

WELL-BEING NEWSLETTER

May 2020

PARENT/CARER Issue 3



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Welcome to the May issue of our 'Work Hard; Be Kind; Well-being' newsletter!

There'll be an issue of this newsletter at the end of each month until the end of this academic year (July).

This is your 'one stop shop' for information and resources to support you during your children's time out of school.

Please also see our newsletter for pupils in addition to this one for you.

What is 'well-being'?

It's a term we hear a lot but what does it mean?

Dictionary definitions tell us that it's about comfort, health and happiness. Essentially, it's about our emotional as well as our physical health: keeping our minds and our bodies healthy!

Here's a short video which might give you some ideas about what 'well-being' means <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oSIWo5nxF2A> and another one with ideas for how you could develop yours: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yF7Ou43Vj6c>. Aimed at children but applicable to adults, too!

Information, guidance and updates

Government response to COVID-19 – this includes the latest announcements and guidance/information/announcements to date <https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response>

Information and guidance for employees, employers and businesses <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19>

Support

Directory:

- The Samaritans offer emotional support 24 hours a day - in full confidence. Call 116 123 - it's **FREE** or email jo@samaritans.org.uk - <https://www.samaritans.org>
- <https://www.mind.org.uk/>
- <https://www.nhs.uk/>
- <https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/for-parents/parents-helpline/>

Supporting children:

- Supporting children to cope without school <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-51959957>

- Talking to children about world news
<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/talking-to-your-children-scary-world-news>

Supporting ourselves:

- Looking after your own mental health during this period:
<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/looking-after-your-mental-health-during-coronavirus-outbreak>
- Well-being <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing>

Special Features

Message for families from John Tomasevic, CEO of the Nova Education Trust



Dear Parents/Carers & Learners,

I hope that this newsletter finds you well and coping with the challenges of lockdown. All the staff at our Nova schools appreciate the efforts our families have made to maintain their connectivity to regular learning. I know staff have been helping as much as possible but equally a significant burden is on parents & carers to provide that all important human touch. If any family is finding getting their child to access learning difficult please make contact with your school. I know you will receive a friendly and supportive response.

I wish to acknowledge the amazing professional dedication all of our trust staff have given over this period of lockdown. Staff support to children, families and communities has been truly outstanding. I am very proud of all of our staff in terms of the selflessness they have demonstrated along with the level of care, love and support they have radiated. As a trust we are truly blessed to have such staff working for us during this challenging time. Alas I know that for several families and staff this period of lockdown has resulted in family loss and sadness. Our hearts and love go out to all of those who have experienced the loss of loved ones.

Throughout this period of lockdown the protection of our learners and staff has been of paramount importance. The trust has been working to ensure that:

- Schools have received protective equipment and cleaning has taken place to protect learners and staff, as much as is possible, given supply issues
- IT systems have been updated, purchased and rolled out to effectively support home learning
- Food vouchers have been procured and distributed to those families who normally access free school meals
- Producing newsletters for families, staff and their learning communities

In addition to this work, we have been working to support learners and their families in order to maintain learning as much as possible. This has included on-line learning support as well as learning materials. We have been immensely impressed with the commitment that learners, with the support of their families, have demonstrated in completing the set work. In fact, we think there are many parents and carers who should consider retraining for teaching! We know many parents and carers have been very inventive in constructing activities to keep their families physically and mentally active in other ways to schooling. Please let us know what you have been doing so other families can share in your inventiveness. I know our staff are very grateful for the support you have provided.

For those learners who are finding it difficult to get into a routine of learning we ask them to make contact with their teacher/tutor and ask for help. This may take the form of encouragement and building self-confidence, help to cope with the set work, solutions to equipment or technical problems with working on-line.

Forward planning for when lockdown comes to an end is very much in our minds, including protecting learners and staff in the new world post lockdown. We are working with the DfE/Ofqual to ensure our learners who would have been taking critical assessments are fairly rewarded. I know this will be a great worry to many parents, careers and learners. All the messages we are receiving from government have been very reassuring that learners will be fairly rewarded for their efforts and abilities.

We know that many of our learners have been very active in their communities, helping others who are in need. Please let us know what you have been doing to help others. Whether it has been great or small. We have thousands of 'Captain Toms' out there and we would like to acknowledge them wherever possible.

The actions of all of our staff and learners, along with their families has been exemplary, during this critical time. Schools have always been at the centre of their communities. As a result of this lockdown we have witnessed stronger communities emerging and care being shown beyond the norm. I do hope this continues, as more than ever before we appreciate we need each other. So often we take things for granted and I do believe we are now witnessing a renaissance of support for people and community groups who work for the public good.

