

Mental Health
Information
Evening

11th January 2024



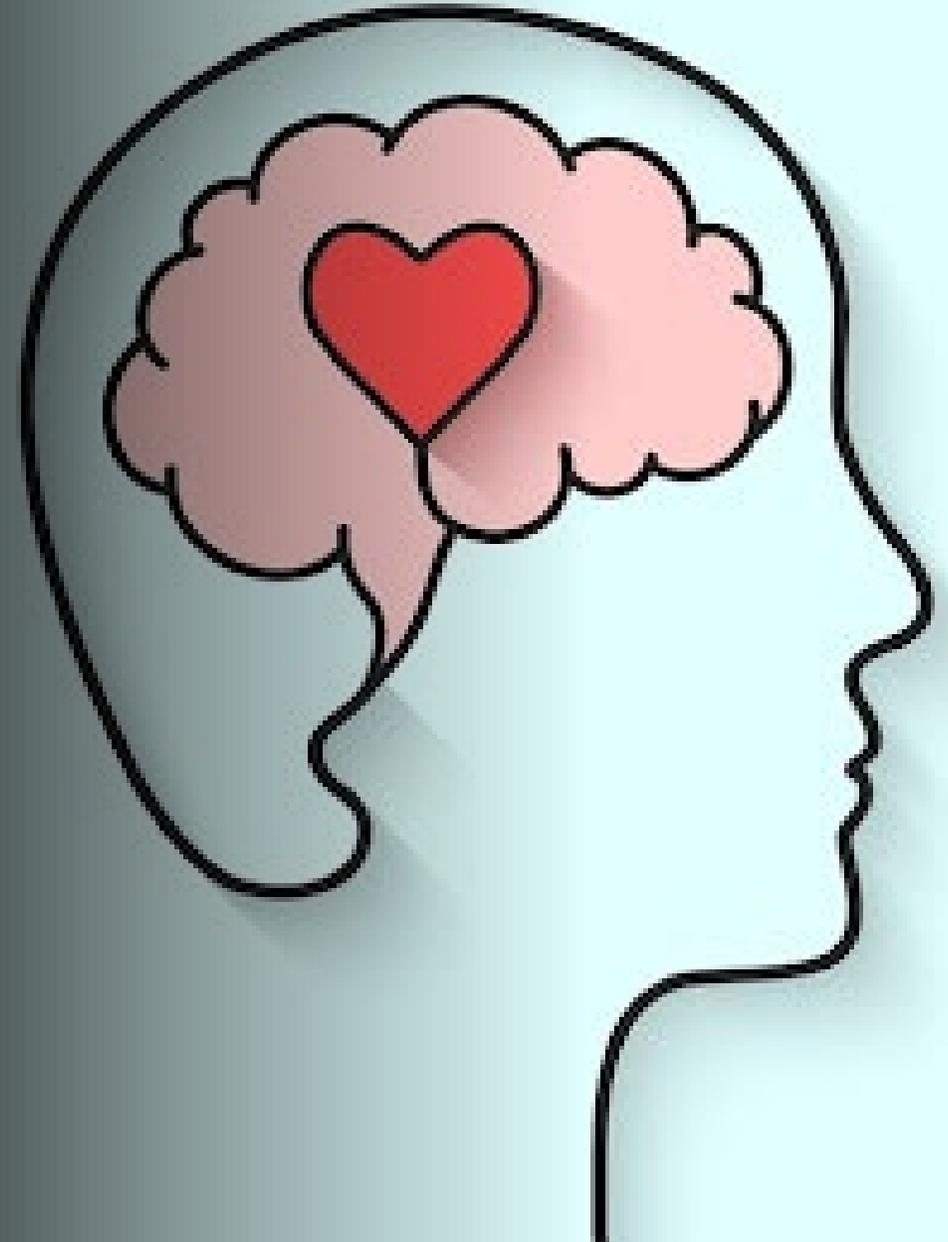
Outline

Part 1:

1. Lifestyle Medicine

Part 2

1. Context of mental illnesses in the UK
2. Mental Health issues
3. Signposting



Active Time

- Primal Play
- Left - Right brain connection
- Play – dopamine, serotonin Noradrenaline, adrenaline, cortisol, GABA
- Improved cognition, concentration

What is Physical Activity?

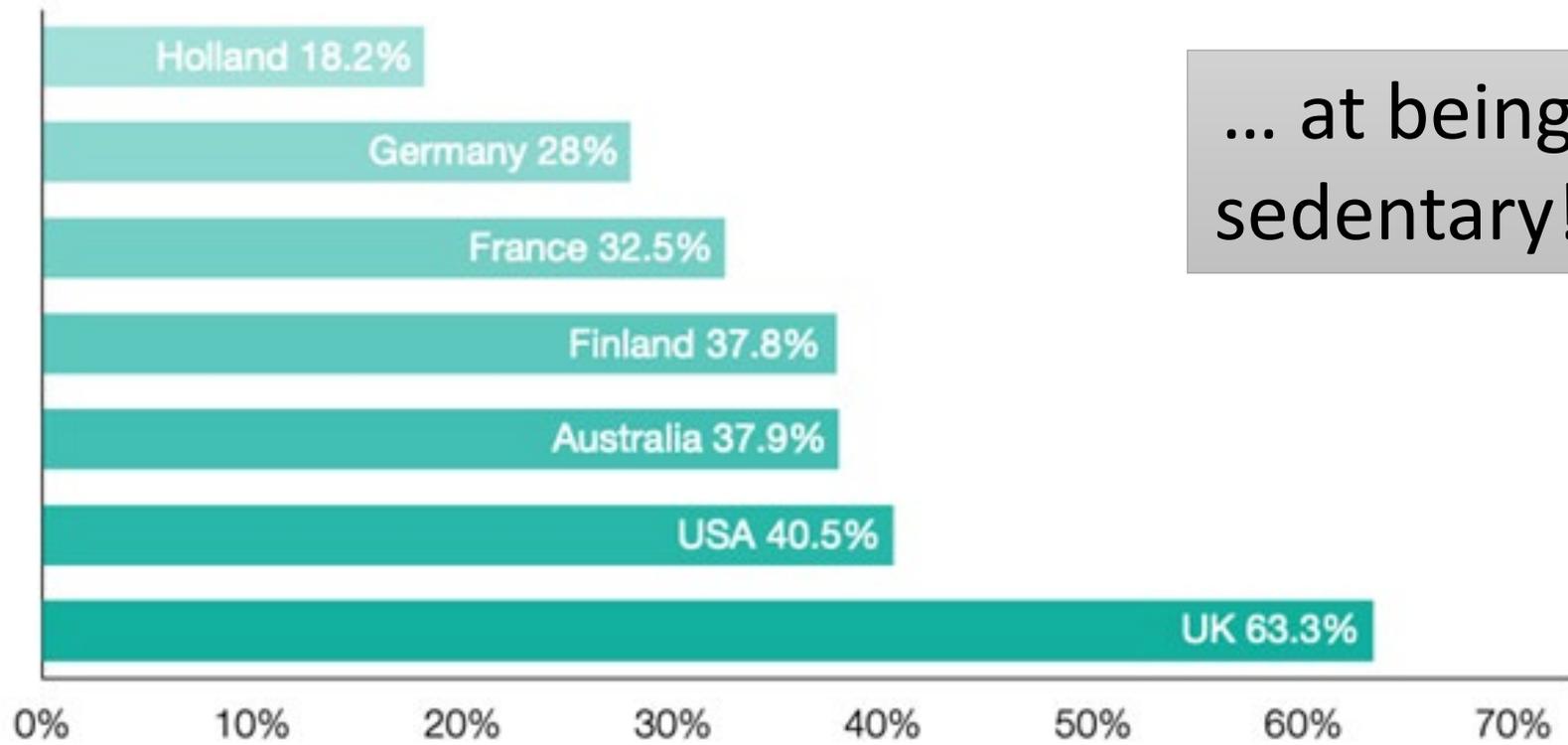
- **Physical Activity** is defined as ANY bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that requires energy expenditure
- **Physically Inactive** is defined as when an individual does less than 30 minutes of physical activity in a week

Sedentary Behaviour

...behaviours characterised by little physical movement and **low energy expenditure in a sitting or reclining position requiring** low levels of energy expenditure for a prolonged period of time.

