

Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School



WELLBEING GUIDE

What is wellbeing?

Wellbeing is a state in which pupils are able to develop their potential, learn and play creatively. Concretely, wellbeing at school means feeling safe, valued and respected. Pupils should be actively and meaningfully engaged in academic and social activities. This means they will have positive self-esteem, self-efficacy and a sense of autonomy.

Why is good mental health and wellbeing important?

Good mental health and wellbeing is essential for school students. It helps pupils to learn effectively, cope with day-to-day challenges, and develop into resilient young adults. There are a number of things that we as a school can do to support the mental health and wellbeing of our students. For example, we can provide information and resources on coping strategies. We effectively teach wellbeing strategies and create safe and supportive environments where students feel comfortable discussing their mental health and how to support wellbeing.

We promote positive thinking and resilience by teaching strategies for positive mental health and wellbeing include the ability to ask for help as well as accept support from others. This is combined with many personal resources that include using helpful thinking, having a positive outlook, being resilient during challenging times emotional awareness and having self-confidence.

Quite rightly, campaigns like Children's Mental Health Week and Mental Health Awareness Day have helped to reduce the negative stigma that once shrouded mental illness. Thankfully, more children, young people, and adults are now finding the help that they need.

Long may these campaigns continue, and although the future is bright, there is much more that can be done to help individuals feel more comfortable talking about mental health and be part of day-to-day conversations.

The five ways to wellbeing

The five ways to wellbeing are a great place to start keeping mentally and physically well. The five ways can benefit your mental health and wellbeing. They can be adapted to your circumstances. The five ways are Connect, Be Active, Take Notice, Learn and Give.

Connect

Connecting is all about developing and nurturing your social relationships. Having a strong support network can help you through difficult times in life and can combat feelings of loneliness and isolation. In times like this, when you may be isolating for long periods of time, it is important to stay connected to friends and family. One example could be:

Making the most of technology – video chat apps like Skype and Facetime are a great way of staying in touch with friends, family and colleagues, particularly if you live far apart. Try to do this regularly.

Keep learning

Learning new things throughout your life is great for improving your self-esteem and keeping mentally sharp. You could do this through trying something completely new or trying to return to activities you once did and always meant to pick up again. Do a crossword puzzle or Sudoku, or play a challenging game. Learn a musical instrument or tik tok dance.

Be Active

Being active is a way of finding physical activity that you enjoy. Incorporating physical activity into your day to the best of your ability is an excellent way of developing your mental wellbeing and is something you can do to boost your mood. There are lots of online home exercise programs, try

<https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/get-active/home-workout-videos/>

Take Notice

Notice is about reminding yourself to look at the small things in life, which is proven to improve your mental wellbeing. This may feel like a difficult task if you are isolating, and have been for a long time, but here are some suggestions:

- Develop a mindfulness habit, which can be done through free mindfulness apps for your phone.
- Learn how to meditate
- Be mindful in watching the news – if constant updates are making you feel anxious, take time away from social media or the TV.

Give

It is proven that people who volunteer their time in some way are much more likely to rate themselves as happy and feel more connected to their community. Now more than ever, acts of kindness can go a long way in helping yourself and others. Why not try:

- Helping a relative or neighbour who may not be able to visit the shops for groceries.
- Write a note to a relative or neighbour.
- Volunteer.
- Check in on a friend

Respect, Believe and Achieve

Our school motto “Respect, Believe and Achieve,” echoes the words of Cardinal Hume. We take pride in challenging our students to reach their full potential in every area of their lives, and at the root of all of this lies the firm foundation of the Catholic faith. To support this there is a strong pastoral team with Cardinal Heenan who work hard to look after the wellbeing of our pupils around these five themes. Specific programmes and interventions are put in place to support our pupil’s wellbeing and are delivered by both internal and external staff, more information can be found on our website wellbeing area.

Research by the Mental Health Foundation suggests that 20% of adolescents may experience a mental health problem in any given year. 50% of mental health problems are established by age 14 and 75% by age 24.

Talking about mental health to our children at home is sometimes difficult - to the point that we can put off raising the subject, not wanting to unearth problems or raise overwhelming subjects. Sometimes we may feel that our children are too young or not ready to talk about these topics. Attached is a practical guide designed to support and guide parents on speaking to children openly about mental health issues. We want children to feel comfortable talking about their worries.

