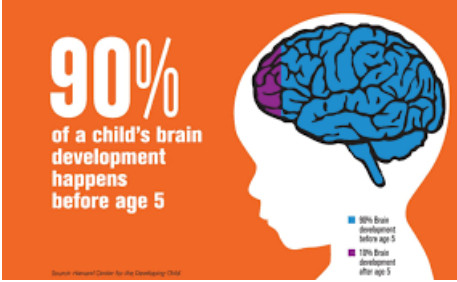




## Mental Health Newsletter Summer 2022


Date	Weekly information on the Newsletter
29/4/22	 <p><b>Brain development and ACES (Adverse Childhood Experiences)</b></p> <p>Our brains develop from before birth and into adulthood (Siegel and Bryson, 2012). But there are key 'sensitive periods' during early childhood and adolescence where children and young people's brains are more affected by positive or negative experiences (Shonkoff et al, 2008). These negative experiences are often referred to as ACES. What happens in a child or young person's life during these periods can have a significant effect on their brain development. Positive experiences throughout childhood help to build healthy brains, while experiencing childhood trauma and abuse can harm a child's brain development (Shonkoff et al, 2015). A really useful video about this from the NSPCC can be found on the link below.</p> <p><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hMyDFYSkZSU">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hMyDFYSkZSU</a></p>
6/5/22	 <p>This week we attended a meeting with other mental health leads from Stevenage, to share good practice and find out about other local</p>

	<p>organisations that can support children and families struggling with mental health needs. One of the organisations presenting was 'Herts Mind Network', who shared that they have a designated website for young people and a helpline (01923 256391) for children aged 10-17 years. They also have bite sized training videos on topics such as Emotional Well Being and Coping Strategies and the 5 Ways to Well Being, which are suitable for parents or older children who want to understand strategies to help themselves.</p> <p><a href="https://www.hertsmindnetworkcyp.org/training-workshops/spot-the-signs-emotional-wellbeing/video-resources/">https://www.hertsmindnetworkcyp.org/training-workshops/spot-the-signs-emotional-wellbeing/video-resources/</a></p>
13/5/22	 <p>Next week is Walk to School week and the week after is Healthy Living week. Over the two weeks we will be encouraging the children to be active, eat healthily and look after their personal hygiene. We have some visitors coming to school and year 6 are planning some fun activities.</p> <p>How children and young people think and feel about their body and the way they look can affect their mental health in both positive and negative ways. Research by PACEY in 2016, found that attitudes about body shape and size may start as early as 3 or 4 years old. There are many factors which may influence body image in children and young people, including the media and social media, their parents and their peers.</p> <p>As parents, the way we talk about our body, the meals we serve and eat, whether we exercise and the importance we place on how we look can all influence our child's body image. Things we can do to help this are;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● talk about eating healthy, not dieting.</li> <li>● talk about exercising to be stronger.</li> <li>● talk about improving our body to be ready for whatever life has to offer.</li> <li>● teach your child to pause and determine whether they are full or satisfied.</li> <li>● show your child that it's important to eat three healthy meals a day.</li> <li>● give your child a say in what they eat. Let your child help choose foods at the shop. Use this time to educate your child on good food choices. Tell them that eating a variety of food is important</li> </ul>

	<p>for growing and to be strong. Teach them about vitamins and minerals.</p>
<p>20/5/22</p>	<div data-bbox="411 389 699 689" data-label="Diagram"> </div> <p>The Leys School has been awarded the <b>Healthy Young Minds in Herts Kitemark</b>. This accreditation is designed to support schools to develop their own whole-school approach to improving mental health and emotional wellbeing. For a school to be awarded with the Healthy Young Minds in Herts Kitemark they need to demonstrate reflective practice with clear actions on how to develop their good practice and have a clear plan about how to address any gaps. Within the school's plan we had to demonstrate how we manage mental health and wellbeing in 11 key areas, including identifying, targeting and supporting children with needs. The evidence was reviewed and discussed in a multi-agency panel with representatives from Public Health, Public Health Nursing Service, School representatives, Educational Psychologists, Herts for Learning and Strategic Leads for Mental Health in schools. The feedback given included the comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Leys' Curriculum was amazing</li> <li>• The evidence provided illustrated our strength and commitment to mental health</li> <li>• We are proactive in addressing mental health in our school community</li> </ul> <p>The kitemark accreditation is one step in a process and an on-going developmental journey to support awareness and the wellbeing and mental health of all in our community.</p>
<p>26/5/22</p>	<p>On Wednesday Tom Ryder from Retune came to work with 30 of our Year 5 and 6 children. In this wellbeing workshop, he demonstrated the importance of using creative outlets such as music, art, drama, dance and writing to maintain wellbeing and build emotional resilience.</p> <div data-bbox="884 1608 1031 1854" data-label="Image"> </div> <div data-bbox="1066 1599 1350 1966" data-label="Image"> </div>