UK is leading the way!

International comparison of physical inactivity (at ages 15 and over)¹⁵



... at being
sedentary!

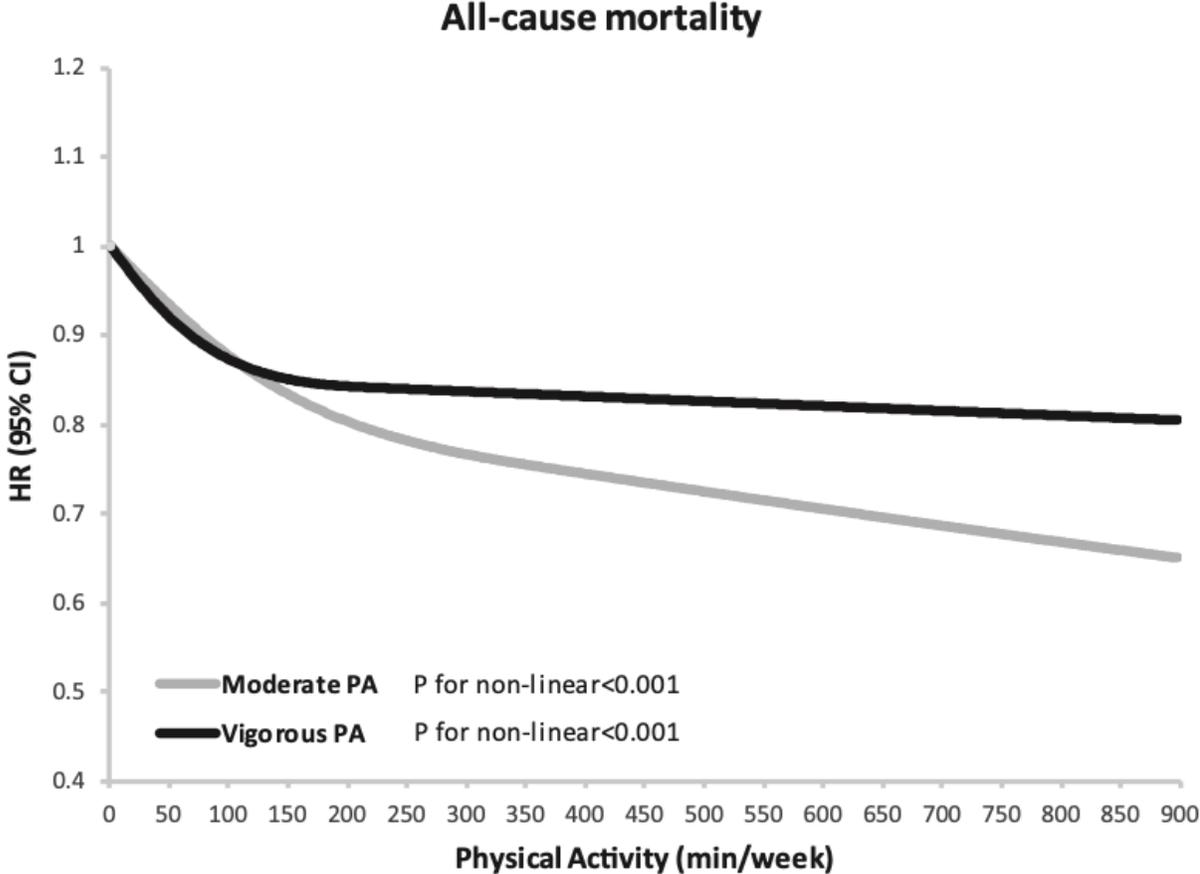
Sedentary behaviour...

Increased sedentary behaviour appears to be associated with worsening mental health for many conditions including **anxiety** and **depression**.

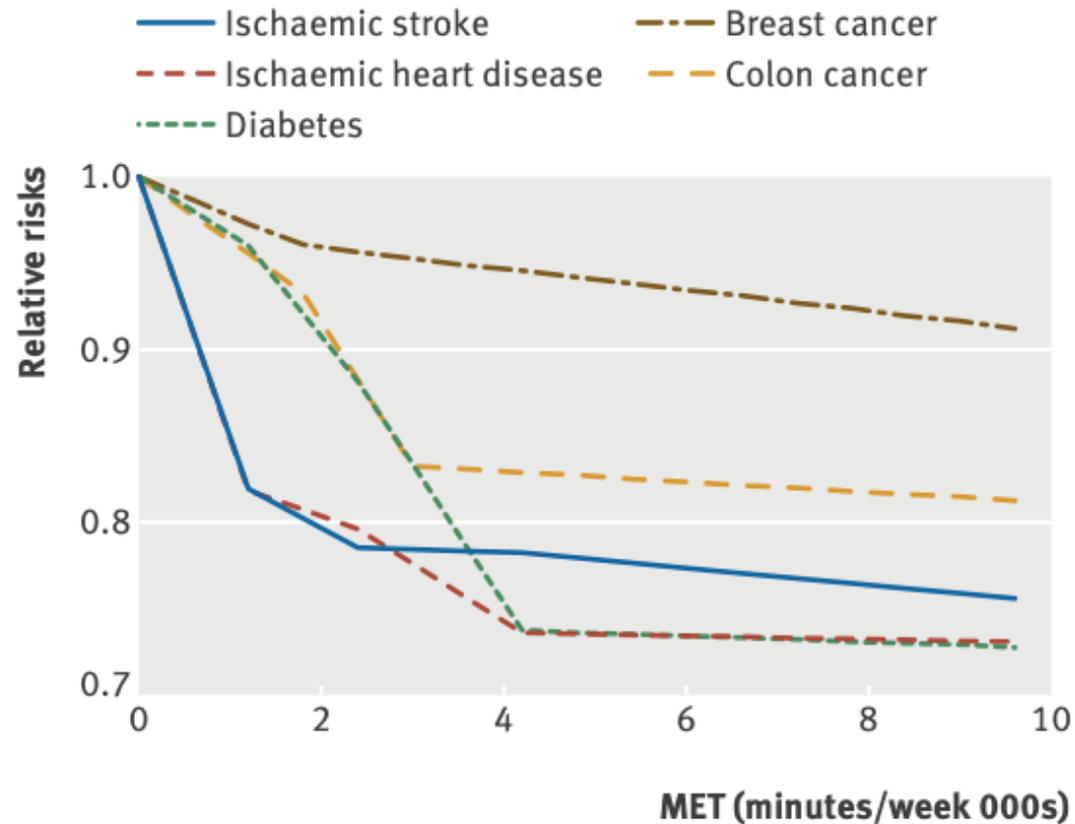
Even short periods of inactivity and sedentary behaviour appear to lead to adverse outcomes.

Studies appear to show strong evidence that physical activity and reducing sedentary behaviour led to better mental health outcomes even for conditions such as **ADHD, PTSD, alcohol abuse, anorexia and schizophrenia**.

