

March 2021

Back to school!

As most of us are now aware we are going to be returning back to school in March. As great news as this is, some of us may be feeling a little apprehensive or nervous about our return.

This is completely normal!

This newsletter is going to be jam packed with tips, strategies and helpful resources for pupils, staff and parents, to hopefully make going back to school that little bit easier.

Excited

Anxious

Overwhelmed

Worried

Motivated

Happy

Apprehensive

Relieved

Nervous



Follow us on social media - @lancsmind

Find more resources for Children and Young People, Adults and Parents on our website:

www.lancashiremind.org.uk



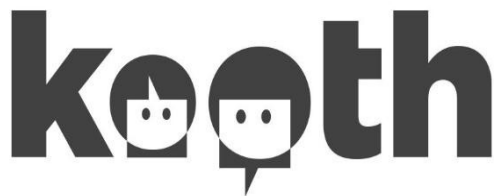
Some of us will have been away from school now for quite a while, this may be leading to feelings of worry about returning and seeing our friends. It is very normal to feel overwhelmed by another big change. To help make things feel less scary it is important to use things that help us feel good. Below are useful webpages that have great resources on them and can be an extra addition to your mental health tool kit. Click on the picture to be sent directly to the page.



Welcome to The Mix. Whether you're 13, 25, or any age in between, we're here to take on the embarrassing problems, weird questions, and please-don't-make-me-say-it-out-loud thoughts you have. We give you the information and support you need to deal with it all. Because you can. Because you're awesome.



We want to see a world where no young person feels alone with their mental health, and all young people get the mental health support they need, when they need it, no matter what.



Kooth is an online counselling and emotional well-being platform for children and young people, accessible through mobile, tablet and desktop and free at the point of use.



ONLINE, ON THE PHONE, ANYTIME
childline.org.uk | 0800 1111

Childline is here to help anyone under 19 in the UK with any issue they're going through.

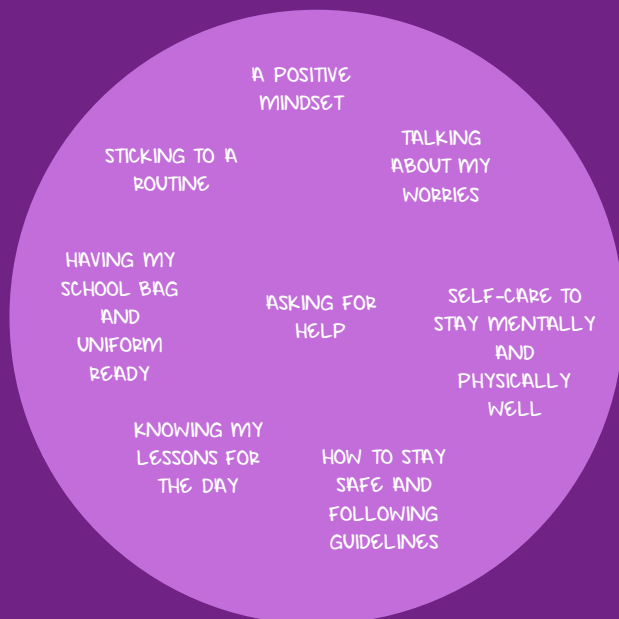
You can talk about anything. Whether it's something big or small, our trained counsellors are here to support you.

Worry is natural and very normal, I am sure at some point we will all have feelings of worry about returning to school and that includes teaching staff, parents and pupils.

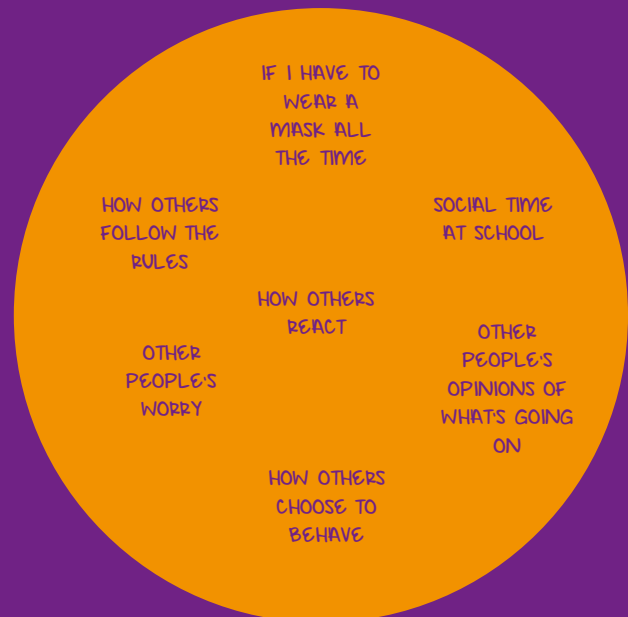
Below is a great technique to try and separate the things you **CAN** control compared to the things you **CAN'T**. If you would like to try this technique, you can have a go at our blank version on [page 4!](#)

The Circles of Worry- returning to school

Sometimes things can feel overwhelming and it's not always easy to make sense of your worries. Follow the diagram below to see which circle they fall into. Then you can easily see what things you can change for the better...



