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NORTH STAR 82°

Issue number 2—Mental Health Week and Black History Month

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Head Teacher's Message

Dear Parents and Carers.

The first term of autumn is approaching its final week and our pupils and school have had a smooth transition from the summer break with many successes to celebrate so far.

As Head Teacher, I am thrilled to see our young people engaging well in school and making progress both academically as well as aspiring to achieve their personal targets, this is very encouraging. Our pupils visit me on a daily basis, showing their work and receiving rewards for their efforts. I would also like to thank you as parents, carers and the school team for the wholehearted commitment we share to ensure active partnership between the school and home that is so important to enable our children to thrive.

Since the last newsletter, we are still awaiting the final report from our recent Ofsted visit, we hope to share this with you as soon as it is received. In the meantime, we have also had an unannounced visit to the school kitchen from Bristol City Council.

Best regards,

James Wookey

School Kitchen 5 Star Rated!

North Star 82° received an unannounced visit by Environmental Health Officers in late September. Our kitchen staff, who provide our children, staff and guests with excellent food on a daily basis were rewarded for their hard work, receiving the highest award of 5 stars for hygiene.



Mental Health Awareness Week

Mental Health Awareness week took place in the first week of October.



This year the focus was Anxiety. Anxiety is a normal and actually useful response to an uncertain situation. If we are preparing for a big event an amount of adrenaline can be helpful. However, more increasingly we are facing events and worries that are out of our control.

If we are unable to affect the outcome of a situation then anxiety, albeit normal, is unhelpful. Some people may suffer for increased levels of anxiety that can have detrimental effects on the body and mind. We teach our students that that if Anxiety is becoming unmanageable, or stopping us living our full lives we may need to act to reduce the anxiety.

The action we can take will be different for each person, strategies may be self-managed, aided by friends/family or teachers, right through to seeking professional help. Advice on all of these is available through school, but if that seems too much we encourage students to access SHOUT, a free text help line where young people can access support and guidance regarding Anxiety, or any other concern they have.

To access help text '*SHOUT*' to 85258



North Star 82 vs Aspire Football Report

First Team

The first team played very well during their first match winning 9:0, the goal scorers consisted of three players. The players showed great respect towards the referee and his decisions. They also were very respectful towards each other and were supportive, even when mistakes were made. In addition, despite winning by a very large margin they demonstrated great sportsmanship towards their opponents.

In their second match the first team drew 4:4. This match was far more challenging and they showed resilience and perseverance when attempting to overcome significant challenge. On top of this they also demonstrated self-control of their emotions, in particular when they found themselves 4:2 down. Similar to their first match they demonstrated good teamwork, even swapping positions when players requested.

Second Team

The second team played very well, winning 1:0 in their first match and 2:1 in their second match. They demonstrated good teamwork, communication and great energy throughout the entire match. They showed great respect towards their opponents and the referee. They also followed instructions very well when directed by Coach, Mr Wadland to either change position, tactics or substitutions.



SUPPORTING CHILDREN TO DEAL WITH UPSETTING CONTENT

A Guide for Parents and Carers

Raising children in the digital age seems to be getting tougher, with the world currently experiencing so many uncertainties. From climate change to the war in Ukraine and the conflict in Israel, right now children across the globe can scarcely go online without being exposed to unsettling stories, images and ideas. Reassuring a concerned child can be difficult, especially when bad news feels omnipresent. We've put together some advice to help you in discussing upsetting events with young ones.

1 FIND OUT WHAT YOUR CHILD KNOWS

There are many ways that children are exposed to upsetting content in the media, both online and offline. Before swamping your child with information, find out what they know already. Show them you're interested in what they have to say, practice active listening and try to gauge how much your child has been impacted by what they've seen.



2 RIGHT TIME, RIGHT PLACE

Starting a conversation about upsetting content probably isn't the best idea when your child is studying for an exam or about to go to bed. Choose a time when they're relaxed and open to talking, to make sure you have their full attention. Remember, these conversations can become emotional, so choose somewhere your child feels safe and comfortable.



3 KEEP IT AGE APPROPRIATE

With younger children, try and keep the conversation more general and avoid leading questions and complex detail. You can go slightly deeper into the specifics with young teenagers but keep monitoring their emotional response. With older teens, you can be more open about the realities and consequences of what's happening – but again, do stay aware of their emotional state.



4 EMPHASISE HOPE

Upsetting content can make anyone feel angry, scared, sad or overwhelmed. Try to find stories of hope, generosity and strength related to the content you're discussing. Children often feel reassured when they know they can do something to help, so encourage your child's sense of control through activities which make them feel they're positively impacting the events they're concerned about.



5 MONITOR REACTIONS

All children react differently, of course, and young people might not directly say that they're scared, angry, anxious, confused or uncomfortable. Emotional reactions are natural when discussing upsetting topics, so take note of your child's body language and reactions. Allow them to express their feelings in a non-judgmental space and try to stay mindful of how they might be feeling.



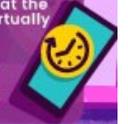
6 CONSIDER YOUR OWN EMOTIONS

It's not only young people who find upsetting news difficult to process: adults also have to deal with strong emotions in moments of stress. Children develop coping strategies by mirroring those around them, so staying on top of how you appear to be regulating your emotion on the outside is important for supporting your child through worrying times.



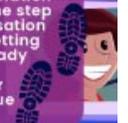
7 SET LIMITS

Managing screen-time and content can be difficult even in normal circumstances, but especially in unusual or stressful periods (at the start of the pandemic, for example). It's virtually impossible to keep children away from upsetting content completely, but it's important to try to limit exposure by using parental controls, talking about the dangers of harmful content and enforcing screen-time limits.



8 TAKE THINGS SLOWLY

Try not to overwhelm your child with information all at once; instead, take the discussion one step at a time. You could make the first conversation a simple introduction to a potentially upsetting subject and then wait until your child is ready to talk again. Opening the door to the conversation and demonstrating that your child can talk to you about this type of issue is a vital first step.



9 ENCOURAGE QUESTIONS

Online, troubling images, posts, videos and stories are shared across multiple platforms, many of which your child might access. Even if the content is actually inappropriate, encourage your child to discuss what they saw instead of being angry at them for seeing it. Children are still learning that not everything online is accurate – you want to be their ultimate source of information, not their device.



10 FIND A BALANCE

There's often a tremendous compulsion to stay right up to date with events. Our phones frequently send us push notifications urging us to read the latest article or view the most recent video on social media. It's essential to remind your child that it's healthy to take regular breaks, and to focus on positive events instead of 'doomscrolling' and risking becoming overwhelmed by bad news.



11 BUILD RESILIENCE

News has never been more accessible. While our instinct may be to shield children from upsetting stories, it's important that they're equipped with the tools to manage this content when they are exposed to it. Talk about upsetting content more generally with your child and emphasise that they can always tell you or a trusted adult if something they see makes them feel uneasy.



12 IDENTIFY HELP

It's hugely important that children know where to find support if they encounter upsetting content online. Encourage them to open up to an adult that they trust, and make sure they're aware of who their trusted adults are. It is essential that children understand that they're not alone, and that help is available if and when they need it.



Meet Our Expert

Cayley Jorgensen is the director of FaceUp South Africa, which is a reporting system that is currently being used by schools and companies to fight bullying around the world. FaceUp helps give a voice to bystanders by encouraging them to speak up and get the help they not only want but need.



Source: <https://www.bbc.com/news/health-1047106> | <https://www.chiknet.com/blog/supporting-your-child-with-upsetting-content/> | <https://www.unicef.org/parenting/how-talk-your-children-about-conflict-and-war>