

CHAMPIONING WELLBEING



A TOOLKIT



FOR EARLY YEARS EDUCATORS

INTERACTIVE RESOURCES

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE FOR YOURSELF, FOR OTHERS AND YOUR COMMUNITY

The information contained within this interactive toolkit can be used to guide, reflect, evaluate and build your own bank of practical ideas to promote and protect compassion resilience (the ability to maintain our physical, emotional and mental well-being). Take what you need - use it within daily life and share and care about it in your professional practice.

Use the toolkit:

- As part of a process to support individuals in sharing specific and necessary health information with relevant line managers or trustworthy stakeholders.
- To enable equitable access and participation at work.
- To support wellness action planning.
- To promote trust, respect and dignity in the workplace, to aid recovery, prevent health issues from developing or worsening, and maintain health and wellbeing.
- As a starting point to individually or collectively raise awareness of wellbeing, and the pillars of wellbeing.
- To preserve caring, compassion and energy.
- To advocate for compassion resilience, self-care and collective care.
- To empower help-seeking behaviours.
- To increase mental health literacy and enhance commitment to employee wellness action planning as well as workplace wellbeing strategies.
- To promote professional dialogue, developing workplace procedures and pathways that signpost to trusted sources of support and information.

A TOOLKIT TO EMPOWER PREVENTION, INTERVENTION, SIGNPOSTING & POSTVENTION



COMFORT AND SAFETY MESSAGE



This toolkit has been developed in line with Early Years Wellbeing Week 2023, which marks the sixth year of honouring our early years workforce, **Let's Talk Wellbeing - Together We Can Make Mental Health A Priority.**

Nothing in this toolkit has been designed to shock or distress, however health and wellbeing is a personal, often private subject, intertwined with life experiences. It is not uncommon for certain topics to feel sensitive or emotive. This is especially so if mental health is not a topic discussed or understood within your home, family or culture. If the opposite is true, and you do have a personal experience and understanding, then perhaps you have encountered prejudice and stigmatising attitudes.

Please be compassionate with yourself, mindful of others and respect how our health changes from day to day. It is fluid and may flow from low energy to high energy at certain times of the month, year or seasonally. Revisiting the questions or activities when you feel at your best/most usual self can be useful and an effective tool for noticing how lower levels of energy and wellbeing show up for you.

Be aware of how your current stage of life influences your health and wellbeing and listen, to understand other people's experiences - especially if they are different to your own. It is important to highlight how you feel today as you read this toolkit. If you are experiencing poor or positive mental health, how are any health conditions, diagnosis or disability influencing your thoughts and feelings, or your ability to reflect and take part in any of the activities either alone or with others?

Therefore, please be considerate of how you plan to share this toolkit with others. Ensure you are respectful in the way that you discuss the themes with colleagues (particularly in larger meetings), and in your expectations of each other, especially if this is a new subject or topic of professional discussion.

VISIT THE EARLY YEARS WELLBEING WEEK WEBSITE FOR HELPFUL AND TRUSTED SOURCES OF INFORMATION TO GUIDE YOU. [HTTPS://WWW.EARLYYEARSWELLBEINGWEEK.CO.UK/](https://www.earlyyearswellbeingweek.co.uk/)





STRESS (1 OF 3)



BEING ALERT TO RECOGNISE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF STRESS IN EACH OTHER AND TAKING ACTION TO ADDRESS IT

BEING ALERT TO STRESS

How does stress show up for you?

Physical sensations:

Thoughts/feelings or emotions:

Behaviours:

When you feel overwhelmed by stress what might other people notice?

STRESS (2 OF 3)

BEING ALERT TO RECOGNISE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF STRESS IN EACH OTHER AND TAKING ACTION TO ADDRESS IT

ADDRESSING STRESS

Recognising signs of stress will help you to take steps to stop, reduce and address stress.

What do you complain the most about at work?

What part of the day/time of year feels the most stressful?

Have you ever felt uncomfortable or self-conscious at work because of your identity?

Do you have a trusted person at work, who will do right by you, has your back and is supportive?



STRESS (3 OF 3)



BEING ALERT TO RECOGNISE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF STRESS IN EACH OTHER AND TAKING ACTION TO ADDRESS IT

HELPFUL STRATEGIES

Can you try to connect your thoughts, feelings and emotions to any physical symptoms or behaviour?

What are your go to strategies to relieve stress and tension?

What strategies help you reduce stress?

How do you keep those going when other pressures build up? Who could help you?

Do you recognise that you rely on any unhealthy coping strategies to release stress and what does this look like over time?

WHAT MATTERS TO YOU?