THINGS I CAN CONTROL



THINGS I CAN'T CONTROL



Below are two blank circles for you to try and separate the things you **CAN** control compared to the things you **CAN'T**.

The Circles of Worry- returning to school

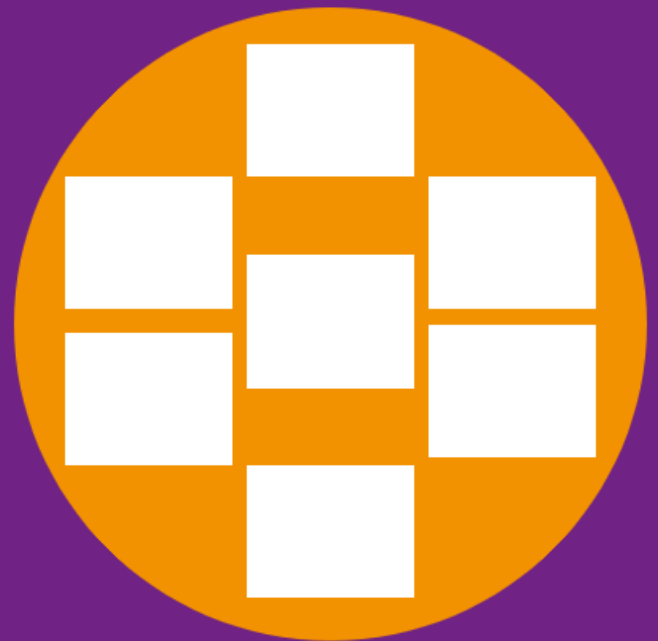
Now it's your turn!

Think about one worry at a time and decide which circle they should go into. Write that worry in a box inside the coloured circles below. Now keep adding your worries.

This will help you to see what you are able to change to help you feel more positive and in control of things.



THINGS I CAN CONTROL



THINGS I CAN'T CONTROL



Six tips to support your return to school during COVID-19



It's normal to feel sad, stressed, confused, scared or angry during the pandemic and when returning to school. Talking to people you trust will help. Get in touch with your loved one, a friend, a teacher and connect with them.



Be aware that not everything being said about COVID-19 in schools is accurate. Go to trusted sources like your local health department or wait for school to give you dates and clear instructions on what to expect on your return.



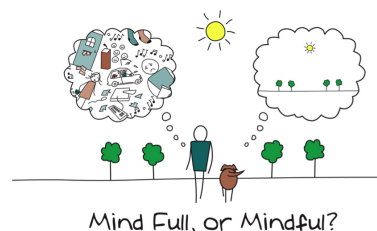
Limit your stress and fear by reducing how much time you spend watching or reading the news or scrolling through social media. Again, school will inform you of what they expect when you return. Try and stay away from anything that makes you feel negative.



Do things you've done in the past to help manage the challenges and stress of your return to school. Know that you've developed skills to manage your emotions and use them during this time.



Whilst being at home before and after school stay healthy by eating well, getting plenty of sleep, exercising regularly and having good social contact with loved ones by phone or video chat. You may find this helps you to feel more relaxed after a busy day of learning.



Mind Full, or Mindful?

Deal with your emotions in a healthy way. Have a plan ready in case you start to feel overwhelmed when returning to school. Don't hesitate to speak to a trusted adult or even your school counsellor. Try and use some of the mindfulness techniques on [page 6](#) to help.

In this newsletter one of our wonderful Lancashire Mind volunteers, Sue, has provided us with a short introduction to mindfulness. Mindfulness is a technique that can be helpful when you are facing feelings of anxiety or stress.

Mindfulness is...

...simply being in this moment and noticing it.
Just here, just now.

Mindfulness can help us...

...feel calmer and choose how best to respond
to what's happening

... realise our thoughts are simply thoughts,
not facts

...become kinder to ourselves and others

We learn this by...

...taking time to *simply be* and being curious
and what we can see, feel, hear, taste and
smell

...noticing our thoughts and emotions with a
sense of kindness

Sometimes our brain goes into overdrive,
perhaps we feel stressed, fearful, angry, or
maybe there just lots going on our mind,
and it all gets very busy, everything gets
stirred up and we can't see through it all, a
bit like when we shake a snow globe.

Simply noticing our breathing brings us into
the present moment, slows down the heart
rate and calms the brain. This can help us
see clearly, as though the snowflakes have
settled. Does the stress go away? No,
mindfulness doesn't stop stressful things in
our lives but it can give us skills to settle our
busy mind so we can make choices that are
healthy for us!

