

OUR WELLBEING NEWSLETTER | OCTOBER 2025

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING LEAD: MRS J CHILTON JCHILTON@BOTELER.ORG.UK
MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING MANAGER: MISS V GIEBKA VGIEBKA@BOTELER.ORG.UK



WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY 2025

World Mental Health Day takes place every year on 10 October. It's a reminder of the importance of good mental health and the need to prioritise and invest in good mental health.

Poor mental health is not inevitable, and World Mental Health Day is an opportunity for us all to consider how, together, we can help everyone have better mental health.

This year focuses on the mental health impact of repeated exposure to news coverage of crises and conflicts. The theme is: Overwhelm: when global events and relentless bad news become too much.



The world is going through a tough time right now and even if you're not directly affected by events, it can still feel like a lot to cope with. It's okay to ask for help, no matter what you, or anyone else is going through.



This week, our school has been proud to mark World Mental Health Day by holding special assemblies for every year group, focusing on the importance of looking after our wellbeing and knowing where to find help when we need it.

In these sessions, students have learned about the support available right here in school, as well as services outside of school such as CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services), the Mental Health Support Team (MHST), and Kooth, an online platform that offers free, safe, and anonymous support.

World Mental Health Day is a reminder that looking after our minds is just as important as looking after our bodies, and that nobody has to face challenges alone—help is always available.

Tips to manage overwhelm during global events and relentless bad news



Constantly hearing about negative news from around the world can feel like a lot to take in – **and that's because it is.**

Feeling overwhelmed by current events, no matter how big or small, can take a toll on our mental health. Here are some tips to help you cope with global news overwhelm and find your way back to balance.



Set boundaries with the news

Ask yourself how much news content you're happy to take in, and how often.



Use grounding exercises

Grounding yourself in the here and now can ease your stress response.

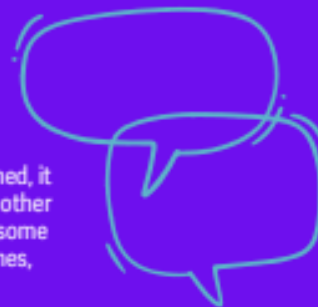
Have phone-free times

If you often find yourself doomscrolling, having set phone-free times or zones could help break this habit.



Talk with others

When you feel overwhelmed, it can help to connect with other people. You could spend some quality time with loved ones, family or friends.



Give yourself permission to rest

Taking time to look after yourself doesn't mean you've stopped caring about anything else; it means that you are looking after yourself so that you can keep on caring.



Focus on what you can control

Small actions still matter. Taking positive action can help shift feelings out of helplessness and into purposefulness.



Everyone deserves good mental health.
For more tips and information, visit [mentalhealth.org.uk](https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk)

Registered Charity No. England and Wales 80100, Scotland SC 039714 446 883.
Registered office: Studio 2, 707 Long Lane, London SE14 4FD. Registered with the Fundraising Regulator.

THE MENTAL HEALTH EFFECTS OF EXPOSURE TO CONSTANT CRISES

Being constantly exposed to distressing news can take an emotional toll, even if we're not directly involved with the events we see. In fact, constant exposure can chip away at our mental health over time, leaving us feeling sad and anxious. We may also find ourselves doing, thinking or feeling things that actually make it harder for us to cope. For example, you might...

Doomscroll

Doomscrolling means spending a long time scrolling through negative news that can make you feel sad, anxious or angry. We usually doomscroll late at night or when we feel stressed. It may feel like we're trying to keep up-to-date with what's happening in the world, but it can instead leave us trapped in an anxious state.



Feel helpless

The conflicts and suffering that people face around the globe can leave you feeling powerless. And when you don't know what to do about it, you can feel overwhelmed and helpless.

Experience hopelessness

Studies have shown that daily exposure to distressing news can contribute to hopelessness.⁶ You may think that things will never improve or that your actions don't matter in the grand scheme of things, leaving you feeling low.

Feel guilty

Sometimes, taking a break from the constant stream of news is good for overall well-being. Yet, you might also feel guilty for turning away from global events – like doing so is an act of not caring.



Practical ways to manage DOOMSCROLLING



It's normal to feel down from time to time when we come across bad news, but constant exposure to negative online content could negatively affect our mental health.

'Doomscrolling' is a relatively new term used to describe the impact of consuming large amounts of upsetting news online.

If you're looking for ways to spend less time doomscrolling, here are some suggestions that might help.

Turn off 'push' notifications

Turning off instant alerts for social media or news apps can give you a break from anxiety-provoking information.