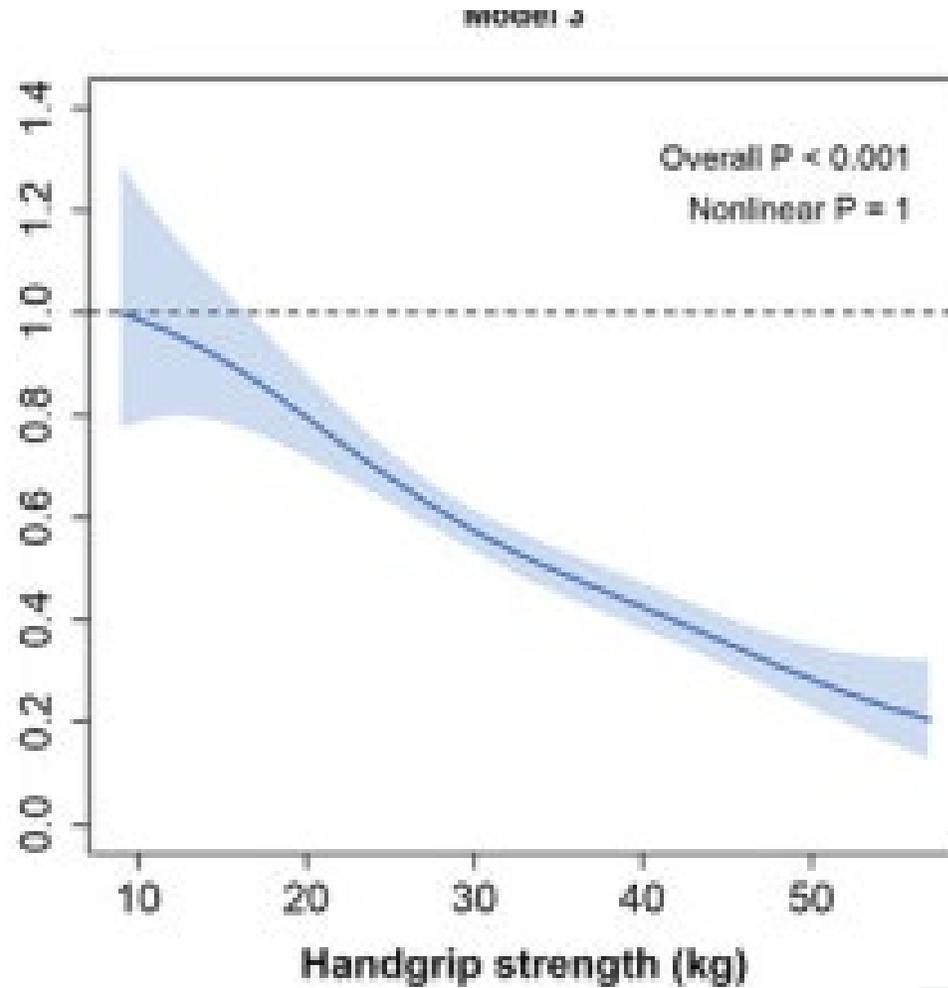
Hazard ratio for all-cause mortality for increasing weekly exercise



Continuous risk curves for association between **physical activity** and breast cancer, colon cancer, diabetes, ischaemic heart disease and ischaemic stroke



Risk of Dementia v Hand Grip



Aims...

- Outline Lifestyle Medicine
- LifeSyle1st Program
- Case Studies
- Strategies to Support Your Children's Wellbeing

What is the most important thing your children possess?



POOR

OPTIMAL

SURVIVING

THRIVING

Health = Wholeness

***health is concerned
with 'flourishing', not just a
'lack of disease'.***



Why are our children experiencing more Mental Health problems?

- What might be driving them?

What Are The Barriers To Thriving?

- Time
- Energy
- Family
- Injury/ Illness
- Convenience/ Support
- Mindset
- Motivation
- Tools/ know how

Our Environment Has Changed...

- Technological advances, increase in structured time/ less play, more time indoors, less sleep, less social contact, more ultra processed food, more environmental pollutants, etc



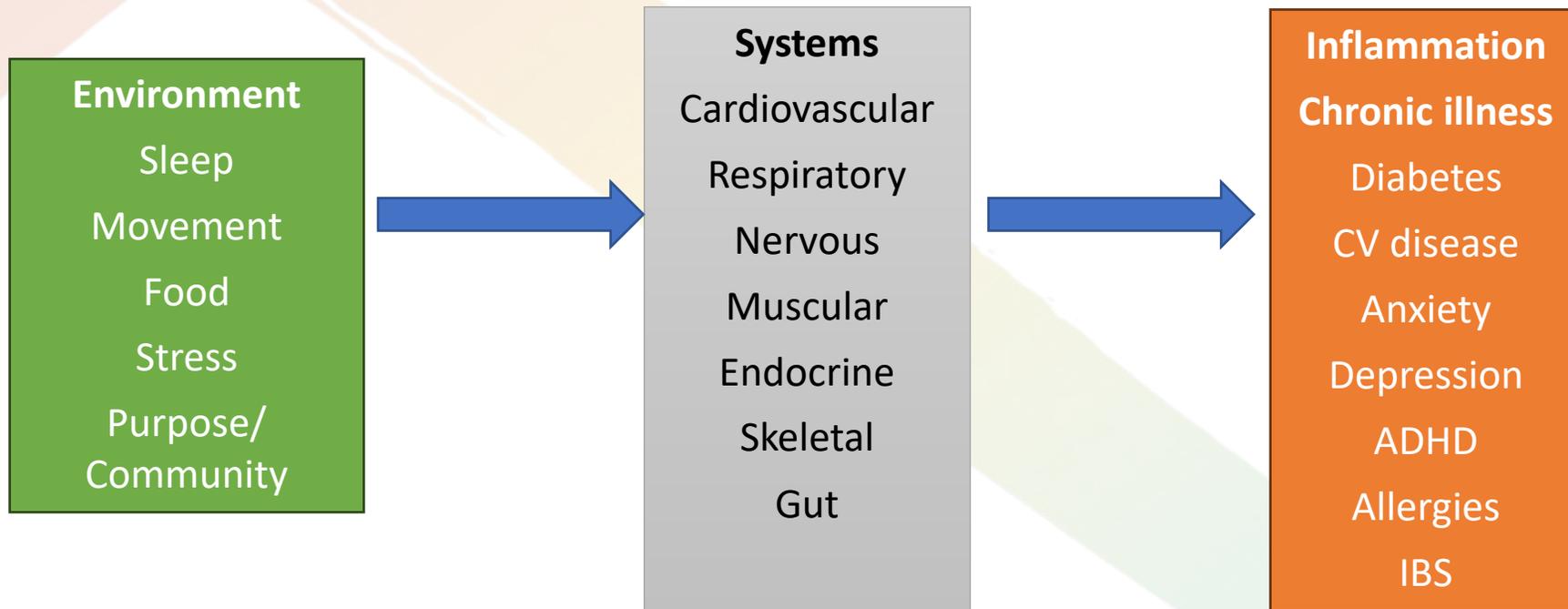
Can we create environments more aligned with behaviours that nourish us?

Lifestyle Medicine...

‘Lifestyle Medicine is **evidence-based**, clinical care that supports behaviour change through **person-centered** techniques to improve mental wellbeing, social connection, healthy eating, physical activity, sleep and minimisation of harmful substances and behaviours.’

British Society of Lifestyle Medicine

A Root Cause Approach...



The 6 Pillars

Each pillar can have an impact on other pillars



Healthy Eating

Lifestyle Medicine supports people to reduce consumption of ultra-processed foods by teaching the knowledge and skills required to follow healthier eating patterns of people's own choosing.



Mental Wellbeing

Lifestyle medicine teaches proven techniques to reduce stress and help people with relaxation. Practitioners support people to find purpose in life and improve health through connection with nature.



Healthy Relationships

Lifestyle medicine supports people to develop and sustain healthy and meaningful relationships and increase social connection to reduce stress and promote both physical and mental health.



Physical Activity

Lifestyle Medicine supports people to choose ways they could incorporate more physical activity in their lives, as well as reducing time spent sitting down.



