Mental health and wellbeing calendar
Autumn term 2020

Do you find it difficult to incorporate mental health and wellbeing into the average school day? To help, we have created a simple calendar for the 2020 autumn term to help you plan ahead.

It highlights curriculum themes and occasions where mental health can be explored and celebrated. It also highlights some points in the school year where stress or anxiety levels in the school community may be higher. For each section we have suggested ideas for what schools can do, and resources to support any activity planned.

Event	Time of year	Themes	What could you do?	Supporting resources
Back to school	England, Northern Ireland and Wales - September Scotland - August	• Our school community – identifying similarities and differences, re-bonding as a school • Adjusting to school life -routines, targets, expectations • Some children may experience separation anxiety Staff may also be feeling apprehensive at this time about the following topics: • Work-life balance • Bonding with their new class • Upcoming inspections and observations • Changes to the staff structure	• Hold a whole-school assembly • Run a wellbeing survey for all students • Plan individual activities for those who find transition difficult Staff • Hold a back to school INSET with a focus on wellbeing • Run a wellbeing survey for staff • Pair staff with a trusted colleague to support each other's wellbeing • Regular 1:1s rather than termly performance management	• Returning to school toolkit • Piece of the puzzle assembly plan • Piece of the puzzle activity • Separation anxiety: tools for teachers • Measure pupil wellbeing: 5 Steps framework • Planning a wellbeing Inset day toolkit • Supporting staff wellbeing during the return to school • Conduct a staff wellbeing survey: 5 Steps framework

Event	Time of year	Themes	What could you do?	Supporting resources
New start, New class	England, Northern Ireland and Wales - September Scotland - August	• Changes • All about me • Working together • Similarities and differences • Responsibilities • Growth mindset	• Whole class team building activities • Develop a class ethos or motto for the year • Displays and classroom prompts	• All about me toolkit • Getting to know me: worksheet for ages 4 to 7 • Getting to know me: worksheet for ages 7 to 11 • Superhero me activity sheet
Beginning of transition – open evenings at secondary schools	Late September/ early October	• Transition – preparing for secondary school • Anxiety • Stress	• Run a year group assembly for school leavers • Plan pre-transition activities and discussions with students • Have an after-school meeting with parents and carers to discuss transition and process	• Moving up: the transition to secondary school animation • Transition assembly • Transition passport

Event	Time of year	Themes	What could you do?	Supporting resources
World Teachers' Day	5th October 2020	• Staff wellbeing • Teacher stress management	• Celebration day for teachers – celebration assembly, activities etc. • SLT, governors or parent councils could pledge to improve an aspect of school life for teachers • Staff wellbeing activities • Twilight on stress management	• 10 steps towards school staff wellbeing • School staff wellbeing training (paid)
World Mental Health Day	10th October 2020	• Theme for 2020: mental health for all	• Hold a wellbeing celebration day • Develop staff knowledge on groups that may be more likely to be at risk • Audit your provision and develop a whole-school approach to mental health	• World Mental Health Day toolkit • World Mental Health Day: 20 wellbeing tips • 5 Steps to Mental Health and Wellbeing framework

Event	Time of year	Themes	What could you do?	Supporting resources
Black History Month UK	October 2020	• Discrimination • Black Lives Matter • Tolerance • Similarities and differences • Empathy	• Lessons on positive role models in the black community • Staff training on the impact of discrimination on mental health • Whole-school assemblies on empathy and tolerance	The same but different lesson plans: • For ages 4 to 5 • For ages 5 to 8 • For ages 9 to 11 • The same but different assembly plan
International Walk to School Month *Walk to School Week (UK)*	October 2020 (moved from May due to Covid-19)	• Health – both physical and mental and the links between them • Wellbeing • Mindfulness on your walk to school	• Issue parent and carer guidance - how to make your walk to school a wellbeing or mindfulness walk • Create a class chart of what the children saw/smelt/thought/heard on the walk	• World Mental Health Day: 20 wellbeing tips • Mindfulness calendar: daily 5-minute activities

			• Add a playtime walk around the school for those who can't participate • Run lessons and activities on the link between mental and physical health	
International Stress Awareness Week/Day	2nd – 6th November 2020/ 4th November 2020	For staff: • Handling stress • Self-care strategies • Mindfulness • Work-life balance • School environment and ethos – is wellbeing considered?	• Hold a staff meeting on staff wellbeing and stress at work • Run a staff wellbeing survey – analyse results and create an action plan • Run staff training on stress management • Develop a whole-school approach to staff wellbeing • Reduce observations and increase 1:1s and team teaching	• Promote staff wellbeing: 5 Steps framework • 5 Steps to Mental Health and Wellbeing framework • School staff wellbeing training (paid) • Wellbeing poster for school staff

Event	Time of year	Themes	What could you do?	Supporting resources
World Kindness Day	13th November 2020	• Kindness • Understanding • Tolerance • Empathy • Emotions related to kindness – how it makes you and others feel	• Hold a celebration day • Make 'kindness' a whole school theme for the week for assemblies and health and wellbeing lessons • Encourage children and staff to participate in random acts of kindness	• Seven days of kindness calendar
Anti-bullying Week	16th -20th November 2020	• Bullying • Cyber or online bullying • Empathy • Respect • Friendships • Peer pressure • Social media	• Hold an awareness assembly • Run lessons on social media for upper year groups • Run lessons on friendships and bullying as part of your health and wellbeing lessons • Review your bullying policy	• Anti-bullying toolkit • Tips on working with children who bully • Tips on empowering pupils who are bystanders to bullying

Event	Time of year	Themes	What could you do?	Supporting resources
Divali	14th November 2020	• Culture – similarities and differences • Respect • Celebrating diversity – promoting positive role models, why is diversity a strength? • Celebration and community – how do celebrations bond us as a school community? • Discrimination – impact on mental health	• Encourage positive dialogues about the differences between us • Place importance on celebrating the different cultures represented in your school to promote a feeling of equality and belonging • Staff training and CPD on mental health in different groups • Review policies for staff leave on celebration days	The same but different lesson plans: • For ages 4 to 5 • For ages 5 to 8 • For ages 9 to 11 • The same but different assembly plan
Christmas	December	• Holiday – spending long period at home without school support systems	• Hold parent/carer support and information meetings to share strategies	• Winter wellbeing toolkit

- Erratic timetable might cause increased anxiety for some children
- Staff – end of term stress due to additional activities and workload
- Families & relationships

- Increase or begin winter wellbeing activities for staff and children
- Plan a community outreach project – doing good for others and volunteering is good for everyone's mental health
- Allow feedback time at staff meetings or include a mindfulness activity
- Praise and reward staff for their hard work

Visit Mentally Healthy Schools for more resources

MENTALLY HEALTHY SCHOOLS

Anna Freud
National Centre for Children and Families