Set a time limit

Setting a time limit on your scrolling can help, as long as you stick to it. Find something that gives you a gentle signal that it's time to put the phone down.



Consider phone-free zones

You're allowed to have quality time that isn't interrupted by notifications every few minutes.



Use a watch or an alarm clock

If you often doomscroll in bed, it may be because your phone doubles as your alarm clock. Switching to using a watch or a physical alarm clock may help.



Manage your social media feeds

You could make changes to what appears on your feed by blocking or hiding certain profiles, allowing you to limit the negative content you are exposed to.



Balance the negative with a positive

Mindfulness, reading, spending time with others, and exercising are all great self-care activities that can benefit your wellbeing.



Everyone deserves good mental health.
For more tips and information, visit [mentalhealth.org.uk](https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk)

Registered Charity No. England and Wales: 81105, Scotland SC: 030714 440 B57.
Registered office: Studio 2, 87 Long Lane, London SE14 6PD. Registered with the Fundraising Regulator.



School anxiety and refusal

It's normal for children and young people to feel worried about something that's happening at school – for example, when starting a new school or during exams. Sometimes, however, school can become challenging, stressful or distressing over a much longer period of time.

If your child is feeling anxious about school, or not able to go, it can be exhausting for both of you. Mornings in particular can become really stressful for the whole family, as you try to juggle your child's feelings alongside the need to get them to school and get on with your other responsibilities such as work. Even if you manage to get your child to the school gate, you might know how difficult they're going to find the day – or know that you'll be facing the same problem tomorrow morning.



About the term 'school refusal'

When anxiety builds up to the point that a young person cannot go to school, this is often called 'school refusal' – and you might hear the school or other professionals using this term. However, many young people and parents do not like this term because it implies that 'refusing' school is a choice, and you may prefer to use terms such as emotionally-based school avoidance (ESBA) or anxiety-related absence.

Strategies you can try at home



Create a morning routine or timetable

Having a routine for getting up, getting dressed, having breakfast and leaving the house can create a sense of security and reduce stress for you too. Try to prepare things like checking their timetable, packing bags and laying out clothes the night before. In the morning, focus on the one thing they need to do next as you work your way through the timetable, rather than thinking about a big goal like 'getting to school'.



Think together about how your child can manage their anxiety

Younger children might like to take something from home, like a favourite toy, into school with them – or use a [worry box](#) at home to help contain their anxieties. Teenagers might like to fill a box with things that help them feel calm using our [guide to making a self-soothe box](#).



Encourage them to do things that help them relax

Having time to unwind after school can be important. This could be spending time with friends and family, listening to music, going for a walk or run, playing sport, baking, drawing or watching a favourite film.



Recognise small achievements

Notice small successes such as getting out of bed at the right time or handing work in at school – and tell your child you're really impressed with them.



Try to take the pressure off

On some days your child may not be able to manage schoolwork or homework. Remember their mood will go up and down and you can always try again the next day.



For more support around school anxiety click the link: [School Anxiety and Refusal | Parent Guide to Support | YoungMinds](#)

THE WORRY TREE STRATEGY

The **Worry Tree strategy** is a practical tool that helps people manage anxiety by breaking down their worries into manageable steps. It begins with identifying the worry and asking whether it is something you can control or not. If the worry is **outside your control**, you remind yourself to let it go and focus on something else, using relaxation or distraction techniques to move forward. If it **is within your control**, you decide what action you can take and make a plan to address it. Once you have acted, you allow yourself to stop worrying about it. By following the branches of the Worry Tree, you learn to separate helpful, problem-solving thoughts from unhelpful rumination, reducing stress and promoting a calmer, more focused mindset.



What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

NAP STREAK

97

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

SNAPCHAT

AGE RESTRICTION
13+

With over 900 million active monthly users and billions of 'Snaps' sent each month, Snapchat is a popular messaging app among children and young people. It allows users to share fun, spontaneous pictures and videos with friends and family while using playful filters. One of Snapchat's unique features is that pictures, videos and messages are only viewable for a short period of time.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Snapchat's use of artificial intelligence (AI) includes features like the 'My AI' chatbot and AI-powered filters, offering interactive experiences that can be fun but also pose risks. These tools may share unfiltered or inaccurate responses, promote unrealistic beauty standards, and collect personal data. Advanced filters and deepfake-style lenses can distort reality, potentially leading to manipulation, impersonation, or inappropriate content.



SCREEN ADDICTION

Snapchat boosts user engagement and daily use with features like streaks (daily Snapchat exchanges between you and a friend). When a streak's been going for a few days, users will see a 🔥 emoji. The number alongside it shows the number of days, but if users miss a day and break the streak, the only way to restore it is to pay. This encourages daily use habits, and frequent notifications can keep users returning to the app even more often.



