



Dear Parents and Carers,

6 - 12 February is **Children's Mental Health Week**. The week is run by the charity Place2Be, and focuses on the importance of promoting good mental health and wellbeing for children and young people. **We will be raising awareness by delivering a virtual assembly to each year group, along with some further activities in lessons.** The theme for this year is 'Let's Connect'.

We would be delighted if you could join us in celebrating the week by continuing the conversation at home. The charity Place2Be has offered some tips below.



What's it all about?

Let's Connect is about making meaningful connections, and for Children's Mental Health Week 2023, Place2Be is encouraging people to connect with others in healthy, rewarding and meaningful ways. As parents and carers, you are an important role model to your child. How you connect with friends and family will influence your child, and how they develop their own friendships and relationships. For example, how you greet people and maintain friendships, but also how you forgive people or say sorry when you need to.

What can you do?

Here are a few simple ways you can connect with your child and help them to make meaningful connections.

1. Connect with your child in everyday ways

Moments of connection (and re-connection) are really important in child-caregiver relationships. For example, when you pick them up from school, or come in from work, try to give them your full attention and see if this helps you feel better connected as you hug, talk, smile and hear about their day. Watching your child play and joining in is really important to them – so put your phone away and have a bit of fun – being playful is good for adults, too! With your older child, you may find times such as car journeys a good time to talk, or to reconnect by playing music you both like. It is important to be accessible to a teenager when they need to talk. You may have to be there 'on their terms' and be ready to listen.

2. Talk to your child about important connections

This could include talking about family members, friends, neighbours, childminders, people in the local community and others in your faith group (if you have one). Remember it's ok to talk about people they miss, for example, family members who live in a different country or people who have died. Children learn a lot from their parents about how to express their feelings, including the joy that comes with feeling connected to others and the sadness that comes with missing others.

3. Talk to your child about their friends

As children become teenagers, their friendship groups become increasingly important to them. Be open to hearing about their friendships and try to listen without judgement. [tips for parents and carers childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk](https://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk) Ask them about their life in real life and online. You may not think online friends are 'real friends', but your child may feel differently. Losing friends, feeling left out or being bullied is very painful and your child needs to know you will support them through these difficult times.

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4. **Connect by taking an interest in your child's world**

As adults we can sometimes be dismissive of the things that our children and teenagers are interested in, e.g. their music, fashion, what they watch etc. If you do take an interest in these things, however, you may feel better connected to your child and the important things in their world. This can lead to other conversations about other things in their lives that matter to them.

5. **Find time to connect as a family**

Family life can become busy and stressful, so it's important to find some time where you connect together. This could include simple things like cooking, watching a film, playing a game, going to the park or even doing the family shop together.

6. **Try to resolve conflict and re-connect after arguments**

Arguments and moments of disconnection are bound to happen in families - between your children, between yourself and your children and between yourself and your partner, if you have one. It is important that children learn how to disagree in appropriate ways, how to say sorry and how to make amends when they have done something wrong. They will learn a lot about how to do these things from you - so try to model the behaviour you want to see in your children. Talk to them about how to re-connect with friends after arguments including what they can do to help repair relationships.

Further resources

- Parenting advice from child mental health experts- <https://parentingsmart.place2be.org.uk/>
- Further resources for families- <https://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk/families/>
- You can also find a list of organisations that provide support and advice here: <https://www.place2be.org.uk/help>

Let your child know that if they are worried about something, they should always talk to an adult they trust. It could be you, someone in your family, a teacher or someone else in their school.

If you're worried about your child's mental health you can talk to your GP or someone at your child's school.

Kind regards

Mr Reed
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[Website](#)



**'Preparing our students for
the Tests of Life, not a Life
of Tests'**

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