Please continue to take care and we look forward to seeing you all soon.

Yours sincerely,
John Tomasevic
CEO Nova Education Trust

Managing Thoughts – an article by Rebecca Morgan-Jones – full text here:

[Thoughts BlogArticle May 2020 ParentsCarersTeachers RMJ.docx](#)

Things to consider and try

- Try asking yourself "how would I choose to think/act/respond?" Think about what makes YOU feel good.
- If you're feeling low in energy, ask yourself what type of thoughts are you having?
- If you are feeling slightly anxious or worried, what are you thinking? Write your thoughts down and then look for the evidence - are they false/true?
- Can you see how your thoughts are having an impact on your physical health?
- Could you start asking yourself "is this thought pattern going to make me feel good?" If not, find a way to get yourself out of it. Maybe, that's talking to someone.
- Am I choosing to see the future in a positive way? If not, try and flip your thought process, choose to see the same scenario in a different way, see how it makes you feel.

- Try being 'present' – stop and see three things you can see, three things you can hear and three things you can feel.
- Try stopping and thinking of three things you can see in that very moment you are grateful for.
- Train yourself to talk to yourself (internally and externally) in the same way you'd talk to a good friend. Often, we are very hard on ourselves.
- Be kind to yourself.

Talking to Children

Talking to children about Covid-19



BE HONEST

Answer questions factually and consider how much information is appropriate to your child's age and development. Children can feel and sense emotions the same way we do and if you're not honest with your child it can make them even more frightened.



BE CALM

Your child will take their lead from you and be reassured if you are steady and matter of fact. Try not to dismiss or talk children out of their feelings or anxieties – accept and acknowledge them and empathise with how hard it must be to feel those things.



BE BRAVE

Start a conversation with them. Some children may not ask questions or appear upset, but this doesn't necessarily mean they don't have fears or anxieties. Choose a time when you are together and busy with something to ask what they have heard about Covid-19 and if they have any questions or worries.



BE BALANCED

Use familiar language and be careful not to overload children with too much information. Try and limit how much they see on TV or social media. Empower them with the things they can do to prevent being ill, such as washing their hands. Keep them hopeful by balancing some of the news statistics with positive messages.



Activities and resources

For all

Being active: <https://thedailymile.co.uk/at-home/>

Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) – bringing the outside inside:

<https://schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk/News/News-results/National/2020/March/Bringing-the-sunshine-inside>

Film, TV and Game recommendations: <https://www.place2be.org.uk/about-us/news-and-blogs/2020/march/launching-bafta-kids-at-home-with-place2be/>

Fun at home with authors and illustrators: https://www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/have-some-fun/?q=&sortOption=AtoZ&pageNo=1?utm_source=place2be.org.uk&utm_medium=referral

Free reading, writing and audiobook resources: <https://literacytrust.org.uk/family-zone/>

Radio 3 – famous people talking about their favourite pieces of art
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m0009bf6>

Channel 4 – Grayson Perry’s art club <https://www.channel4.com/programmes/graysons-art-club/episode-guide/>

Channel 4 Comedy with Matt Lucas - <https://www.channel4.com/programmes/reasons-to-be-cheerful-with-matt-lucas/on-demand/71436-003>

Yoga with Adrienne - <https://www.youtube.com/user/yogawithadriene>

At 11 am every morning, David Walliams reads from one of his books - <https://www.worldofdavidwalliams.com/category/elevens/>

Maths Factor Carol Vordeman - <https://www.themathsfactor.com/>

Primary

Use the packs from school and check out any additional resources on school’s website to keep their learning going!

BBC Super Movers

KS1 - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/supermovers/ks1-collection/zbr4scw>

KS2 - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/supermovers/ks2-collection/zr4ky9q>

Secondary and Post-16

Students should keep logging into Microsoft Teams (and/or the packs sent home by school, if this is the case) and check out any additional resources on school’s website to keep their learning going. This will also help them stay in touch with school virtually!

PE with Joe - live every day at 9am – link to first session here - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rz0go1pTda8>

‘Here’s one I tried earlier’

If you’ve got suggestions for ‘Here’s one I tried earlier’, please email Well-Being@novaeducationtrust.net

All ideas, tips and suggestions will be curated by our team and published anonymously. This could include: a recipe to try; suggestions for in-door sports and games; arts and crafts activities; ways in which you’ve used an activity or resource from this newsletter and your ‘top tips’ for doing it; any ideas that you’ve had from your experiences so far.

Contact us

The main contact email to use for the college for general enquiries is contactus@mv16.org.uk