Minimising Harmful Substances

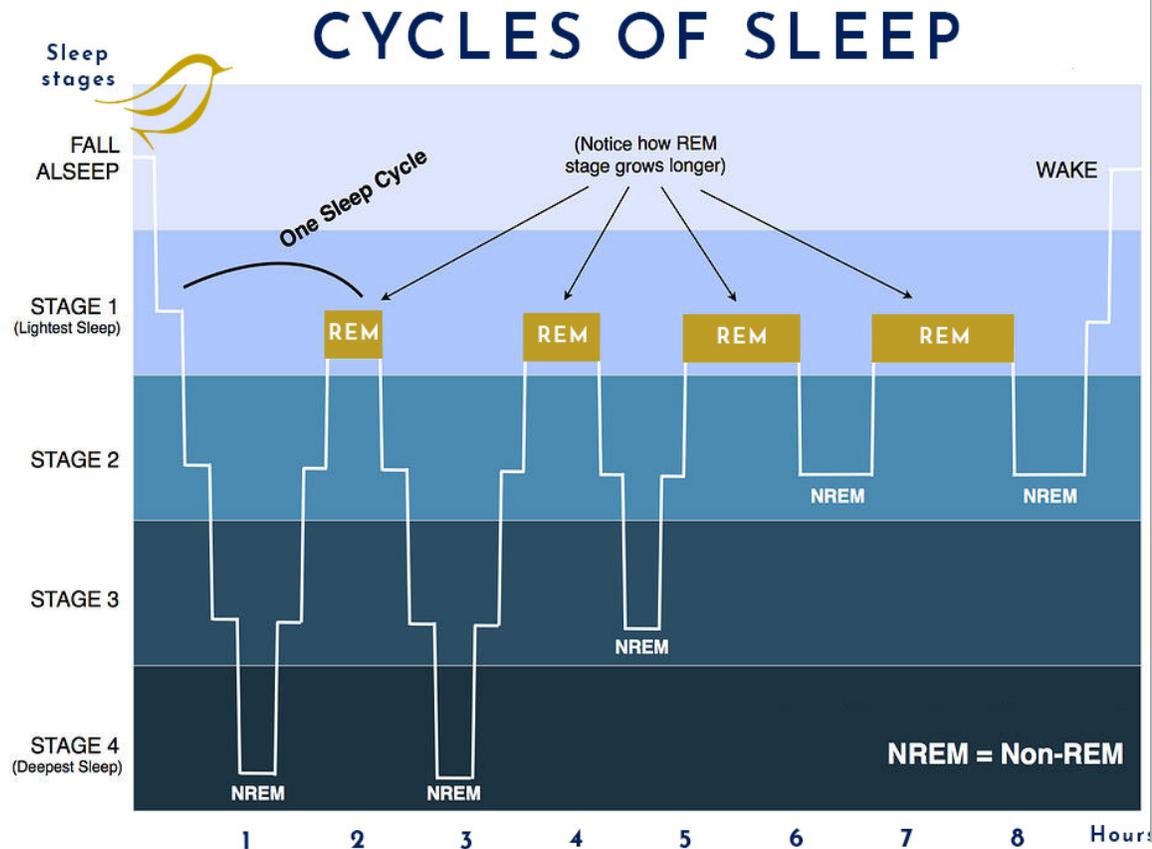
Lifestyle Medicine supports people to stop smoking, reduce excessive alcohol consumption, avoid addictive substances and behaviours such as gambling or harmfully excessive internet or social media use.



Sleep

Lifestyle Medicine supports people to achieve good quality sleep and avoid behaviours which can impair sleep quality.

Why is Sleep Important?



NREM

- Body muscles, cells organs grow and repair
- Improve memory
- Prune neural connections

REM

- Process emotions
- Creativity
- Encode memories into long term memory
- Strengthens neural connections

Poor Sleep

- Poor emotional control
- Low mood
- Lower levels of concentration
- Less empathy
- Poor decision making
- More deviant
- Impaired immune response
- Increased suicidal thoughts
- Poor blood sugar control

Long term linked to increase risk of:

- Depression, type 2 diabetes, ADHD, schizophrenia, Parkinson's, Alzeihmers



Top Tips for Getting Good Sleep

Increase light exposure in the morning as soon as get up.



This will reset
the 24 hour
circadian
rhythm in your
body each day

Top Tips for Getting Good Sleep

Try to finish eating by 7pm



Core body temperature needs to drop for you to fall asleep. Digesting food requires energy and can elevate core temp.

Blood sugar spikes can also make you more alert

Top Tips for Getting Good Sleep

Minimise Blue Light Exposure in evening



Blue light stops **melatonin** levels from increasing

Interaction and content can also be stimulating

No screens an **hour** before bedtime

Tips for Reducing Screen Time!

- It is not your fault – designed to be addictive (Dopamine)
- Set screen time limits for specific apps
- Develop habits and routines, e.g. no phone whilst eating
- Use your phone consciously – you are in control and it has a specific purpose
- Reflect how you feel after using it – be honest and curious - do you feel better?
- Fill your day with more 'real' connections and activities
- Try phone holidays – how do feel?

Top Tips for Getting Good Sleep

Establish a consistent evening routine

- Lock phone away at 8.30
- Use low level side lights/ lamps
- Have a shower, read a book/ listen to music/ journal
- Breath
- 9.30 lights out



Top Tips for Getting Good Sleep

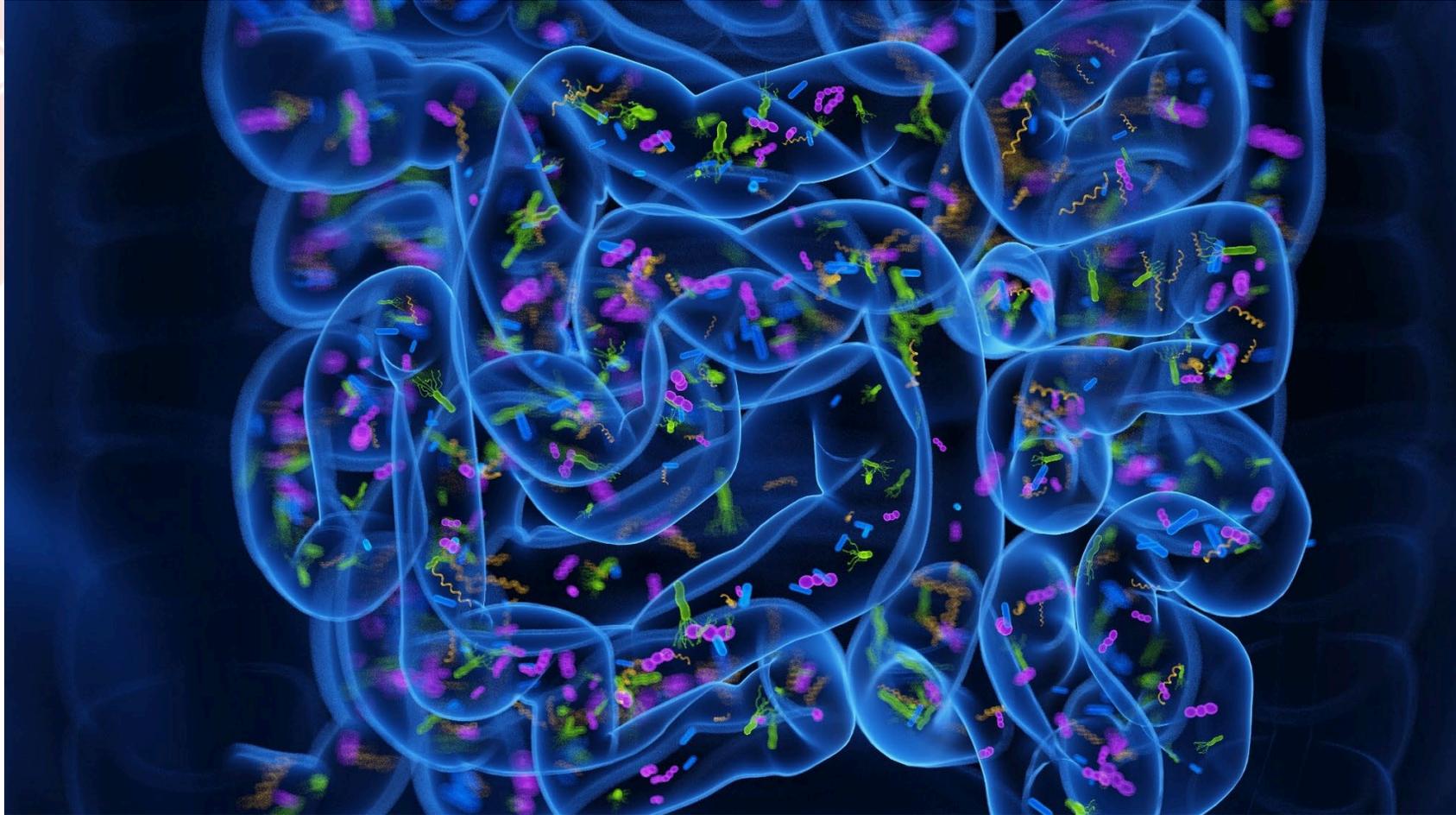
- Consistent wake/ sleep times at weekend/ holidays



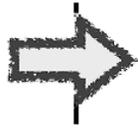
This minimises disruption to circadian rhythm

Avoid 'Jet Lag' every Monday!