OUR VALUES ARE THINGS WE BELIEVE IN AND THEY ARE IMPORTANT IN EVERYDAY LIFE TO THE WAY WE LIVE, LOVE AND WORK

Select the words that resonate most with you:

KIND CARING PATIENT EMPATHETIC HONEST
FAIRNESS LOVING PROFESSIONAL BRAVE
NON-JUDGEMENTAL AMBITIOUS RELIABLE STRONG
SPIRITUAL FLEXIBLE OPEN-MINDED DARING
SINCERE ADVENTUREOUS INTEGRITY JUSTICE
FAIRNESS FAITH CONNECTION CURIOUS LOYAL
DEPENDABLE INCLUSIVE TRUSTWORTHY HEALTH
GROWTH JOY RESILIENT ALLY COMPASSION
INTUITIVE GRACE EMPOWERING DIVERSITY
COMFORT BELONGING FITNESS ALTRUSIM
COLLECTIVISM HEALTH EQUITY VULNERABILITY



Are you moving towards things that are important to you?

How do your values, align with your everyday words, behaviours & actions?

Personally; health, family, relationships.

Professionally; contribution.

WHAT SHAPES MY VALUES AND QUALITIES?

YOUR VALUES ARE YOUR FUNDAMENTAL BELIEFS & HELP GUIDE YOU TOWARD A FULFILLING & MEANINGFUL LIFE

SOMETIMES WE CAN REALISE WE HAVE BEEN DRAWN IN ANOTHER DIRECTION AND OUR ACTIONS ARE NOT ALIGNED WITH OUR VALUES AND WHO WE WANT TO BE

Describe your job role and responsibilities?

What values and qualities do you need to work in early years education?

What support do you need to fulfil your role?

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Describe your home life, roles and responsibilities, commitments, hobbies, education, training etc...

What and who is important to you?

How do you take care of yourself so you can fulfil these roles and responsibilities?

Who takes care of you?

Who could help you?

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What thing would you like to do differently?

What one thing would you change?

What one thing could you stop?

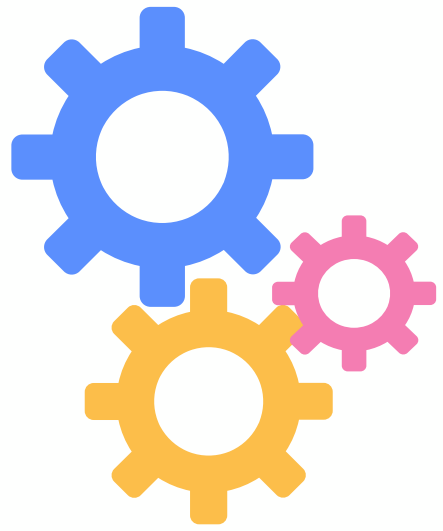
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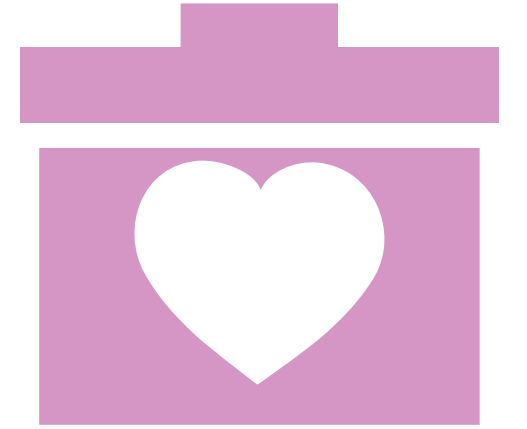
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WHAT'S IN YOUR WELLNESS TOOLKIT?

THINK OF IT AS YOUR OWN PERSONAL SELF-CARE KIT

RESPECTING YOUR HEALTH
HONOURING PROFESSIONAL SELF-CARE



If you read the [Beginners Guide To Wellbeing](#), you may know there are times when we all need to boost our mental health. Wellbeing is not a one size fits all approach. Respecting identity and understanding intersectionality to cultivate connection, belonging and inclusion in our workspaces is critical when considering any wellbeing initiatives or events. Further reading in the [Tapestry Beginners Guides](#) can be found here.

CAN YOU THINK OF THREE THINGS THAT YOU WOULD PUT IN YOUR SELF-CARE KIT?

OR IF THAT FEELS OVERWHELMING, TRY TO THINK OF WHAT YOU WOULD OFFER TO A FRIEND, FAMILY MEMBER, COLLEAGUE, OR LOVED ONE?

This kit can be something that you turn to when you need a boost, helping you to address stress and release some of the stressors that may feel overwhelming. It's about:

- Finding the tips and strategies that work best for you when you are not feeling yourself: what can you do to feel a little better?
- Thinking about what would be in your kit to use as a resource to promote and maintain wellbeing.
- Asking yourself what is going on for me when I feel at my best?