	<p>Retune as an organisation teaches young people how to unlock their imaginations, inspiring them to pursue their passions and achieve mental harmony in the process. Sometimes we all feel out of tune, and small adjustments can take us back to where we need to be. The children enjoyed singing George Esra's Shotgun and helping to compose a song about eating chicken nuggets!</p>
<p>10/6/22</p>	<p>Part of our 5 ways to Wellbeing is to be active. As well as the many clubs we run at school. Here are a few other ideas available locally in Stevenage;</p> <p>Herts Inclusive Theatre runs from 4.45-6pm on a Thursday at the Gordon Craig Theatre  <a href="https://clubhubuk.co.uk/clubs/stevenage-childrens-theatre/">https://clubhubuk.co.uk/clubs/stevenage-childrens-theatre/</a>  Every sport in Stevenage from Archery to Zorb football!  <a href="http://www.sportstevenage.co.uk/">http://www.sportstevenage.co.uk/</a>  Scouts in Stevenage are available to all from 4-18 years and they are even coming to the school fair!  <a href="http://www.stevenagescouting.org.uk/">http://www.stevenagescouting.org.uk/</a>  Herts Music Service is based at The Nobel School. They have a Steel Pans group on a Tuesday plus lots of Saturday morning classes.  <a href="https://www.hertsmusicservice.org.uk/music-centres-in-hertfordshire/stevenage-music-centre/stevenage-music-centre.aspx">https://www.hertsmusicservice.org.uk/music-centres-in-hertfordshire/stevenage-music-centre/stevenage-music-centre.aspx</a>  <a href="https://www.hertsmusicservice.org.uk/media-library/documents/stevenage/smms.pdf">https://www.hertsmusicservice.org.uk/media-library/documents/stevenage/smms.pdf</a>  <a href="https://www.hertsmusicservice.org.uk/media-library/documents/stevenage/lsmmp.pdf">https://www.hertsmusicservice.org.uk/media-library/documents/stevenage/lsmmp.pdf</a>  For the more adventurous, there are always water sports at Fairlands park or even hiring a pedalo!  <a href="https://www.sll.co.uk/fairlands-valley/activities/#main-content">https://www.sll.co.uk/fairlands-valley/activities/#main-content</a></p>
<p>17/6/22</p>	<p><b>Taking Notice</b> is about being in the moment. Not being lost in our own thoughts. Sometimes we are so busy making plans, going from task-to-task, going from one place to the next and pushing forwards that we don't take time to reflect and take notice of the world around us. At other times, we may find that we aren't very busy in the same way - but are occupying our minds with 'doing nothing' and find ourselves worrying about the future and being bogged down with unhealthy thoughts and negative feelings. In both cases, we can find ourselves not taking the time to pay attention to the present moment -</p>



	<p>the here and now. By taking notice and being in the present, we can improve our mental health and sense of wellbeing.</p> <p>Some ideas to try and be more aware</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walk around your neighbourhood. (You are not merely trying to get from A to B. You are walking 'on purpose'.)</li> <li>• Try to see things with 'new eyes'.</li> <li>• Look for beauty in the unexpected: look out for colours, textures, shapes, reflections in water, shadows. Look down, look up, and look along.</li> <li>• Get creative and take pictures with a camera! Focus on capturing what's before you.</li> </ul>
24/6/22	<p>Connecting with others is one of the 5 ways to Well-being. Connections are the interactions we have with others, ourselves and the world around us. Positive connections are interactions which make us feel good. It is essential we help children to form connections with other people because it helps them to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build self-esteem</li> <li>• Feel like they belong</li> <li>• Share positive experiences</li> <li>• Get emotional support when needed</li> </ul> <p>Things to try</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• if possible, take time each day to be with your family, for example, try arranging a fixed time to eat dinner together</li> <li>• arrange a day out with friends you have not seen for a while</li> <li>• try switching off the TV to talk or play a game</li> <li>• have a picnic with friends or family</li> <li>• visit a friend or family member who needs support or company</li> <li>• make the most of technology to stay in touch with friends and family. Video-chat apps like Skype and FaceTime are useful, especially if you live far apart</li> </ul>
1/7/22	<p>Research suggests that acts of giving and kindness can help improve our mental wellbeing by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• creating positive feelings and a sense of reward</li> <li>• giving you a feeling of purpose and self-worth</li> <li>• helping you connect with other people</li> </ul> <p>It could be small acts of kindness towards other people, or larger ones like volunteering. Children are capable of giving and also benefit from such acts. Within school we encourage even our youngest children to</p> 

smile and greet others and thank them for acts of kindness, such as holding open a door.  
 You don't need to wait for Christmas there are many things you could try at home over the Summer:

- saying thank you or writing an email/card to someone for something they have done or for a gift
- spending time with friends or relatives who need support or company
- drawing a picture or making something such as cakes or a photo frame for a friend or family
- encouraging children to share a toy or game with others

8/7/22

Keep Learning is our final area for our 5 ways to well being. Here are a few ideas for the summer holiday.



