



Health & Wellbeing Guide for Parents/Carers of Year 6 Children

Top tips on a range of health and wellbeing topics identified as common areas of concern or interest in the Year 6 Health Needs Assessment.

What's inside?

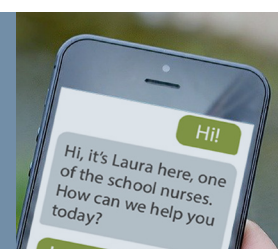
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Here to support you

Warwickshire School Health & Wellbeing Service is here to support you and your child: contact us for free, confidential advice from a school nurse. Parents/carers can call **03300 245 204** or text Parentline on **07520 619 376**. Children/young people aged 11-19 can text ChatHealth on **07507 331 525**.

Children and young people also have the opportunity to speak face-to-face with their school nurse at secondary school. They can arrange this using the contact details above or by asking one of their teachers.

 www.compass-uk.org/services/wshwbs





Sleep

As your child reaches their teenage years, getting enough sleep will continue to be important for both their development and day-to-day health and wellbeing.

Why is sleep important?

- Sleep boosts our immune system, helping us to fight off diseases and stay healthy.
- Young people need enough sleep to be able to function well at school. Research shows that a good night's sleep can improve our memory, concentration and problem-solving abilities.
- A bad night's sleep can put us in a bad mood, while long-term sleep deprivation is linked to mental health problems such as depression.

Tips for helping your child get a better night's sleep

- Encourage your child to stick to the same bedtime and morning routine, even if their schedule is varied. Going to bed and waking up at the same time every day has been shown to improve sleep quality. Most older children and young people need about 8 to 10 hours sleep.
- Get plenty of bright light in the day, and reduce exposure to blue light in the evening. Studies have shown daylight exposure can help with our sleep (but remember to protect against the sun while outdoors). The blue light that comes from our phone and TV screens can make our sleep worse. Try switching devices off 2 hours before bed. If/when your child has a phone, look in the settings to see if you can reduce blue light in the evenings. Try to avoid having screens in your child's bedroom.
- Ensure your child gets plenty of exercise (but not too close to bedtime). You could try evening family walks or jogs, cycle rides, sports, or encourage them to try a YouTube workout video after school.
- Avoid caffeinated drinks. If they do drink them, they should not have any for 7 hours before bedtime.
- Create a relaxing bedtime environment. As part of your child's bedtime routine, suggest a warm bath, reading a book, meditation and/or relaxing breathing, and relaxing music. Lavender scented products are also thought to help with sleep and relaxation. What works for your family will be unique to you, so if you are having difficulties it's worth trying out a few of these ideas.
- Get help if you need it. If you've tried all the basics and your child still regularly has a disrupted night's sleep, there may be an underlying medical reason. Contact your GP.

Useful links

thechildrenssleepcharity.org.uk/leaflets.php

nhs.uk/live-well/sleep-and-tiredness

www.sleepcouncil.org.uk



Staying safe online

The best way to keep your child safe online is to help them understand the risks they are facing. As your child starts to use the internet unsupervised, here are some key points to share to help them browse safely:

- Keep your social media accounts set to 'private', so that only people you connect with can see your regular posts. For any public-facing accounts, stay as anonymous as possible – even sharing your school could put you at risk.
- Check your location settings. Don't allow apps to access your location by default, and only share your location with close friends and family members.
- Keep your passwords safe. Don't write them down or share them. A good way to set secure passwords is to use a unique memorable phrase for each, such as 'PurpleCactusMug' or 'HairyEagleTree'.
- Think before you post. Would you be happy for a parent/grandparent/teacher/future employer to see what you're posting? Express yourself in a way that reflects how you would want a wide spectrum of people to see you.
- Be kind. Cyberbullying can have a serious effect on someone's wellbeing, regardless of whether it takes place anonymously. Treat people how you would want to be treated.
- Not everyone is always who they say they are. Although some people do make new friends over the internet, some individuals create fake personas, which can make meeting in person very dangerous. Never arrange to meet or share personal details without talking to a trusted adult first.
- Think critically about everything you encounter online. From news articles to 'special offers', there's lots of false information out there. Fact check by finding other sources for information. If an offer or 'competition win' seems too good to be true, chances are it's a scam – don't share any personal details.
- Sharing explicit pictures can put you at risk. Young people may be tempted to try sharing explicit pictures or 'sexting'; however, this puts them at risk of blackmail, bullying and harassment if their picture is shared. Information for teens around this topic can be found here: cutt.ly/sexting-childline.