Strategies that you can facilitate at home

For children learning to cope with mental health conditions, you as a parent can help facilitate and initiate self-care.

Learning to slow down their thoughts and changing how they can see things can help the child to feel better and happier, concentrate better and find new ways to cope. Encourage them to try

1. Taking deep breaths in through the nose and out through the mouth.
2. Express their feelings through art or a mood journal.
3. Build their confidence and self-esteem by talking about the things they are good at and things they have achieved.

4. Encourage them to do some exercise or sport.
5. You can ask for help on their behalf
6. Encourage them to use our school website to log their worries and concerns.
They will then be met in school by a mental health first aider to offer them the support and guidance that they may need.

If you need support for your child's mental health please contact your GP or school and speak to their head of year or one of the safeguarding team. Below are also some of the organisations who can offer additional support and guidance.

Childline 0800 1111 (free 24 hour helpline)

Papyrus Hotline (Under 35's at risk of suicide or concerned for another) 0800 068 4141

Young Minds 0808 803 5544 <https://www.mind.org.uk>

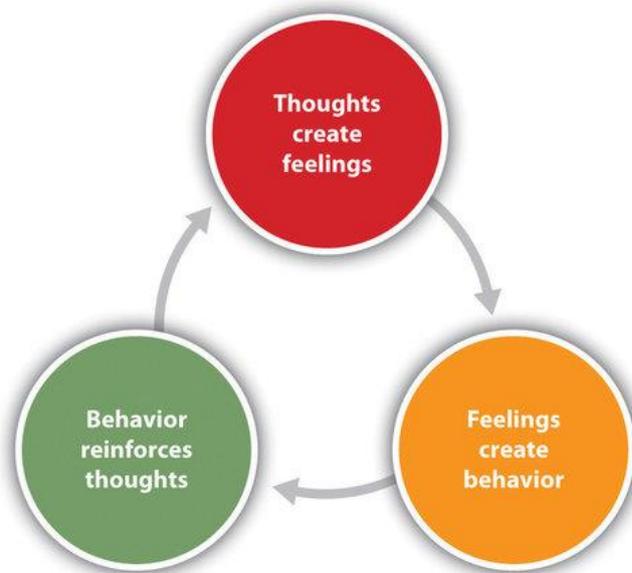
Samaritans support for anyone who wants to talk 116 123

YPAS – Young Persons Advisory Service – 0151 707 1025

Fresh CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service) single point of access 0151 293 2662 <https://www.Kooth.com>

Resilience

Resilience is learning about what needs you have and what needs are not being met. Once you can learn more about this you can work on a certain area and build up your resilience and self-belief. In exploring things around your learning, coping and core-self we can help you learn what your achievements are and what helps you cope with issues and overcome things. What motivates you to keep on trying?



Understanding Emotional Resilience

Emotional Resilience is not a trait that we are born with or without. It is a dynamic process that can be influenced by various factors, such as our personality, upbringing, environment, and experiences. Emotional Resilience can also vary depending on the situation and the context. Some people may be more resilient in certain areas than others.

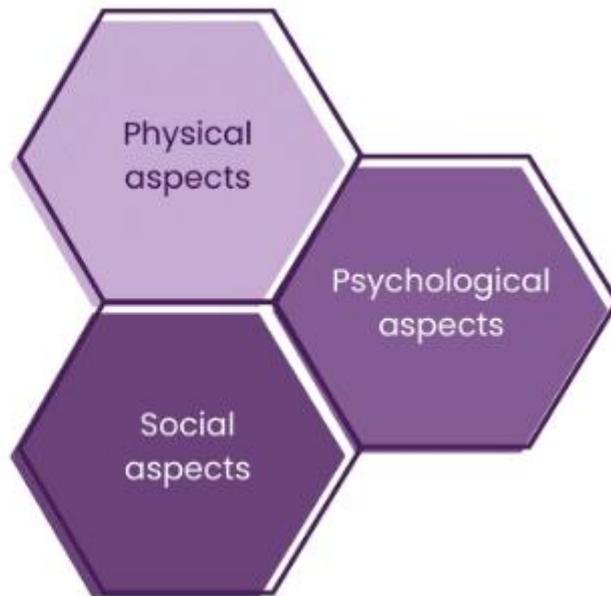
Emotional Resilience is not the same as happiness or optimism. It does not mean we never feel negative emotions or always see the bright side of things. Rather, it means that we can recognise and accept our positive and negative emotions. You can use them as a source of information as well as motivation.