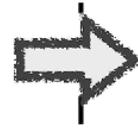
Microbiome



Symbiosis



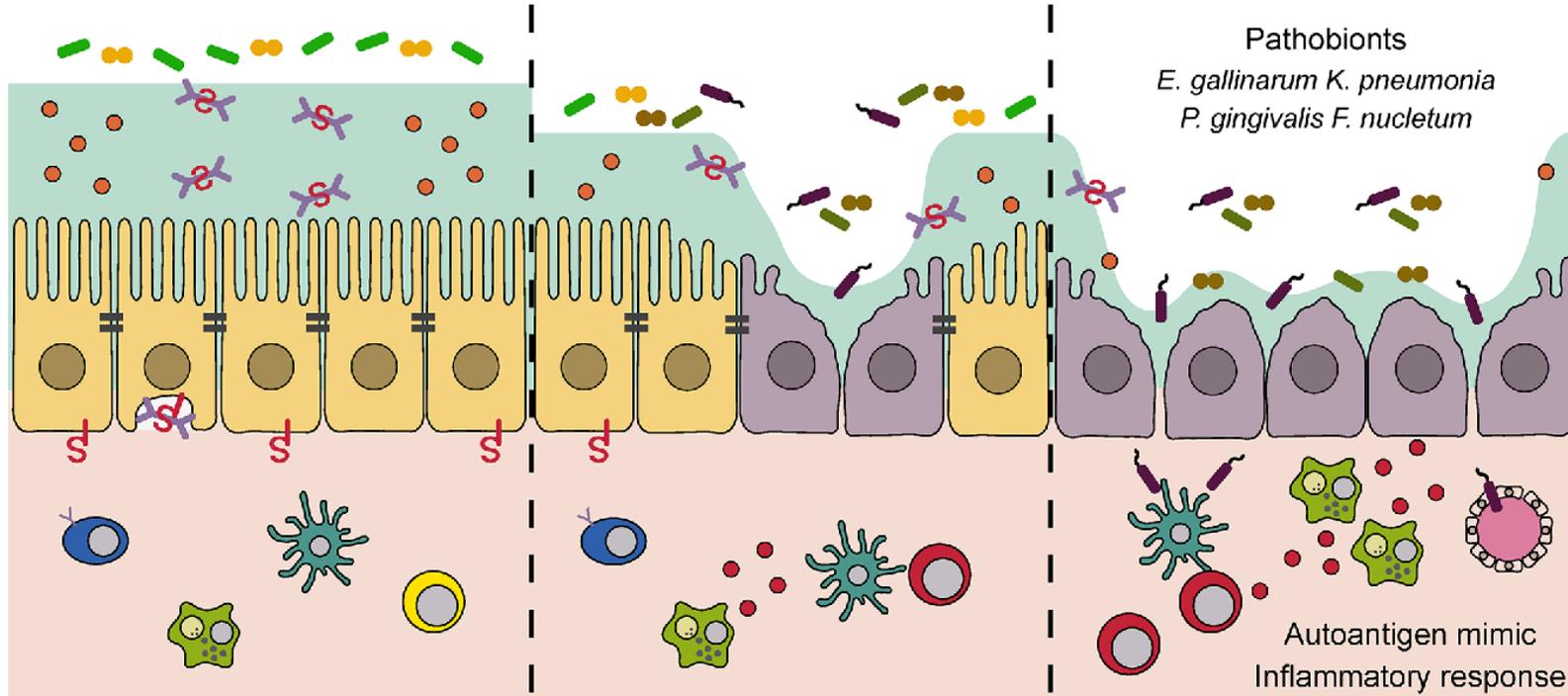
Dysbiosis



Leaky gut syndrome

Genetic factors
Environmental factors

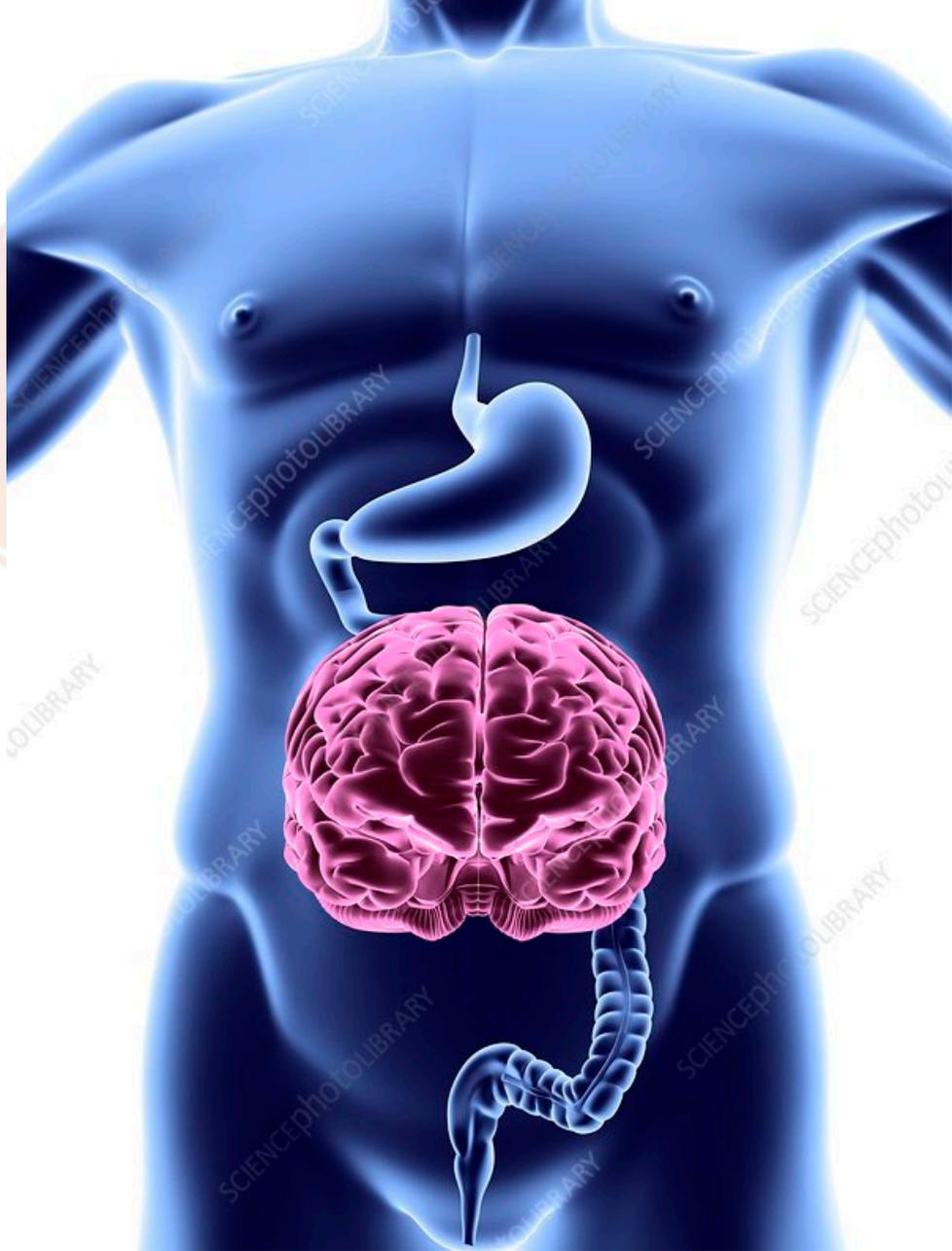
Cytokine response
Epithelial barrier dysfunction



- secretory IgA
- tight junctions
- proinflammatory cytokines
- antimicrobial peptides
- T cells
- macrophages
- polymeric IgA receptor
- B cells
- dendritic cells



Autoimmunity



What do the Healthiest People Eat?