Firstly keep your children motivated to read using the library reading challenge. The theme this year is 'Gadgeteers' and there are lots of ideas, games and rewards all available online through their website.

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

**Free Workshops this Summer for Hertfordshire Families from Step2Skills**

If you're looking for free family activities for the summer holidays, Step2Skills is offering a range of family learning workshops, which are all free!

Story Sacks - 2-day workshop - Stevenage - 25th and 26th July - Explore traditional tales and familiar stories through interactive games and activities, developing literacy and creative skills.

Nailing Numbers - 2-day workshop - Stevenage - 25th and 26th July - Through fun and interactive maths activities, this workshop encourages children and adults to think about what we know about money and developing good habits to make our money go further.

Hertfordshire Hedgehogs - 2-day workshop - Stevenage - 28th and 29th July - Taught by an expert in her field, this workshop is perfect for animal lovers out there and will teach you all about the wonders of hedgehogs and how you can help them, through fun activities and crafts.

To book your place on any of these free 2-session workshops, visit <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/adult-learning/find-a-course/event-booking?service=eventHAFLS>

And finally one for the adults.....Here is the link to a range of FREE online level 2 courses from mental health to Autism or teambuilding.


<https://freecoursesinengland.co.uk/free-courses-1/>



15/7/22

This academic year our Mental Health Practitioner, Leila, has worked with the parents of 4 individual children, 22 children in groups from Years 5, 4, 3 and 2 working on anxiety based issues and 12 Year 6 pupils supporting them with transition work. Over the holiday this service are offering online sessions for parents and carers on Understanding Worries and low mood, Transition to secondary School and Confidence, resilience and Risking on Purpose. Also for 16-18yr olds on New beginnings.

They will also be hosting Coffee Mornings for all Stevenage MHST Education Sites. These are being held at Barnwell Upper School, SG2 9SR. For further details, please see below and scan the QR code to make a booking.



**MHST Wide Online Programme - <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/herts-amp-w-essex-mental-health-support-teams-in-schools-42530331823#about>**

WC 25.07.22	WC 01.08.22	WC 08.08.22	WC 15.08.22	WC 22.08.22	WC 29.08.22
For parents and carers - Understanding Worries and low mood Tuesday 26 <sup>th</sup> July 1:30-2:30pm	For parents and carers - Transition to secondary School Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> August 09:30-10:30am	For parents and carers - Confidence, resilience and Risking on Purpose Tuesday 9 <sup>th</sup> August 4:30-5:30pm	For parents and carers - Understanding Worries and low mood Monday 15 <sup>th</sup> August 09:30-10:30am	For parents and carers - Transition to secondary School Monday 22 <sup>nd</sup> August 10-11am	For parents and carers - Confidence, resilience and Risking on Purpose Tuesday 30 <sup>th</sup> August 12-1pm
For parents and carers - Understanding Worries and low mood Wednesday 27 <sup>th</sup> July 6-7pm	For 16-18yr olds New beginnings Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> August 11-12noon	For 16-18yr olds New beginnings Monday 9 <sup>th</sup> August 12-1pm	For parents and carers - Understanding Worries and low mood Wednesday 17 <sup>th</sup> August 6-7pm	For parents and carers - Transition to secondary School Wednesday 24 <sup>th</sup> August 4-5pm	For 16-18yr olds New beginnings Wednesday 31 <sup>st</sup> August 1:30-2:30pm
For 16-18yr olds New beginnings Thursday 28 <sup>th</sup> July 3-4pm	For parents and carers - Transition to secondary School Wednesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> August 6-7pm	For parents and carers - Confidence, resilience and Risking on Purpose Wednesday 10 <sup>th</sup> August 12-1pm	For 16-18yr olds New beginnings Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> August 11-12noon	For parents and carers - Transition to secondary School Friday 26 <sup>th</sup> August 10-11am	For parents and carers - Confidence, resilience and Risking on Purpose Thursday 1 <sup>st</sup> September 5:30-6:30pm

**Local Sessions for All Stevenage MHST Education Sites held at Barnwell Upper School, SG2 9SR**


WC 25.07.22	WC 01.08.22	WC 08.08.22	WC 15.08.22
Primary School Parent/Carer Coffee Morning Wednesday 27 <sup>th</sup> July 10-11am	Secondary School Parent/Carer Coffee Morning Wednesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> August 10-11am	16-18yrs Parent/Carer Coffee Morning Wednesday 10 <sup>th</sup> August 10-11am	16-18yrs Coffee Morning Wednesday 17 <sup>th</sup> August 10-11am

**All online sessions will include:**

- a short presentation on the theme and how it can improve wellbeing
- some fun activities on offer linked to the them
- Informal Q&A session to end
- To sign up - please Scan the QR Code

**Coffee Mornings will include:**

- Drop in and say Hi!
- Informal Q&A
- Space to reflect and share resources
- "Stevenage Young Peoples Healthy Hub" will also be there to provide information, advice and signposting



**Mental Health Support Teams**

Hertfordshire Partnership  
University NHS Foundation Trust