1. Take 5 breaths exercise

The idea is to take 5 breaths as you trace around the hand with the little finger of the other hand. A full breath in as you trace up each finger and a full breath out as you trace down. Do you notice anything about your breathing afterwards?

2. Breathe, simply be and smile

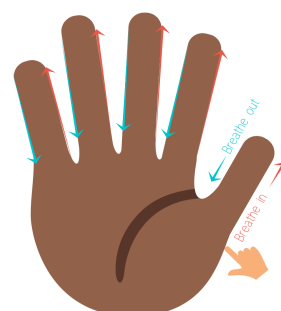
Sitting or standing, put the thumbs together with fingers of one hand resting on the other (looks a bit like a basket) and smile. Simply breathe normally, following each breath in and each breath out. No need to change the breath. Notice any thoughts and allow them to pass through your mind and float away like bubbles.

3. Take Notice of your senses

When you're outside, perhaps on a walk just notice everything you can feel - your feet on the ground, your clothes against your skin, air on your face, the temperature and so on; now what can you see, hear, smell and taste?

4. 5 finger gratitude exercise

Simply breathe. Hold one hand out and trace your fingers one at a time with the fore finger of the other hand, starting at the inner wrist up to the tip of the little finger. Hold as you get to each fingertip and think of something you're really grateful for. Continue with each finger, finishing at the outer wrist.



After a busy day or week it is good to make some time for reflection. Reflection is a useful tool to look back on thoughts and feelings at the end of the day. With returning to school this is a good technique to use for any age, from young people to parents and teachers. Below are reasons why reflection may be beneficial to your day and how you may plan writing your reflection journal.

Talk about how the day made you feel.

What feelings have you felt today? Did they change throughout the day?

Can you ask for support to explore alternative behaviours?

Was the way you felt and your behaviours normal to the situation?

How can you respond to a situation in a different way?

How can you react to that situation if you felt like that again?

How did you progress in your learning last week?

How can you improve next week?

This week my learning successes were...

The parts I don't understand YET are...

What will I do to make sure I improve next week?

What will I need to help me make those improvements?

What mistakes did I make that helped me learn?

What will I do to ensure that I am a good learner next week?



1:1 wellbeing coaching available

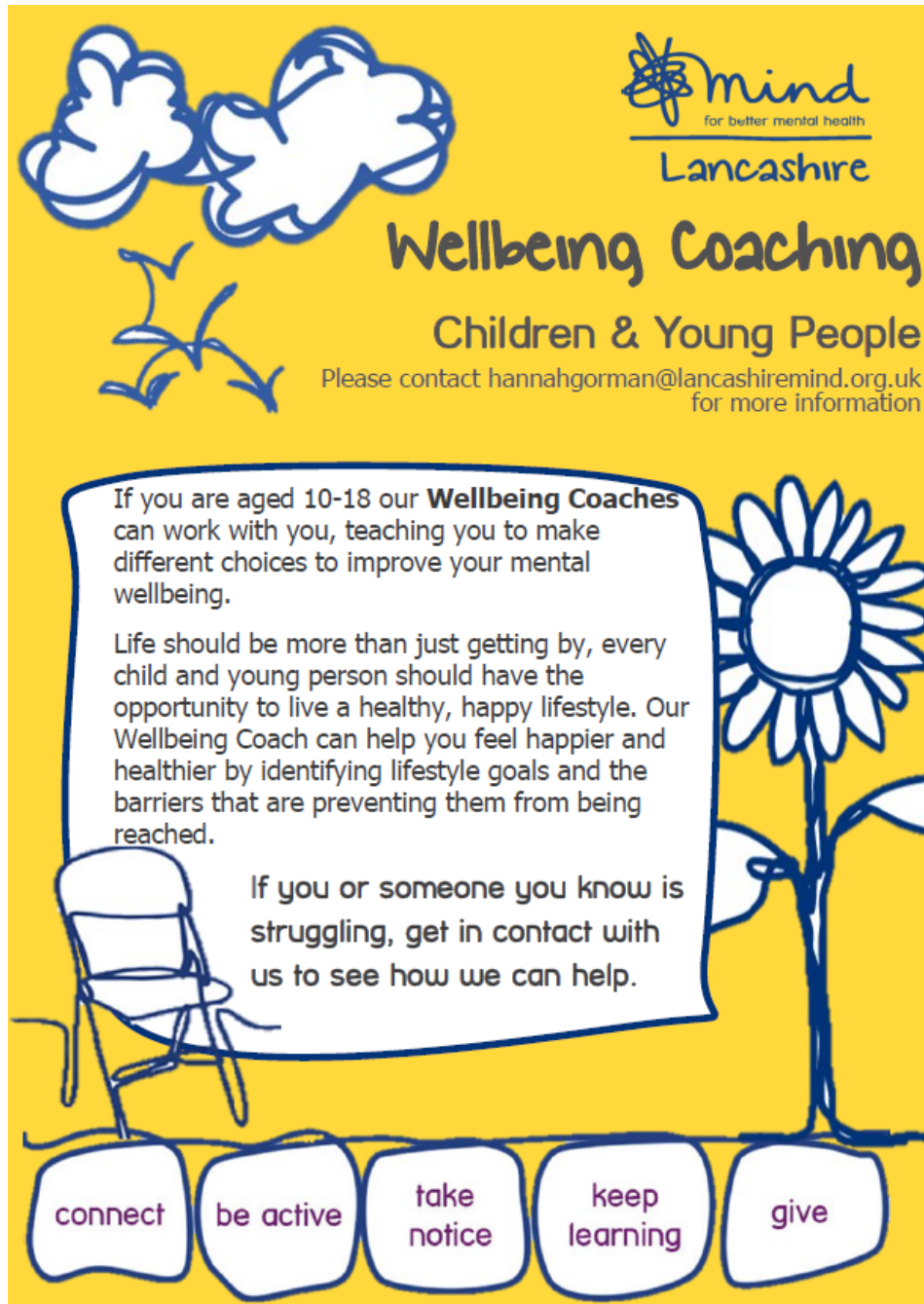
Wellbeing Coaching is a 6-week 1:1 intervention with a Wellbeing Coach, where the young person (**aged 10-18 years**) will work collaboratively with the coach to help create coping strategies, remove barriers to mental wellbeing and improve it. Coaching focuses on the present and how to move the young person forward with their life, to understand their own mental health and to develop positive changes into their routine. It can increase their motivation, confidence and self-esteem. It is tailored to meet the needs of the individual.

