



Children's Mental Health Week 2019

4-10 Feb #ChildrensMentalHealthWeek
ChildrensMentalHealthWeek.org.uk

Dear Parents and Carers,

This week (4-10 February 2019) is Children's Mental Health Week. The Week was set up by the children's mental health charity Place2Be to shine a spotlight on the importance of children and young people's mental health. This year's theme is **Healthy: Inside and Out – we're encouraging everyone to think about how they look after their bodies and minds.**

What's it all about?

When we think about healthy living, we tend to focus on looking after our bodies – our physical wellbeing – through food, being active and getting enough sleep.

However, in order to be healthy overall, it's important that we look after our minds – our mental wellbeing – too. We know from our work in schools that children in every class have diagnosable mental health conditions and many more struggle with challenges from bullying to bereavement.

Our bodies and minds are actually very closely linked, so things that we do to improve our physical wellbeing can help our mental wellbeing as well. When we take steps to be **Healthy: Inside and Out**, it helps us to feel better in ourselves, focus on what we want to do and deal with difficult times.

As parents and carers, you play a very important role in your child's health. Here are a few simple ways you can encourage them to look after their body and mind:

- **Chat with your child about what you do to look after your body and mind**, from walking the dog to turning your phone off before bed. Sharing the steps you've taken to stay healthy can set a good example for them – but don't be afraid to admit it if you've struggled! It's important for children to keep trying, even when things are difficult.
- **Praise your child and other family members for what they do to look after their body and mind** – even if it's small. If your child sees healthy living in a positive light, they're more likely to carry on doing these things throughout life.
- **Remind them that there's no such thing as a perfect body or mind – and no one is perfectly healthy!** Your child might be tempted to compare themselves to other children, especially on social media, but it's important to remember that everyone's bodies and minds are different – and that's something to celebrate.
- **Do something regularly with your child to be Healthy: Inside and Out.** Family life can be very busy and stressful at times. Cooking a meal, sitting down for a family dinner, or going for a walk together can be a great way to stay connected and have fun.

Don't forget, if you're worried about your child, you can talk to your GP or someone at your child's school.

You can also find a list of organisations that provide support and advice for parents on our website

www.place2be.org.uk/usefulcontacts

Visit www.ChildrensMentalHealthWeek.org.uk to find out how you can get involved and support Place2Be's vital work.