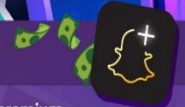
SEXTORTION

Because Snapchat's disappearing messages feature may foster a sense of safety, users may become targets of sextortion. For example, a predator may pressure someone into sending nude images, then somehow capture those images to threaten and intimidate the victim. This might involve claiming they will share the images with friends or family unless money is paid.



SNAPCHAT+

Snapchat+ is the platform's premium subscription service, offering early access to new and exclusive features. In June 2025, Snapchat introduced a new tier called Lens+, giving subscribers access to hundreds of lenses and AR experiences for playing, creating, and sharing Snaps. These paid features may encourage young users to spend money to access exclusive content, increasing the risk of overspending or feeling pressured to make in-app purchases.



ACCESSIBILITY

Snapchat is now accessible from a web browser, meaning children can use it on a laptop or tablet without downloading the app. This can make activity harder to monitor, reduce the effectiveness of parental controls, and increase the risk of unsupervised communication or exposure to inappropriate content.



INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some content on Snapchat isn't suitable for children. The hashtags used to group content are determined by the poster, so even an innocent search term could still yield age-inappropriate results. The app's disappearing messages feature also makes it easy for young people to share explicit images on impulse – so sexting continues to be a risk associated with Snapchat.



Advice for Parents & Educators

ACCESS THE SNAPCHAT FAMILY SAFETY HUB

Created with guidance from Common Sense Media, Snapchat has developed a Family Safety Hub that explains how the app works and how to use its in-app protections for teens. It's recommended that you review this guidance before allowing a child to download Snapchat. Remember, the app is only intended for children aged 13 and over.



ENCOURAGE OPEN DISCUSSIONS

Snapchat's risks can be easier to handle if you nurture through an open dialogue. Talk about scams and blackmail before letting children sign up. If they're lured into a scam, encourage them to tell you immediately. Talk openly and non-judgementally about sexting, emphasising its inherent risks. Furthermore, explain how popular 'challenges' on the platform can have harmful consequences.



BLOCK AND REPORT

If a stranger connects with a child on Snapchat and makes them feel uncomfortable by pressuring them to send or receive unwanted or inappropriate images, the child can tap the three dots on that person's profile to report or block them. There are options to state why they're reporting that user, with a tailored reporting section under the 'Nudity and Sexual Content' category. In this category, there's the option to report somebody for threatening to leak sexually explicit images, or 'nudes'.



USE PRIVACY SETTINGS TOGETHER

Sit down with the children in your care and explore Snapchat's privacy settings as a shared activity. You can help them adjust who can contact them, view their stories, or see their location on Snap Map. It's a good opportunity to explain why some settings are safer than others, reinforcing their understanding of online boundaries. Encourage them to regularly review these settings, especially after app updates or changes in their friendship groups.





YOUTH IN MIND



Mersey Care
NHS Foundation Trust

WARRINGTON



An **OnSide** Youth Zone

f



in

DROP IN

Monday - Sunday

3.30pm - 7.30pm

A free and discreet drop-in service offering early intervention support to young people aged 7-19 (up to 25 with a disability) who are experiencing challenges with their emotional wellbeing.

No appointment or referral is necessary and young people do not have to be a Youth Zone member to access this support.

Our friendly Key Workers are here to listen, offer advice and guidance, and will introduce you to a range of wellbeing projects and mental health services at the Youth Zone, in your local community, and online.

warringtonyouthzone.org



Department
of Health &
Social Care

The service is commissioned by Cheshire & Merseyside NHS as part of 'Warrington Place' Starting Well plans to support 'Children and Young People's Emotional and Mental Health & Wellbeing'.

The project delivery is a partnership between Warrington Youth Zone and Mersey Care 'Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services'



Warrington
Youth Zone
Dallam Lane
Warrington
WA2 7NG



warringtonyouthzone.org



Department
of Health &
Social Care

YOUR VOICE MATTERS

IF YOU HAVE ANYTHING YOU
WANT TO SAY - POST IT HERE...



BY THE
PASTORAL
OFFICE
UPSTAIRS -
END OF
ENGLISH
CORRIDOR

USE THIS POST BOX TO TELL US HOW YOU FEEL, ASK FOR SUPPORT, REPORT SOMETHING OR JUST TO HAVE A VENT AND UNLOAD YOUR THOUGHTS ANONYMOUSLY.

