

# ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

## ONE MINUTE GUIDE

### Mental Health

#### What is the meaning of Mental Health?

**Mental health** refers to our cognitive, behavioural, and emotional wellbeing – it is all about how we think, feel, and behave. The term '**mental health**' is sometimes used to mean an absence of a **mental** disorder. **Mental health** can affect daily life, relationships, and even physical **health**. We all have mental health and it is just as important as our physical health. Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through to adulthood. Mental health can be displayed in different ways, from everyday worries that get on top of us to serious conditions that can be long term.

#### How to maintain positive mental health:

There are lots of things we can do on a daily basis that will help to look after our mental health. Some of these activities include; eating healthy, regular exercise, plenty of fresh air, a good night's sleep and taking a small amount of time out of the day to relax. Another way to maintain positive mental health is to talk, if for any reason you are feeling low, upset or stressed make sure to speak about how you feel to prevent it from building up inside. Understand your feelings, and talk about them regularly. We should always try and look after our mental health, not just when we feel low, anxious or stressed, if we continuously look after it we are less likely to struggle and long term can learn to deal with situations that we face more calmly.

#### Signs we should look out for:

There will be times for all of us when we may struggle with our mental health, signs we can look out for can differ from one person to the next. If you do notice a change in your mood, daily habits it may be time to ask for support. Some common signs that you may be struggling with your mental health include; a change in mood, feeling withdrawn, over or under eating, losing interest in the things you usually enjoy, it is also common to feel helpless and that you feel the weight of the world on your shoulders.

If you notice any of these changes in yourself or those around you, it is important to seek support Without the correct help, it is likely your mental health will deteriorate further.

#### Monitoring mental health in children:

It is just as important for children to understand their mental health as it is for adults. Children develop good mental health from their environment so feeling safe and secure and loved all has a positive impact on them. Children also benefit from a healthy diet, regular exercise, outdoor time and a good night's sleep. It is important that we encourage our children to talk about their feelings from an early age and help them to understand their feelings. Children that are struggling with their mental health can also display symptoms physically through sleep patterns, i.e. sleep walking, nightmares or sleeping too much and too little or frequent complaints of headaches/tummy aches.

If you are concerned about your child's mental health but they are struggling to express their feelings, it can help drawing pictures, writing poems or allowing your child to keep a diary. There are many resources available to help support children to express what is on their mind.

## Where you can find help or support:

There is a range of help and support available from the NHS, charities and individual Mental Health Organisations:

<http://doncastermind.org.uk/>

<https://www.rdash.nhs.uk/>

<http://www.doncasterccg.nhs.uk/your-care/mental-health>

<https://youngminds.org.uk/>

<https://mentalhealth-uk.org/>

## COVID-19

Due to current times, as we are quite restricted with what we are able to do, many of us may feel low and unsure of how to deal with the new day to day situations. It is a good idea to keep a good routine and keep talking to friends and family where possible.

If you feel you are struggling, make sure to seek support from friends, colleagues, family or reach out for professional support.