Predominantly **plant based** with small amounts of fish, meat, cheese, e.g Mediterranean Diet, Blue Zones

- **More fruit and vegetables, wholegrain breads and cereals, nuts, pulses (peas, beans and lentils) and seeds.**
- **It's rich in monounsaturated fats which are heart healthy, such as olive oil and nuts.**
- **Less/ zero processed foods**



Basic Principles for Healthy Living

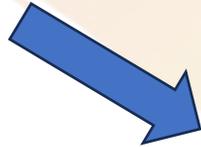
- Reduce/ cut out refined sugar and UPF
- Include a wide range of plant based whole foods
- Max 3 meals a day (no snacking)
- Eat all your food in a 12 hour window (less if you can)
- Try to finish eating before 7pm (the earlier the better)

Mental Health

- Strong correlation between certain nutrients and brain health:
- Omega 3 (long chain)
- B Vitamins (3, 6 and 12)
- Choline, Zinc, magnesium

What has worked...

Awareness



Motivation



Small Steps

Case Study 1

M is a lovely lad but has **no motivation** to do anything at school. Outside of school he plays football and does martial arts but in school he just **CBA** to use his expression. He gets cautions most day for **poor attitude** to learning and **lack of homework** - he just cannot see the point of school and never has, He just cannot see the point. M **looks unhappy** most of the time.

Case Study 1

- On meeting I ask him about his typical day.
- Very stressed
- Poor sleep
- Typical teenage diet (processed food, sugar, timing of food)
- High screen time/ gaming
- Back pain

Case Study 1

- Started with stress and back pain
- Breath work and some exercises and stretches to mobilize back
- Agreed to come off screens an hour before bed (9.30)
- Reframing thoughts around football (puts himself under pressure and focusses on negative)
- Added spices and herbs and more diversity of plants
- Reduced snacks and opt for real food, e.g. nuts

Case Study 1

- Cut out breakfast cereal (UPF)
- Cut out sugary drinks
- Makes own ice tea!
- Link between his improvement in attitude to football to school
- Focus on positive - The work he does in lessons is for his future self
- Visualisation

Recent comments from Dad..

- 'SEEMS HAPPIER, LOT MORE TALKTIVE AND ENGAGED WITH FAMILY STUFF.
- HE HAS MORE PRESENCE
- THIS WEEK TRYING TO REDUCE SUGAR'

What is 'normal'

- Fostering good health means you will need to stand up to lots of societal norms.
- Children can be confused and overwhelmed by the modern environment.
- Consistency and clarity are key to helping them feel safe

Mental Health Issues



In 2023, over 1 in 5 children and young people aged 8 to 25 years had a probable mental disorder.

This was 20.3% of 8 to 16 year olds, 23.3% of 17 to 19 year olds and 21.7% of 20 to 25 year olds.

Among 8 to 16 year olds, rates of probable mental disorder were similar for boys and girls, while for 17 to 25 year olds, rates were twice as high for young women than young men.

**Between June 2022 and August 2023 out of 4,982 deaths
by suicide:
3,729 (74.8%) were in males**

**Suicide rates among young females have been steadily
increasing over several years. Comparison between 2015 and
2021 shows a statistically significant increase for those aged 10
to 24. In 2021, the rate in this group was 3.6 deaths
per 100,000.**

449 (9.0%) were people aged 10 to 24 – equivalent to 9 people aged 10-24 a week taking their own lives.

1,894 (38.0%) were people aged 25 to 44.

Suicide rates drop over the Summer months for those aged 10 to 24.

In 2023, eating disorders were identified in 12.5% of 17 to 19 year olds, with rates 4 times higher in young women (20.8%) than young men (5.1%).

2.6% of 11 to 16 year olds were identified with eating disorders, with rates 4 times higher in girls (4.3%) than boys (1.0%) and 5.9% of 20 to 25 year olds, were identified with eating disorders with no difference in rates evident between women and men.

Communication
is our greatest
tool



Communication Openers

Shorter Activities

- Take a walk.
- Go for a drive.
- Ready, set... bake.
- Create something together.
- Have a kickabout.
- Share your music.
- Draw or colour-in together.
- Yoga time.



Longer Activities

- Start a new series. e.g. Childhood 2.0, Never Have I Ever, Crazy Ex-Girlfriend, Homeland, Girls, This is Us etc.
- Share your favourite books.
 - Cook together.
 - Coffee shop date.
 - Have a games night.
- Start a hobby together.

General

How are you feeling?

What do you want to talk about?

What was the best and worst bit of your day?

If you could start today again, what would you do differently?

What did you do today that you are most proud of?

What was the biggest problem you had today?

Do you want to talk about what's going on?

How can I support you through [issue]?

Is there anything that you need from me? Space, time to talk, time to do something fun...

Fun

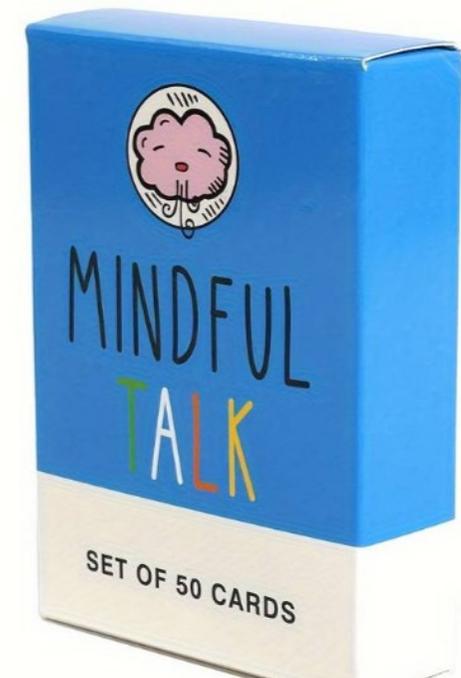
What's your favourite song at the moment? Would I like it?

If you were an animal which one would you be?

If your life was a movie which one would it be?

What's your favourite thing about school and why?

Serious



TEENS CONVERSATION STARTERS

72+ CARDS - 8.5x11" (LETTER)

HOW DO YOU THINK OTHERS VIEW YOU AND WHY?

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU WISH OUR FAMILY WOULD DO TOGETHER MORE OFTEN?

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE POPULAR AT YOUR SCHOOL?

WHEN DO I FEEL MOST LIKE MYSELF?

DO YOU SOMETIMES FEEL EXCLUDED OR OUT-OF-PLACE? WHY IS THAT?

DO YOU THINK PEOPLE TALK DIFFERENTLY ONLINE THAN THEY DO IN PERSON? WHY?

WHAT MAKES A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP?

WHAT IS SOMETHING THAT YOU DID THAT YOU ARE PROUD OF?

WHAT ARE THE PROS AND CONS OF SOCIAL MEDIA?

IF YOU COULD CHOOSE, WHO WOULD YOU LIKE TO SIT BY IN CLASS?

IS THERE SOMETHING I AM WORRIED ABOUT TODAY?

light&salt.

"Every child deserves

A CHAMPION

an adult who will **never** give up on them
who understands the power of connection
and **INSISTS** that they
become the best

they can possibly be."

-Rita Pierson

-inthelandofteaching-



Children need us!

A photograph of two people walking on a sandy beach. The person on the left is wearing blue shorts and the person on the right is wearing blue jeans. Their footprints are visible in the sand. The background shows the ocean and a clear sky.

Often, we cannot "fix
it/them".
We need to
acknowledge this to
ourselves. And then we
need to walk alongside
them on their journey.



Role Modelling

How do we role model positive mental health?



Mental Health Issues

Anxiety

Anxiety is a feeling of worry or fear that is experienced as a combination of physical sensations, thoughts and feelings.

Anxiety can become a problem when a young person feels stuck in it, or when it feels like an overwhelming, distressing or unmanageable experience. If this kind of worrying goes on for a long time, it can leave a young person feeling exhausted and isolated, and limit the things they feel able to do.



