

We hope that you are all well staying safe and settling into a new way of learning from home.

The purpose of this newsletter is to offer some ideas and suggestions for activities linked to looking after our mental health and wellbeing which is particularly important in these challenging circumstances. There is no expectation to complete these tasks, they are just there for you to use as you wish.

If you have any concerns about your child’s mental wellbeing, please contact School and we will do all we can to support you.

Five Ways to Wellbeing

At school we promote the ‘Five Ways to Wellbeing’ which are a set of really simple actions we can all take, which have been shown to improve people’s wellbeing. Here is an explanation of each one.

I would love to hear how you are getting your ‘Five a day.’

Email me on year.two@ellwood.gloucs.sch to let me know what you have been doing.

Connect	Be active	Take Notice	Keep Learning	Give
Connect with the people around you. This is something which is particularly important, but also challenging during this time. Online platforms are a great way to enable us to see family and friends as well as speaking on the phone. It’s ok to miss people right now, but think about what you could do to feel closer to each other. Talking to others about how you are feeling is hugely important for your mental wellbeing.	We all know exercise is good for your body, but it is good for your mind too. Current guidance says that everyone can go out each day for a walk, cycle or run. There are lots of online workouts covering a wide range of activities and abilities that can be done within the home. If you have access to a garden or outdoor space, you can use this to get active. It doesn’t have to be a strenuous workout, playing tag always gets the heart pumping.	Be aware of the world around you and how you are feeling. Take some time each day to check in with your own thought and feelings, this could be through a conversation with others, or alone, depending on what you feel you need. By paying attention to the present moment, we might enjoy things more and even notice things that we would have otherwise missed. Have you noticed the wonderful signs of Spring or a woodland animal on your daily walk?	Learning something new keeps our brains healthy, and the sense of achievement we get from learning something is great for our wellbeing. Talk as a family about what skills you have and what skills you would like to develop or even learn something brand new. More than ever, there are lots of free online courses and classes to access which cover a wide range of activities. Learning is a lifelong journey that doesn’t end when you leave school.	Evidence shows that helping others is actually beneficial for your own mental wellbeing too. At a time like this, it is possibly more important than ever to help each other. Ask a family member if they need help in completing a household job, support each other in your home learning, think about what you could do without being asked. You can also ‘Give’ to others outside of your household. Start a smile and see how far it travels or put a rainbow in your window.

Fun Breathing Exercise

“Take a deep breath”

Hot Air Balloon

Sitting in a comfortable cross-legged position, start by cupping your hands round your mouth. Take a deep breath in through your nose and slowly start to blow out through your mouth, growing your hands outwards in time with your exhale as if you are blowing up an enormous hot air balloon. Once your balloon is as big as it can be (and you've finished your exhale), breath normally as you sway gently from side to side admiring your big beautiful hot air balloon as it soars through the sky.

Tumble Dryer

Sitting in cross-legged position, point your index fingers towards each other and position them so your left finger is pointing to the right and your right finger is pointing to the left overlapping a bit in front of your mouth and blow as you spin your fingers round each other, making a lovely long exhalation and a satisfying swishy sound.

Tongue Tube

Some people can curl the sides of their tongue up, others can't... it's a genetic thing! If you can, curl up the sides and make your tongue into a tube or straw. Then with your tube-like tongue sticking out a little bit, inhale and suck the air in over your tongue. Exhale slowly through your nose. This has a wonderful cooling effect and refreshes the throat. Very cleansing! If you can't do the curling thing with the sides of your tongue, you can instead get all the same benefits of the refreshing breath by doing a big toothy grin and sucking in the air sharply.

Bumble Bee Breaths

Sitting comfortably with your legs crossed, breath in through your nose, then with fingers in your ears hum out your exhalation. The lovely comforting resonance of this has a calming effect and done with eyes closed can make it even more peaceful.