

Supporting Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing

What do we mean 'mental health and wellbeing'?

-  How children think and feel
-  How they cope with everyday life
-  How they get along with others
-  How they grow emotionally and socially

Signs a child may need support

- Mood (sadness, anger, withdrawal)
- Sleep or appetite
- Behaviour (clinginess, aggression)
- Play (themes of worry or fear)

Why it matters

Good mental health helps children to:

- ★ Feel confident and secure
- ★ Build friendships
- ★ Cope with challenges
- ★ Learn and thrive at school

Early mental health affects behaviour, learning, and relationships later on.

If you have any concerns about your child's wellbeing, please speak to the school. We can offer support directly or help signpost you to the right services.

Our aim is to make sure every child, and family can get the right help, at the right time.

1. Build Emotional Awareness

- **Name feelings together:** Use books, pictures, or mirrors to help children label emotions ("I see you're feeling frustrated because your block tower fell.").
- **Feelings chart:** Create a simple "How I Feel Today" chart with faces showing different emotions. Encourage your child to point to one each morning or evening.
- **Model calm talk:** Show how you manage emotions ("I'm feeling tired, so I'm going to take some deep breaths.").

2. Encourage Open Communication

- **Daily check-ins:** Ask open questions like, "What made you smile today?" or "Was there anything tricky about your day?"
- **Active listening:** Give your child your full attention when they're sharing something — this helps them feel heard and safe.
- **Storytime connection:** Read books about emotions or kindness and talk about what the characters might be feeling.

3. Teach Simple Coping Strategies

- **Calm-down corner:** Create a cozy spot with soft toys, books, and sensory items where your child can relax when upset.
- **Breathing games:** Pretend to blow up a balloon, smell a flower/blow out a candle, or practice "bubble breaths."
- **Movement breaks:** Dancing, stretching, or jumping helps release tension and boost mood.

4. Foster Connection and Security

- **Predictable routines:** Regular mealtimes, bedtime, and playtime help children feel secure and reduce anxiety.
- **One-on-one time:** Even 10 minutes a day of focused, uninterrupted play strengthens connection.
- **Affection and reassurance:** Frequent hugs, positive touch, and gentle encouragement build emotional safety.

Ways to support at home

5. Promote Play and Creativity

- **Free play:** Unstructured play lets children process emotions and develop problem-solving skills.
- **Expressive outlets:** Art, music, and pretend play allow them to explore feelings in safe ways.
- **Outdoor time:** Nature walks, gardening, or playground time boost mood and reduce stress.

6. Support Healthy Habits

- **Balanced sleep routines:** Encourage calm wind-down time before bed with stories or soft music.
- **Nutrition and hydration:** Regular, balanced meals and water breaks affect mood and energy.
- **Screen awareness:** Limit screen time and balance it with creative and physical play.

7. Model Wellbeing

- **Show self-care:** Let children see you rest, take deep breaths, or talk about your feelings.
- **Positive self-talk:** Say things like, "I made a mistake, but that's okay — I can try again."
- **Family gratitude moments:** Share one thing everyone is thankful for each day.

Story recommendations

The Colour Monster by Anna Llenas

In My Heart: A Book of Feelings by Jo Witek

When Sophie Gets Angry – Really, Really Angry by Molly Bang
The Feelings Book by Todd Parr

Breathe Like a Bear by Kira Willey

Anh's Anger by Gail Silver

The Invisible String by Patrice Karst

I Like Myself! by Karen Beaumont

Giraffes Can't Dance by Giles Andreae
What Do You Do With a Problem? by Kobi Yamada

Be U Notts



SUPPORT WHEN YOU NEED IT

Free and accessible mental health and emotional wellbeing support service for children and young people and their parent/carer.

Contact: Telephone: 0115 708 0008 (9am-5pm) / Website:

www.beusupport.co.uk

CASY (counselling)



Counselling and Support for Young People

CASY provides a confidential counselling service to young people aged from 6 to 25 within Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire.

Contact: Call 01636 704 620 Email: office@casy.org.uk

Website: www.casy.org.uk

Healthy Families Team

They provide early help and prevention: addressing issues like feeding, sleep, behaviour, emotional health, healthy lifestyles (diet, activity).

School can support by completing a referral.

Contact: Advice Line: 0300 123 5436 — for parents/carers of children.

Text Support (for parents/carers): Parentline — text 07520 619919.

Nottinghamshire Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)



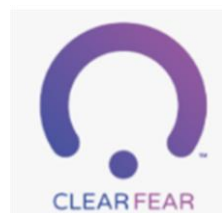
Contact your GP or school for a referral.

If you think your child is at risk or a crisis, call 0808 196 3779 (24/7 mental health crisis line) for Nottinghamshire.

Accessing external support



Clear Fear App



Clear Fear is an app to help children and young people manage symptoms of anxiety.

Harmless



Harmless are a user-led organisation providing a range of services about self-harm and suicide including support, information, training and consultancy to people in need, their friends and families, and professionals.

Contact: By telephone - Nottinghamshire: 0115 880 0280 / Email: info@harmless.org.uk

Website: <https://harmless.org.uk>

Useful Links

Young Minds – www.youngminds.org.uk

NSPCC – Advice for families – www.nspcc.org.uk

NHS Every Mind Matters – www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters

School

Speak with your child's class teacher or the SENDCO if you have concerns. We can offer individual support to help your child with their emotional, social, or learning needs. We can also link with other local services that offer extra help for things like:

Coping with bereavement or loss

Recovering from difficult or traumatic experiences

Special educational needs or disabilities

Friendships and relationships

Feeling safe and supported