Anxiety

Physical Symptoms

- panic attacks, which can include having a racing heart, breathing very quickly, sweating or shaking
- shallow or quick breathing, or feeling unable to breathe
- feeling sick
- dry mouth
- sweating more than usual
- tense muscles
- wobbly legs
- irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), diarrhoea or needing to pee more than usual
- getting very hot

Thoughts and Feelings

- preoccupied by upsetting, scary or negative thoughts
- nervous, on edge, panicky or frightened
- overwhelmed or out of control
- full of dread or an impending sense of doom
- alert to noises, smells or sights
- worrying about being unable to cope with daily things like school, friendships and being in groups or social situations
- worrying so much that it is difficult to concentrate and/or sleep

Coping behaviours

- withdrawing or isolating themselves – including not wanting to go to school, be in social or group situations, be away from parents or try new things
- repeating certain behaviours, actions or rituals (often called ‘obsessive compulsive behaviours’)
- eating more or less than usual
- self-harming

Helping your child in the short term

Breathe slowly and deeply together.

Sit with them and offer calm physical reassurance.

Try using all five senses together.

Reassure them that the anxiety will pass and that they will be okay.

Ask them to think of a safe and relaxing place or person in their mind.

Encourage them to do something that helps them to feel calmer.

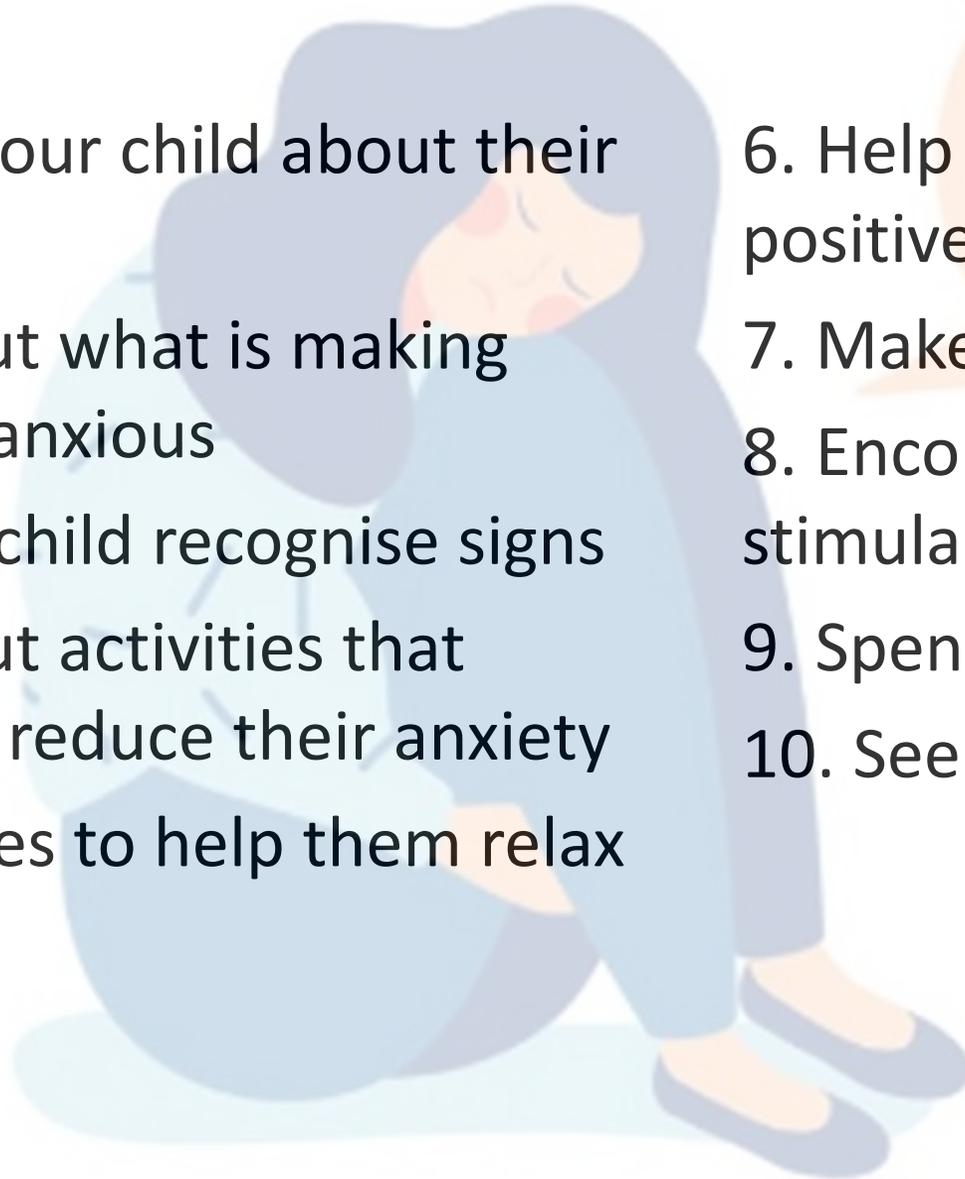
Helping your child in the long term



A lot of these strategies are about helping your child to understand themselves and find out what works for them. The more confident they feel about helping themselves when things are hard, the more they will believe in their ability to cope – helping to reduce feelings of panic.

Helping your child in the long term

1. Talk with your child about their anxiety
2. Think about what is making them feel anxious
3. Help your child recognise signs
4. Think about activities that express or reduce their anxiety
5. Try activities to help them relax
6. Help them do the daily things for positive wellbeing
7. Make a worry/self-soothe box
8. Encourage them to cut out stimulants
9. Spend quality time together
10. Seek Professional help



Depression

Feeling sad is a normal reaction to experiences that are stressful or upsetting. However, when these feelings go on for a long time, interfere with life or make one feel unlike their usual self, they might have depression.



Depression – The Symptoms

- withdrawing, or avoiding friends or social situations
- finding it hard to concentrate, and/or losing interest in schoolwork
- not wanting to do things they previously enjoyed
- feeling irritable, angry or frustrated
- feeling tearful, miserable, lonely or hopeless
- feeling empty or numb
- being very self-critical, or feeling less confident
- sleeping more or less than normal
- eating more or less than normal
- feeling tired or not having any energy
- showing less or no interest in self-care activities like washing
- wanting to self-harm
- experiencing suicidal thoughts



CORE SYMPTOMS: Low mood and/or difficult in getting pleasure from usual activities (nearly every day at least 2 weeks)



AND At least 4 additional symptoms (e.g. appetite, sleep, etc.)



AND Difficulties interfere with functioning (e.g. school, work, friends, family)