Talking to your child about internet safety

When talking to your child about internet safety, it can help to start with a positive conversation about the apps and influencers they are interested in and what it is they like about them. This also allows you to research the content they are accessing and find out specific safety advice. Ask questions to establish how much they know about internet safety; make it a two-sided conversation. When giving advice, always explain the reasons why they need to take these steps to stay safe - it's important to be open about the risks.



Useful links

thinkuknow.co.uk/parents
net-aware.org.uk
internetmatters.org

⚠ If you think someone is grooming or harassing your child online, you can make a report and get help here: ceop.police.uk



Emotional health & wellbeing

5 Ways to Wellbeing

The 5 Ways to Wellbeing are simple steps we can all take to improve our general wellbeing. Why not share these with your child and come up with some creative ways together to include them in your daily life?

1. Connect. Connecting with others is one of our most fundamental needs. Talking to others about mental health and wellbeing can help us process our feelings and receive support, and enables us to listen and provide support in return.

- Spend some time doing an activity with a loved one that doesn't involve a screen. Go for a picnic, make a meal together, or do some crafts. This can be a great way to connect in a relaxed way, without the interruption of technology.

2. Be active. Physical activity has been shown to boost our mood, as well as improving our confidence and self-esteem. Take a walk, cycle, jog or swim together, or just kick a ball around in the garden.

3. Take notice. This means giving attention to our environment and ourselves, recognising how things make us feel inside and out. Taking notice helps you focus on the present and see what is beautiful and unusual in the world.

- While eating, pay attention to your senses; the smell, taste and how it feels.
- Take notice of your surroundings when out and about - look for the details.
- When you wash your hands, what can you feel? Is it hot/cold? How does the soap smell and feel?

4. Keep learning. Having new experiences and gaining knowledge and skills continues to be essential for our wellbeing at all ages. It helps us feel more confident and gives us a sense of purpose.

- Your child will have lots of opportunities to learn while in school, but encouraging them to pick up hobbies and try new things outside of this can get them in the habit of bringing about their own learning, which continues once school is over. Lead by example and try new things together.

5. Give. Acts of giving and kindness create positive feelings and a sense of purpose, as well as helping us to connect with others and feel part of our community.

- Giving can be something simple, like asking someone how they are and really listening to their answer. Your child could spend extra time with elderly relatives, or send them a card or letter. Or you could try helping out a friend or volunteering together in the community.

Emotional resilience

Learning to understand and regulate emotions is an important step to developing emotional resilience. Our 'Regulating Emotions' activity puts emotions into different groups based on a traffic light system. This methodology often proves useful for children with autism, and can help all children learn more their emotions. Download here: cutt.ly/regulating-emotions Easy-read version: cutt.ly/regulating-emotions-easy-read



Mental health

Talking to your child about mental health

Talking about mental health as a family can seem uncomfortable if it isn't something you are used to. However, making it a regular part of conversation can help your child recognise that everyone has mental health in the same way we all have physical health, and can reduce the awkwardness they may feel when talking about mental health problems. Having an open dialogue allows you to provide comfort and support with any issues they are facing as they arise.

Starting the conversation

Talking in a relaxed, natural way can help your child open up; however, it can be difficult to know how to start the conversation. Young Minds, a UK charity for young people's mental health, have provided a range of activities and questions to get the conversation flowing, alongside advice on what to do if your child tells you they are struggling. Access this resource here: youngminds.org.uk/starting-a-conversation-with-your-child.

Seeking help and support

There will be times when talking to your child, helping them to process their feelings, and providing comfort and support is enough. However, there may also be times when further support is needed. Examples could include a sustained period of low mood, struggles following a trauma or bereavement, or a mental health problem such as anxiety disorder. **It's important you both know that support is there when you need it and asking for help doesn't reflect badly on either of you.**

- **Contact us - Warwickshire School Health and Wellbeing Service.** Parents/carers can call **03300 245 204** or text Parentline on **07520 619 376**. Young people age 11-19 can text ChatHealth on **07507 331 525**. A school nurse will talk to you and/or your child, provide advice and guidance, and make a referral to specialist services if appropriate.
- **Visit your GP.** They can assess your child and complete a referral to specialist services if appropriate.
- **See below** for services, supportlines and websites for children and young people's mental health. Additional websites can be found on page 8.