Emotional Resilience also does not mean that we never face challenges or problems. It means that we can deal with them proactively and adaptively without letting them overwhelm or define us.

The three elements of Emotional Resilience

Emotional Resilience consists of three main elements: physical, psychological, and social. These elements are interrelated and influence each other. Let us look at each of them in more detail:

The three elements of Emotional Resilience



1) Physical aspects

The physical aspects of Emotional Resilience refer to how we take care of our body and health. This includes our diet, exercise, sleep, hygiene, and medical care. A healthy body can support a healthy mind, and vice versa. Besides, physical activity can reduce stress, improve mood and cognitive function, and boost the immune system.

Similarly, getting enough sleep can improve our memory, concentration, creativity, and emotional regulation. On the other hand, deprived physical health can increase our vulnerability to stress and affect our mental well-being.

2) Psychological aspects

The psychological aspects of Emotional Resilience refer to how we think, feel, and behave in response to stress and challenges. This includes our mindset, attitude, beliefs, values, goals, and coping skills. A positive and flexible mindset can help us to see challenges as opportunities rather than threats and to focus on what we can control rather than what we cannot.

A positive attitude can also help us to appreciate what we have rather than what we lack and to express gratitude rather than resentment. A clear and realistic sense of thought can help us to find our strengths and weaknesses and to set achievable and meaningful goals. Various coping skills can help us manage our emotions, solve problems, communicate effectively, and seek help when needed.

3) Social aspects

The social aspects of Emotional Resilience refer to how we relate to others and our environment. This includes our family, friends, colleagues, community, and culture. A strong and supportive social network can provide us with emotional, practical, and informational support, as well as a sense of belonging and identity.

A positive and respectful relationship with ourselves and others can also foster trust, empathy, and cooperation. A diverse and inclusive environment can expose us to different perspectives, experiences, and opportunities and enrich our learning and growth.

Steps to build Emotional Resilience

Emotional Resilience is not something that we have or do not have. We can develop and improve it over time through practice and experience. Here are some steps that can help us to build our Emotional Resilience:



Identify and understand your emotions

Fundamental to fostering Emotional Resilience is acknowledging and understanding your emotions and their origins. Regular monitoring of your emotional state can be achieved through methods like journaling, using a mood tracker, or employing a straightforward emotional scale.

Additionally, practices like meditation and breathing exercises can effectively soothe both mind and body, allowing you to observe your emotions impartially and without immediate reaction.

Challenge and change your thoughts

A crucial part of developing Emotional Resilience involves scrutinising and altering any thoughts and beliefs that might contribute to or amplify your stress and discomfort. Techniques like Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy (REBT), Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) or approaches grounded in positive psychology can be instrumental in this process.

These methods assist in recognising and confronting negative or irrational thought processes, enabling you to substitute them with more constructive and empowering ones.

Develop and use your coping skills

The third step to building Emotional Resilience is to apply and practice your coping skills in different situations and contexts. There are many **Ways to Build Resilience** with coping skills. You can use strategies such as problem-solving, decision-making, time management, goal-setting, assertiveness, humour, or relaxation to deal with stress and challenges in a constructive and effective way. You can also seek professional help, such as counselling, coaching, or therapy, if you feel that you need more guidance or support.

Seek and offer support

The fourth step to building Emotional Resilience is to reach out and connect with others who can provide you with support, feedback, and encouragement. You can also offer your support, feedback, and encouragement to others who may need it. You can join or create a support group, a peer network, or a volunteer organisation where you can share your experiences, learn from others, and contribute to a common cause.

Celebrate and learn from your experiences

The fifth and final step to Building Resilience is to acknowledge and appreciate your achievements and progress, as well as your mistakes and setbacks. You can use tools like a gratitude journal, a success log, or a reward system to celebrate your wins and reinforce your positive behaviours.

You will find a range of advice, signposting and support on our website both internally and externally.