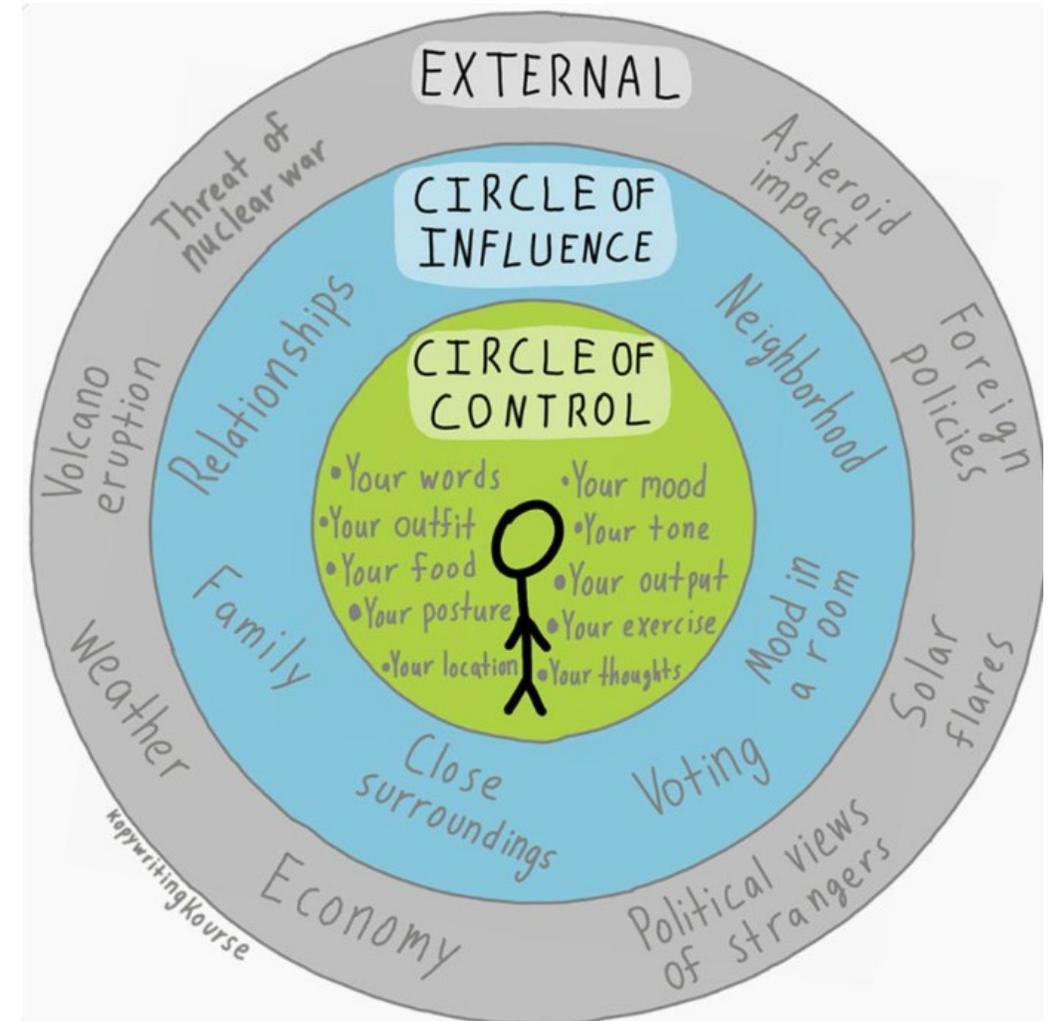
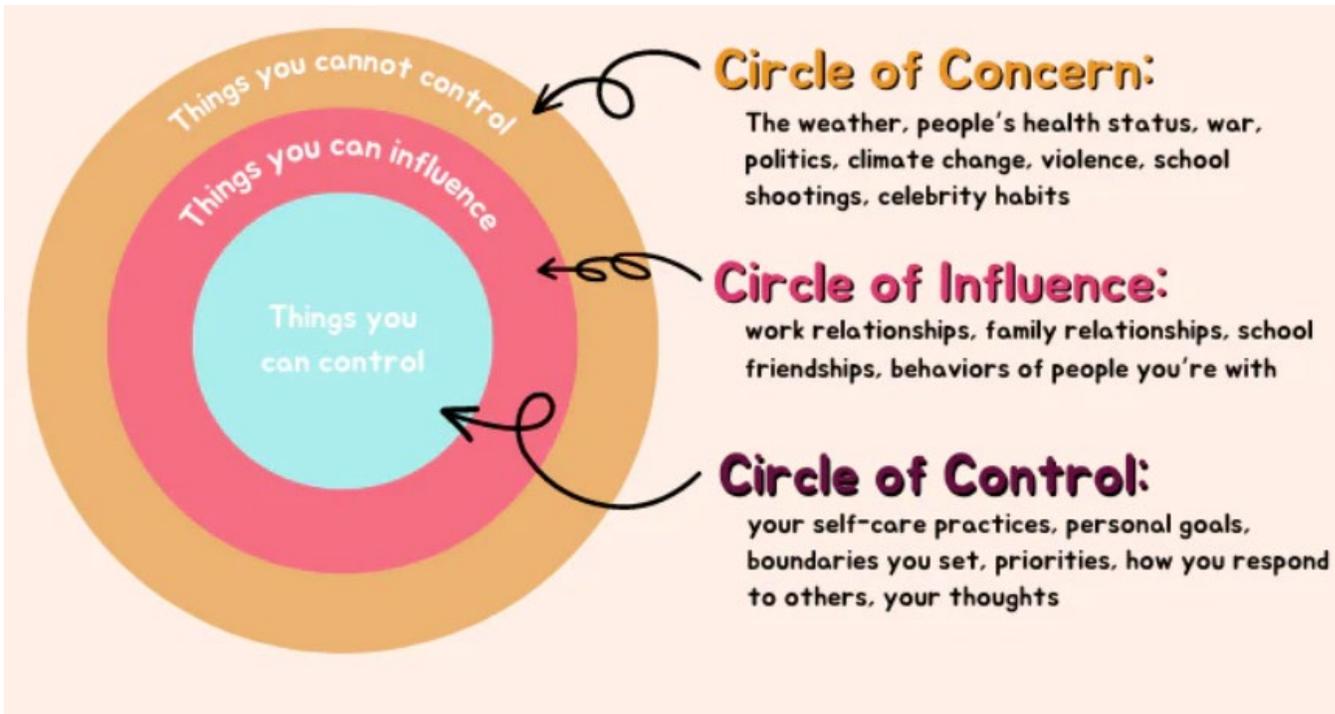
Depression



Helping your child in the long term

1. Open up a conversation
2. Listen!
3. Consider whether there is anything in particular that's making them feel this way
4. Help them think of someone to talk to
5. Help your child to think about who's in their support circle
6. Encourage them to think about what they enjoy doing
7. Help them do the daily things for positive wellbeing
8. Ask them to make a plan (if helpful)
9. Consider their circles of control
10. Seek Professional help

Helping your child in the long term





Self-Harm

Definition: “Any act which involves deliberately inflicting pain and/or injury to one’s own body, but without suicidal intent. It is usually an attempt to stay alive in the face of great emotional pain”. (NHS)

Self-Harm

- Picking and scratching
- Cutting
- Writing on the body
- "Overdosing" (self-poisoning)
- Dieting/Overeating
- Biting
- Pulling out hair
- Head banging
- Risk taking
- Hitting
- Excessive exercising
- Burning
- Self Strangulation



Self-Harm

Why do young people self harm?

Control Mechanism

Relieve Tension

Punishing Oneself

Relieve "Numbness"

Distraction from problems

Suicidal (but this is very few!)

What to look out for as parents

- unexplained cuts, burns, bite marks, bruises or bald patches
- keeping themselves covered,
- bloody tissues
- seeming low or depressed,
- blaming themselves for problems or expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or hopelessness
- outbursts of anger or argumentativeness



Helping your child in the short term

When the urge to self-harm does build in the moment, having a list of other things they can do straight away can also help your child to 'ride the wave of' their intense feelings without self-harming.



Helping your child in the long term

- 1. Open up a conversation about what's going on**
- 2. Make sure your child knows they can talk to you anytime**
- 3. Stay calm and non-judgemental**
- 4. Think together about the cause**
- 5. Help them to notice when the urge to self-harm builds**
- 6. Spend quality time together doing activities they enjoy**
- 7. Help them do the daily things that support our wellbeing**
- 8. Ask your child if there are things that would help them to feel more safe**
- 9. Keep an eye on your child without making them feel policed**
- 10. Seek professional help**

Helping your child in the long term



Young people tell us it's helpful when parents...

- are open-minded and don't make assumptions
- remember that their child is not doing this for attention – it's their way of letting out the pain on their terms
- let their child know they are there to help, and aren't going to judge them
- listen to them and offer reassurance – things like 'I'm proud of you', 'we will get through this together' and 'I recognise your pain and want to help'



Young people tell us it's unhelpful when parents...

- put too much pressure on their child to stop
- force their child to talk when they're not ready
- minimise their child's feelings by saying things like 'it's only puberty', 'it's just a phase' or 'you just need to grow up'

Looking After YOU!

Looking after your own mental health, seeking advice and support when needed, is vital. This is the best form of role modelling we can provide for our children.

- Jacqui, Parent -





Signposting



Thank you for coming

Communication
is key!

Mental Health Evening Evaluation