Mental health support

CW RISE - mental health services for children and young people in Coventry and Warwickshire.
Website: cwrise.com
Urgent supportline: 8am-8pm call **02476 641 799**, or call **0300 200 0011** outside these hours.

NHS Every Mind Matters - mental health advice.
Website: nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters

Young Minds - CYP mental health charity.
Website: youngminds.org.uk
Parents helpline: **0808 802 5544**

Childline - advice and support for CYP.
Website: childline.org.uk
Supportline: **0800 1111**

PAPYRUS - prevention of young suicide.
Website: papyrus-uk.org
Hopeline: **0800 068 41 41**



Healthy lifestyles

As your child gets older, they may become less physically active as things like outdoor play become less frequent. They will start to juggle more responsibilities such as homework, school and friendships, which can leave less time for staying active. You will also have less control over their diet and will have to leave it to them to make healthy choices. Eating well and staying active is important for young people: it can reduce stress and anxiety, promote good sleep, improve focus and productivity, and help them maintain a healthy weight, lowering the risk of health conditions including heart disease and diabetes.

Tips for helping your child stay active

Ultimately, the decision to stay active must come from your child as they become a young person; however, there are ways you can support them:

- Explain the benefits of staying active to them. They will feel the benefits themselves when they are active - ask them how they're feeling after they work out to help them take note of the positive effects.
- Help them find ways to stay active that fit in with their interests, whether this is through local clubs and sports groups, online workouts led by celebrities they are interested in, or facilitating them to workout with friends. Young people are most likely to stay motivated if they find the activity fun.
- Be a good role model by exercising regularly too. You could try introducing family walks in the evening or at the weekend, cycle rides, swimming, and games in the park such as cricket, bowls or tennis.

Tips for helping your child eat well

- Lots of young people enjoy snacks; however, many common snack choices are high in sugar and/or fat, which can make them an unhealthy choice. Use this guide to help them enjoy healthier snacks that are still tasty: cutt.ly/easy-snack-ideas
- Encourage them to eat 3 portions of veg and 2 of fruit per day, and eat the right amount of food from the different food groups. The Eatwell Guide is the best tool for understanding this; take a look at this interactive version together: nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/the-eatwell-guide
- Help them stay hydrated by getting them a water bottle to drink from throughout the day. Remember, they need 6 to 8 glasses of fluid per day, which should be mostly water.
- Your child may become self-conscious about their weight at some point and take it upon themselves to try to lose weight. If this happens, it's important to explain to them that the best way to lose weight is by eating a healthy, balanced diet and staying physically active. Doing fad diets and skipping meals is unhealthy and often only leads to short-term weight loss. If you think your child has an eating disorder, speak to a healthcare professional.



Useful links

nhs.uk/change4life

nhs.uk/live-well/

www.greatgrubclub.com

bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/collection/easy-healthy

jamieoliver.com/recipes/category/healthy-recipes/



Sun safety

Spending time outdoors can be great for your child's health and wellbeing. However, it's important that they are aware of the risks of sun exposure and the measures they can take to stay safe.

Why should we be careful in the sun?

The sun gives off rays of light known as UV (ultraviolet) that can be harmful. Getting too many of these rays can lead to:

- An increased risk of developing skin cancer.
- Early skin aging such as wrinkles or leathery skin.
- Damage to your eyes, which can cause blurred vision and cataracts.

Explaining this to your child may help them be more sun safety aware.

Staying safe outdoors

Children and young people can enjoy the outdoors safely by remembering the 5 S's of sun safety:

- SLIP on a t-shirt
- SLOP on sunscreen
- SLAP on a broad brimmed hat
- SLIDE on sunglasses
- SHADE from the SUN where possible

Find out more about the 5 S's of sun safety here: cutt.ly/5-s-sun-safety

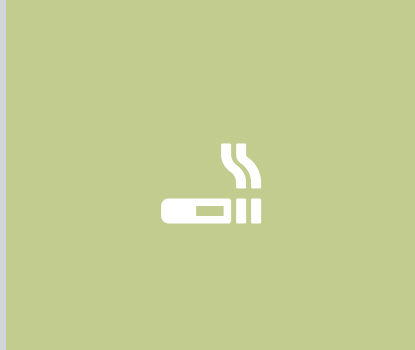
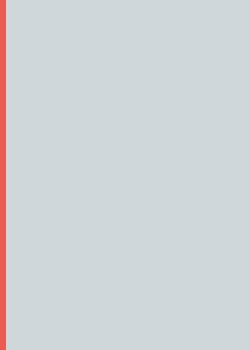
Remember, sun damage affects us all, regardless of our age or ethnicity. However, if you have fair skin or lots of moles, you need to be especially careful.