YOU CAN ALSO TALK TO THE WELLBEING COUNCIL LEADS - MISS GIEBKA, MRS CHILTON AND MRS HORTON, PLUS ANY TEACHER, TEACHING ASSISTANT, SUPPORT STAFF - EVERY SINGLE MEMBER OF STAFF IS HERE FOR YOU.

VISIT [HEALTHLINE.COM/HEALTH/BREATHING-EXERCISE](https://www.healthline.com/health/breathing-exercise)
FOR SOME CALMING BREATHING EXERCISES

SUICIDE PREVENTION ADVICE

WAIT!

- W** **Watch out** for signs of distress and changes in behaviour
- A** **Ask** "are you having suicidal thoughts?"
- I** **It will pass** – assure your loved one that, with help, their suicidal feelings will pass with time
- T** **Talk to others** – encourage your loved one to seek help from a GP or health professional

Mindful Moment:

Practicing mindfulness can have a positive effect on our mental health and wellbeing. It helps us slow down, pay attention to the present moment and develop better self-awareness and focus. In every Wellbeing newsletter we will be including a short guided meditation video for you to do at home and help build in healthy mental health habits that support managing our students impulsivity and restlessness.

[Grounding Exercise for Racing Minds: Calming Meditation with Dora Kamau](#)



Key contacts/ Help:

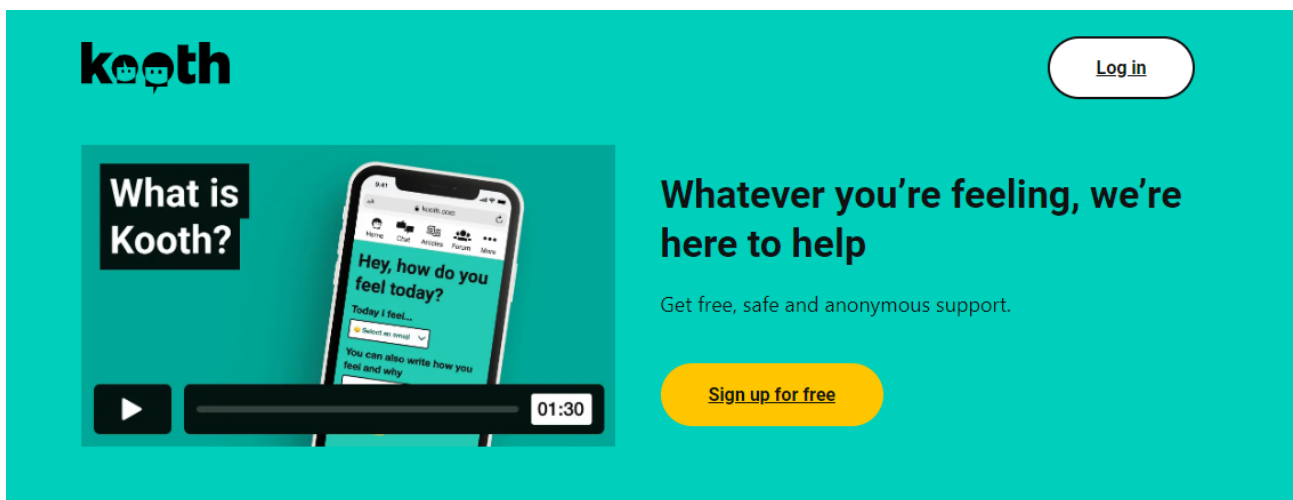
Life Signs: www.lifesigns.org.uk are a small self-harm charity that have so much information for people who are currently self-harming and for family members or friends of people who are self-harming. They also have information on cleaning self-harm wounds and treating wounds.

Parent Talk: Down-to-earth parenting advice you can trust. We're here for you, when you need us. Find answers to parenting questions in our advice articles. Or talk to a parenting coach about anything that's worrying you.

They can be found at: <https://parents.actionforchildren.org.uk>

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/young-person/your-guide-to-support/reaching-out-for-help/#Howtoaskforhelp>

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



The banner features a teal background. In the top left is the 'kooth' logo. In the top right is a white 'Log in' button. On the left, a video player shows a smartphone screen with the text 'Hey, how do you feel today?' and 'Today I feel...'. A play button and a '01:30' duration indicator are at the bottom of the video player. To the right of the video, the text reads 'Whatever you're feeling, we're here to help' followed by 'Get free, safe and anonymous support.' and a yellow 'Sign up for free' button.

kooth

Log in

What is Kooth?

Hey, how do you feel today?

Today I feel...

Select an emoji

You can also write how you feel and why

01:30

Whatever you're feeling, we're here to help

Get free, safe and anonymous support.

Sign up for free