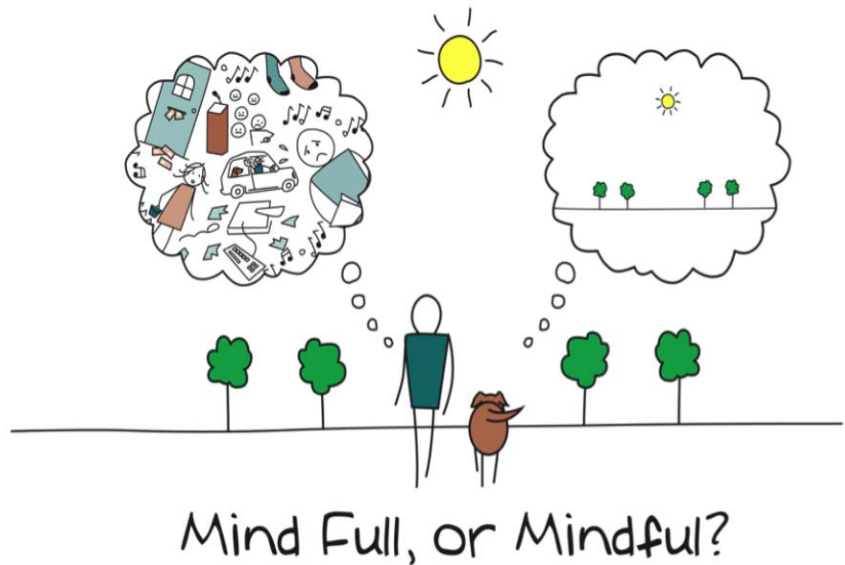
- Get good sleep
- Be more physically active
- Eat healthily

- Reward yourself for achievements
- Get a change of scenery
- Take a break or holiday
- Resolve conflicts
- Forgive yourself

Top 10 Tips for Eliminating Unhelpful Stress

1. Take time to put yourself first
 2. Prioritise tasks
 3. Make time to relax and mentally unwind
 4. Empathise with others
 5. Live life to the fullest
 6. Avoid ignoring your needs
 7. Avoid getting distracted
 8. Avoid choosing to allow others to make you feel inferior
 9. Avoid being judgemental
 10. Stop avoiding the things you least want to do
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From the International Stress Management Association UK



The word 'Mindfulness' is used more and more, and seems to be a fashionable phrase, but what is it and can it help?

Mindfulness describes the process of learning to bring attention to thoughts and feelings without judging them. OR simply, being aware of an experience and not judging it; accepting and acceptance. It can help as it can promote becoming less worried about success and self-esteem, it can also help with stress, heart disease, lower blood pressure, reduce chronic pain, improve sleep and alleviate gastrointestinal difficulties.



A short 'mindful' exercise

Make a decision to give yourself three minutes of YOU time without interruption.

1. Find a comfortable place to sit, preferably where your feet can touch the floor and your back is upright and straight. (This helps to prevent nodding off!)
2. Turn off your phone and protect your space as much as possible against loud noises/cold drafts or any other distractions that may prevent you from relaxing.
3. Take a deep breath in and sigh out as loud as you like the outbreath. Repeat three times.
4. Allow your eyes to gently close or soften your gaze and focus on an object in the room. (A candle can be nice and also festive!)
5. Take in all the sounds and smells and temperature in the room, notice everything you can while your eyes are closed or softly focused. Notice the weight of your body on the chair and feel the floor beneath you supporting you.
6. Take your attention inwards and notice how you are breathing. Do not attempt to control the breath or make judgement, just observe and let it be.
7. Notice your thoughts and be aware of them but again pass no judgement, accept what is there and let them appear like the end credits of a film. You know they are there but you can just watch them roll by.
8. Come back to the breath and notice where you can feel it in your body, it might be your tummy, your chest or even your nostrils or mouth. Again, just observe, there is no right or wrong.
9. Begin to feel your body and the weight pressing into the chair, feel your feet on the ground and the ground beneath you.
10. Tune in again to the sounds and the smells and the temperature in the room.
11. With your eyes remaining closed, rub your hands together to create some heat and then cover your eyes with your hands. Breathe in the warmth that you have created and open your eyes into the hands. Spread your fingers to allow in some light and then gently remove your hands and come back into the room with your eyes open.
12. Take a couple of breathes and re-adjust back into the room. Try and hold some of the calm that you have manifested inside of you for the remainder of the day.

Aside from these being helpful exercises to do on your own, it can be nice to try it with your child, particularly before bedtime.

Stress Related Resources

Mobile Apps:



Headspace is a free mobile APP, and is great as an introduction to mindfulness. It is very easy to use and encourages you to try a little every day.



Calm is an App for mindfulness and relaxation.

Websites:

- **The Stressbusting website** offers information about stress and provide techniques for coping: <http://www.stressbusting.co.uk/treatments/>
- The **Mind Tools** website can help you with stress management and assertiveness techniques: <https://www.mindtools.com/>
- The **Be Mindful** website provides guidance on mindfulness, including how to find a mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) course: <http://bemindful.co.uk/>
- **The International Stress Management Association** can help you find a specialist stress practitioner in your local area: <http://isma.org.uk/>
- **Mind's Infoline** can let you about support groups and mental health services in your local area: <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/helplines/>
- **Help Guide for Mindfulness** <https://www.helpguide.org/harvard/benefits-of-mindfulness.htm>
- **The Meaning of Mindfulness** <https://www.thebestbrainpossible.com/the-meaning-of-mindfulness-2/>

Local Agencies, Charities and Support Services

Bromley Parent Voice



Bromley Parent Voice

Bromley Parent Voice is a forum that aims to be a voice to inform service providers of the need of children and young people with a disability or additional need and their families in the London Borough of Bromley.

<http://www.bromleyparentvoice.org.uk/> 07803 287838

Bromley Changes - Drug & Alcohol Service

A social care and health charity that supports adults, young people and families whose lives are affected by substance misuse, homelessness, poverty, unemployment, domestic abuse, mental health issues and offending.

<https://www.changegrowlive.org/what-we-do> T: 02083131107

Bromley Mencap

Bromley Mencap is an award winning, user led service which offers free support across a range of areas for families with a child who has social/communication or learning difficulties.

www.bromleymencap.org.uk T: 020 8466 0790

Bromley Women's Aid

Support for Domestic violence. www.bwaid.com T:02083139303

Welcare in Bromley

Welcare is a family-focused charity dedicated to helping children and families overcome challenges and build towards a better future

www.welcare.org T:020 7820 7910

Young Minds



YoungMinds is the UK's leading charity championing the wellbeing and mental health of young people. The website also has support for parents and carers.

<http://www.youngminds.org.uk/>

Oxleas NHS



Support booklets for parents looking at Family relationships, violent behaviour, and gang affiliation. <http://oxleas.nhs.uk/advice-and-guidance/children-and-young-peoples-services/nvr/parent-booklets/>