Moving up to secondary school

The move to secondary school can create lots of questions and emotions for year 6 children (and their parents/carers!). To help you and your child prepare for the move to secondary school, regardless of the circumstances surrounding the move, we have put together a booklet which you can download here:

cutt.ly/moving-up-to-secondary-booklet





Smoking, alcohol and drugs

As your child gets older, it's likely they will encounter smoking, alcohol use and/or drug taking at some point. You probably can't prevent your child being exposed to this, so the best thing you can do is make sure they are well informed and understand the risks of using these substances.

- You can get up-to-date information about a wide range of substances on the Talk To Frank website - www.talktofrank.com. There are also regular news updates which can help you to gain an understanding of current substance taking trends amongst young people.
- Try to make talking about substance misuse a regular part of everyday conversation, rather than a one off 'big talk' that could make them feel uncomfortable or defensive. Good times to bring it up may be if it comes up in a TV programme you are watching, during relaxed conversation at mealtimes, or when seated side-by-side such as during car journeys.
- Be a responsible role model for your child. If you do drink and they ask about your alcohol use, try and be honest about what makes it enjoyable and the downsides, such as hangovers and embarrassment if you lose control. Educate them on the additional risks that come with underage drinking.
- Help them understand the link between alcohol and confidence, and help them find healthier ways to feel more confident in social situations.
- If you suspect your child has been drinking, smoking or taking drugs, you may find it useful to read this article before speaking to them about it: cutt.ly/talking-about-substance-misuse. If you feel angry, wait until you have fully calmed down before talking to them - it's unlikely you will have a productive conversation while you are angry.

Warwickshire Children and Young People's Drug and Alcohol Services (CYPDAS)

Our partner service Warwickshire CYPDAS is here to provide children, young people and their families with support around substance misuse. This includes individuals who need help with their own substance misuse, and those who are being affected by another's misuse. The service is free and confidential. To find out more and speak to a friendly health and wellbeing worker, please get in touch:

Website: www.compass-uk.org/services/warwickshire-cypdas

Phone: 01788 578 227

Text ChatHealth (for ages 11-19): 07507 331 525

Other useful websites



Warwickshire Family Information Service - www.warwickshire.gov.uk/fis

NHS – www.nhs.uk

Affected by sexual abuse or rape - www.safeline.org.uk
Call 0808 800 5007
Text 07860 027 573



Behaviour Management
www.warwickshire.gov.uk/parentguides
www.triplep-parenting.uk.net

Bereavement
www.childbereavement.org.uk
www.cruse.org.uk
www.winstonswish.org.uk
www.guysgift.co.uk

Peer Support
www.kidscape.org.uk
www.bullying.co.uk

Accidents & Safety
www.rospa.com
www.capt.org.uk
www.safetynetkids.org.uk

Emotional Health
www.rcpsych.ac.uk/mental-health/parents-and-young-people – young people's mental health
www.behealthy-peersupport.org.uk – peer support
www.warwickshire.gov.uk/sorted – Self-help books for teens to borrow
www.nshn.co.uk/whatis.html – self-harm
www.stem4.org.uk – teenage mental health: depression, anxiety, self harm, eating disorders, addiction
www.b-eat.co.uk – Eating disorders

Puberty
www.nhs.uk/livewell/puberty

Young Carers
www.warwickshireyoungcarers.org.uk

Anaphylaxis/ Allergies
www.anaphylaxis.org.uk
www.allergyuk.org

Asthma
www.asthma.org.uk

Bladder & Bowel, Bedwetting
www.eric.org.uk
www.bladderandboweluk.co.uk/children-young-people

Cancer
www.macmillan.org.uk
www.cancerresearchuk.org

Children's Arthritis
www.childrensarthritis.org.uk

Diabetes
www.diabetes.org.uk/guide-to-diabetes/your-child-and-diabetes

Epilepsy
www.epilepsy.org.uk
www.epilepsysociety.org.uk

Eczema
www.eczema.org

Oral health
www.dentalhealth.org

