

An important message for Families in Essex

Subject: Mental Health and Smoking
Date: October 2020
Issue: No. 18

The Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service (ECFWS) supports children, families, schools and communities to address current physical and emotional health, social, and financial issues that may affect the healthy development and future outcomes of young people.

Each month, we promote and support specific local, national and international campaigns by providing education, advice and information to other organisations that can improve health and wellbeing for all. Our campaigns can be interactive with real-life practical learning examples, including web links to resources, which can be used in the classroom or at home.

10th October is World Mental Health Day. Mental health problems can affect anyone, any day of the year, but 10 October is a great day to show your support for better mental health and start looking after your own wellbeing. Due to the unprecedented times the world is currently experiencing as a result of COVID-19, the World Federation for Mental Health decided to set this year's theme as 'Mental Health for All'. The aim of this focus is to campaign for greater access and greater awareness for all.

October also sees the return of **Stoptober**. Stoptober is back for 2020, with the primary aim of encouraging the nation's smokers to make a quit attempt for the month of October and beyond. As with previous Stoptober campaigns, this year's campaign is founded on the evidence that if a smoker can quit for 28 days, they are five times more likely to quit for good. The campaign this year sees a focus on 'Better Health', recognising the impact that COVID-19 has had on the nation's health behaviours. The campaign will focus on targeting those aged between 35-60, but also younger smokers too.

Family Wellbeing – Mental Health

Public Health England has launched their Every Mind Matters Campaign, recently focusing particularly on children and young people's emotional wellbeing. The resource provides parents with some [top tips](#) on how to support children and young people.

The Anna Freud Centre has some excellent resources to support children and young people of all ages with their emotional health and wellbeing. For example:

- [Helping babies and young children under 5 through the coronavirus crisis](#)
- [Advice for parents and carers: talking mental health with young people – primary](#)
- [Advice for parents and carers: talking mental health with young people – secondary](#)

Evidence suggests that there are 5 key things we can do in order to improve our wellbeing. These [5 ways to wellbeing](#) are:

- 1) Connect with other people
- 2) Be physically active
- 3) Learn new skills
- 4) Give to others
- 5) Pay attention to the present moment (mindfulness)

CHALLENGE – as a family, why don't you commit to trying just one way to wellbeing, and see if you feel any benefit? Why don't you [contact us](#) to let us know how you get on?

Family Wellbeing - Smoking

Stopping smoking is one of the best things you'll ever do for your health. When you stop, you give your lungs the chance to repair and you'll be able to breathe easier. There are lots of other benefits too - and they start almost immediately.

A common fear is that when stopping smoking you may struggle to manage stress. Smoking can raise your blood pressure and cause other health risks. Using smoking to self-medicate stress can lead to further cigarette withdrawal symptoms and feelings of anxiety. On top of this, smoking does not deal with the underlying cause of other sources of stress.

Essex Lifestyle Service provides 1 to 1 support for people who would like to stop smoking and can work with you to identify your barriers to stopping and ways to make your quit attempt more successful, such as Nicotine Replacement Therapy. To find out more information, visit their [website](#).

It's never too late to quit - so use Stoptober to challenge yourself, or someone you know who smokes, to quit for 28 days.

To find out more information about us and the wide range of services we offer, please visit www.essexfamilywellbeing.co.uk

We are always looking for ways to improve and provide you with information that is beneficial and relevant to you. We value your opinion and would love to hear your feedback on our briefings. Please send your reply to Essex.Communications@virginicare.co.uk