BEING ME BEING-WELL

Can you provide a description of:

- Your own positive mental health? What does it look, feel and sound like?

- Symptoms of poor mental health in yourself? Thoughts, feeling, emotions, behaviour & actions and any physical signs & symptoms?

- Actions that protect your wellbeing at work – boundaries, self-caring, pathways of support?

- How your identity shapes your ability to engage in self-caring actions?

EVERYDAY ACTIONS THAT CAN BOOST OUR WELLBEING

'The New Economics Foundation' developed the evidence-based public health messages, 'the Five Ways to Wellbeing' (FWTW).

These messages can have a positive impact on our mental wellbeing, be a helpful tool to address stress and a reminder of helpful self-caring coping strategies.

1. Connect with others – reach out to that old friend, or make plans to connect with colleagues, family, neighbours or people in your community.
2. Be active. Move your body because you love your body. Find an activity that you enjoy and make it a part of your life. You don't have to be good at it to enjoy it!
3. Keep learning. Every day is a learning day. Is there something you have always wanted to do and always put off? Sign up for that course, join that book club, do it today!
4. Give to others. Your time, words or presence. You might already do this A LOT in your day job. As educators perhaps this is the one area we don't need to focus on as much as the others!
5. Be mindful. Reflect on experiences that matter to you. Notice how you feel when you're at your best. Live in the moment. Some people call this 'mindfulness'.

WELLNESS ACTION PLANNING

Do I have any pre-existing or diagnosed health conditions or any other health issues?

Do I take any medication? How long have I taken it. Do I have any side-effects?

What helps me stay healthy?

What am I like when I am well?

What do I need to do every day to stay well or keep on track with my goals?

How do I want to feel as I navigate this situation and maintain my wellness?

Are there any situations that may trigger poor mental health?

WELLNESS ACTION PLANNING

What new stress am I aware of?

What can I do to take care of the things that are worrying me?

What existing stress may need my attention right now?

How can my workplace support me right now?

What could my line manager do to support and/or adjust?

What are the things that I enjoy, that bring me joy and happiness and that I can use to lift my mood?

Who can I rely on at home to support me if I need someone to turn to?

FOR MY FUTURE SELF WHEN I NEED A REMINDER

MY "IN CASE OF BURNOUT KIT"

"Nobody knows how to love you better than you"

Brittany Long @brything

To use on the days when you need a little reminder of how wonderful you really are! The idea is that if you are lacking in energy, self-care or compassion, you can take care of yourself by offering your own words of wisdom, love and care. Please be aware it may feel harder to complete when you are experiencing poor mental health or a change in your usual levels of wellbeing and fitness.

Use these ideas to remind and guide you:

Write your own pep talk.

FOR MY FUTURE SELF WHEN I NEED A REMINDER

MY "IN CASE OF BURNOUT KIT"

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Write a list of people who love you and you can trust - gather supportive notes from these loved ones.

Make a list of self-soothing activities when everything feels too much.



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MY "IN CASE OF BURNOUT KIT"

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Make a list of things that make you smile.

Make a list of things you have achieved for when your self-esteem is low.

FOR MY FUTURE SELF WHEN I NEED A REMINDER

MY "IN CASE OF BURNOUT KIT"

"Nobody knows how to love you better than you"

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Make a list of professional accomplishments for when your professional self-esteem is low.

WELLNESS ACTION PLANNING

PREVENT + PROTECT + PROMOTE

NATIONAL SUPPORT

- Latest policy updates
- Government support & information
- Charities and organisations:
 - National Lottery
 - ACAS, Citizens Advice
 - Able Futures

IN HOUSE

- Accessible support & information
- Unions
- Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)
- HR support, Occupational Health
- Mental Health Training
- Wellness Action Plans:
 - practical support, cost of living, benefits schemes.

LOCAL OFFER

- Linking up with local strategy
- Community partnership
- Local charities & organisations & groups, peer support
 - www.hubofhope.co.uk

COMMUNITY OF CARE

- Empowering a community of 'Wellbeing Champions' consisting of staff, parents, and children
- Develop a sharing and caring network to honour and model best practices
- Honour your core values and observe how they influence behaviour



IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT THE INITIATIVES YOU PUT IN PLACE, IT'S ABOUT MAKING SURE PEOPLE ARE AWARE OF THEM AND THAT THE WELLBEING SUPPORT BENEFITS THE WHOLE COMMUNITY, AND REACHES THE EDUCATORS WHO REALLY NEED IT.