At the moment we are offering this service virtually but once children and young people return back to school, we hope to be offering this face-to-face as well as virtual. We have a specific risk assessment for the activity and we will tailor it for each school.

Email:

hannahgorman@lancashiremind.org.uk

for more information or to refer a young person to our free Wellbeing Coaching service



The poster features a yellow background with blue line art illustrations of clouds, a flower, and a chair. It includes the Mind Lancashire logo and text describing the Wellbeing Coaching service for children and young people aged 10-18. It provides contact information and lists five key themes: connect, be active, take notice, keep learning, and give.

mind
for better mental health
Lancashire

Wellbeing Coaching

Children & Young People

Please contact hannahgorman@lancashiremind.org.uk for more information

If you are aged 10-18 our **Wellbeing Coaches** can work with you, teaching you to make different choices to improve your mental wellbeing.

Life should be more than just getting by, every child and young person should have the opportunity to live a healthy, happy lifestyle. Our Wellbeing Coach can help you feel happier and healthier by identifying lifestyle goals and the barriers that are preventing them from being reached.

If you or someone you know is struggling, get in contact with us to see how we can help.

connect be active take notice keep learning give

General Government Guidance and Updates

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-public-on-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-the-public-on-the-mental-health-and-wellbeing-aspects-of-coronavirus-covid-19>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing>

NHS Guidance

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/caring-for-children-and-young-people/children-and-young-peoples-services/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/>

Lancashire Mind Resources

<https://www.lancashiremind.org.uk/pages/148-coronavirus-and-your-mental-health>

Mind.org Resources

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/#collapse77625>

Other Mental Health Resources

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/for-children-and-young-people/>

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/looking-after-your-mental-health-during-coronavirus-outbreak>

<https://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/blog/health-and-other-forms-of-anxiety-and-coronavirus/>

<https://www.healthyyoungmindsisc.co.uk/information/children-and-young-people>

<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/looking-after-yourself/coronavirus-and-mental-health/>

<https://www.kooth.com/>

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

Crisis Help and Helplines

If the person is in a crisis and in need of medical attention, you should call 999 and ask for an ambulance to take them to A&E.

If the person is presenting as a danger to themselves or members of the public you should contact the Police on 999.

Samaritans on free phone 116 123 (open 24 hours a day every day of the year)

| <i>Local area</i> | <i>9am-5pm</i> | <i>5pm-9am</i> |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|------------------------------|
| Blackburn | 01254 226430 | 01254 226074 |
| Blackpool | 01253 951225 | 01253 956280 |
| Chorley & South Ribble | 01772 676173 | 01772 773525 |
| Hyndburn, Rossendale & Ribble Valley | 01254 226006 | 01254 612640 |
| Lancaster & Morecambe | 01524 550550 | 01524 550198 or 01524 550199 |
| Pendle & Burnley | 01282 628455 | 01282 657222 |
| Preston | 01772 647024 | 01772 773433 |
| South Cumbria | 0300 024 7247 | 0300 024 7247 |
| West Lancashire | 01695 684161 | 01695 684356 |