**Wellbeing Advice Issue 8 – Enjoying Summer and taking care of yourself, Mrs Wardle at Cavendish**

The last week of term is upon us and the Summer awaits, we all deserve lovely weather and 6 weeks of fun and relaxation. I am looking forward to a few weeks with family enjoying all the wonderful things that Eastbourne has to offer, the seafront, walks on the Downs, forest walks to name just a few things. Most of all we are all looking forward to welcoming all of our pupils back to school in September. Even though things will be slightly different to how they were when you were last at school, getting the new school year started will be very exciting for all of us.

I would like to reiterate the importance of self-care and wellbeing to everyone as we embark on the summer holiday. In order to take care of our wellbeing effectively, we need to have our own personal wellbeing toolkit to draw on when things get tough. Just like having a toolbox at home for daily maintenance and the occasional bigger project, we need our wellbeing toolkits to help us manage during difficult times. I am hoping that the Wellbeing Advice Issues I have been writing will have given you a useful wellbeing toolkit to use if you are finding things tricky over the next 6 weeks. Please remember to be gentle with yourself always look for the positives in situations, even tiny positives can help to lift your mood.

It is important to be positive and to believe in yourself, there will be times when things may be tough and you may have low self-esteem. Self-esteem is the way we see and feel about ourselves, low self-esteem can be caused by a number of issues, which can be at home, at school or just in the wider community. Tackling low self-esteem early on can prevent the onset of anxiety and depression later on. There are things you can do to help, so try to boost your wellbeing by using the following 7 steps;

1. **Understand why you focus on negatives**

What negative things do you think about yourself?

Why do you feel negative about yourself and when did these feelings start?

Did something happen to make you feel this way?

1. **Challenge the negative feelings**

Ask yourself if there is another way to look at things? What advice would you give to a friend who was having similar negative feelings? Remind yourself about the things that have happened which prove these negative thoughts are not true. Perhaps what ever happened to cause the feelings has stopped. Try keeping a list of these things to keep and bring out the next time you feel low.

1. **Focus on the Positive**

Write down your best feature, the last time you received a compliment, the last time you did something for someone else which made you feel good. These might seem like small gestures, but it is so important to recognise all the good things about yourself and the reasons why people appreciate you for being who you are.

1. **Find the right people**

How do the people around you make you feel? Spend more time with people who make you feel good about yourself and bring out your best qualities and spend less time which those that make you feel less confident about yourself or make other people feel bad about themselves.

1. **Get Active**

Think about doing activities you enjoy or even trying something new. Being active makes you feel good, it is vital for your ongoing mental wellbeing. If you already have a hobby you enjoy doing, try doing it more often, being creative is a great way to feel good and positive. Ensure that you enjoy the activities you are doing!

1. **Set yourself some goals**

Choose something you know you can already do and try challenging yourself – remember to keep your goals realistic! Achievements can boost your positive feelings and remind you just how much you are capable of.

1. **Tell someone**

If you are struggling with negative feelings about yourself, it is important to talk to someone you trust, perhaps a family member, staff member (just because it is the summer does not mean that you can’t reach out! Email us on [wellbeing@cavendish.e-sussex.sch.uk](mailto:wellbeing@cavendish.e-sussex.sch.uk)) It is not always easy talking to some you know or talking face to face, below are some Helplines and Services you may find helpful;

**Young Minds Crisis Messenger**

* [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)
* Provides free 24/7 crisis support across the UK if you are experiencing a mental health crisis.
* If you need urgent help text YM to 85258, all texts are answered by trained volunteers with support from clinical supervisors. Texts are free from most mobile providers.

**Child Line**

* [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)
* Freephone 24hour helpline; 08001111. All calls are confidential and no problem is too big or too small.

**Stem4**

* <https://stem4.org.uk/>
* Stem4 is a great resource for teenagers struggling with their mental health.

For our pupils who are transitioning from Primary to Secondary in September and for our Secondary pupils, Dr Pooky Knightsmith, who has overcome many of her own personal mental health dilemmas, has a fantastic website full of fantastic tips and a great blog, <https://www.pookyknightsmith.com/>.

If you are happy to listen to a podcast then perhaps try The Happiness Lab, it is packed full of great pod casts, there should be something there to meet most people’s needs. I have listened to quite a few of them and some do have some mature content, I am adding these for parents and our older children in the Secondary Phase. Dr Laurie Santos is American and is a cognitive scientist and lecturer of Psychology at Yale University, so the podcasts although primarily American, are nonetheless relevant and helpful, enjoy <https://www.happinesslab.fm/>

I hope that you find the information in this Issue helpful and that you will be able to manage your wellbeing positively. Enjoy your summer and remember to be present in all that you do.

