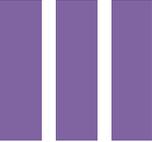




# Children's Mental Health Awareness Week

6th – 12th February 2023



# WHO ARE CHUMS?



**CHUMS**  
**CHARITY**

**Supporting Mental Health**  
**Improving Lives**

# Importance of Mental Health



Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood.



Good mental health is important because it can help you to:

- Cope with the stresses of life
- Be physically healthy
- Have good relationships with others (e.g., family, friends)
- Make meaningful contributions to your family and community
- Work productively
- Realise your full potential
- Helps us think more clearly
- Enhances our self-esteem





# Connecting with others...



We all have lots of different people in our lives...

It's so important to make sure we connect with those that are special and important to us.

By connecting with those that are special to us, we make sure we're supported through difficult times but also have someone to talk to/spend time with whenever we need 😊

## Who could I connect with?

Think about people in your life,  
that are special to you...

→ Family

→ Friends

→ Teachers

→ Health  
professionals



# Family



Spending time with family is one important way to connect with those around us and spend time with people we love.

These are some activities to **'Connect'** with family:

- Going for a walk
- Playing board games
- A family quiz
- A movie night
- Cooking together
- Playing a sports game
- Be creative such as painting or drawing



Thinking about your family – how do you spend time together? What activities do you enjoy doing together?

Everyone's family is different, and they come in all shapes and sizes. Some may be very big, whilst others very small. Every family is unique and that is important!



Sometimes just having a chat with someone in your family can be really important!

# Friends



## Importance of connecting with friends:

It is important to surround ourselves with friends for support and comfort in both times of joy and distress. Studies have shown that having supportive relationships is a strong protective factor against mental difficulties and helps to increase our mental well-being.

## How to Create and Maintain Strong Friendships:

- 1) Create and make time for one another.
- 2) Be honest with each other.
- 3) Show them that you care.
- 4) Embark on new experiences together.
- 5) Provide support and encouragement.
- 6) Treasure the little things.

## Connecting with friends can:

- Decrease feelings of loneliness and isolation
- Reduce your risk of mental health difficulties, including depression and anxiety
- Lower your blood pressure
- Decrease your risk of serious health problems like diabetes, heart attack, and stroke
- Produce less of the stress hormone cortisol
- Live longer and healthier
- Offer support when needed and companionship
- Increase your sense of belonging and boost your happiness



**Remember, family members count, too!**

# Teachers



## The importance of connecting with teachers

- It is important to be vocal about how you feel.
- Talking to a trusted teacher about how you feel.
- Think about a teacher you feel comfortable speaking to. Perhaps they can be added to your backup team!



Connecting with teachers is also a great way to reflect on your strengths and weaknesses.

You can communicate:

- Any questions or concerns
- Your achievements and areas for improvement
- Your interests and hobbies



There are many examples of teachers to connect with including:

- School teachers
- Extracurricular e.g., dance, music, or sports teachers
- Tutors
- Mentors
- Youth or community teachers

Although they are teachers, they may learn something from you too!

# Health professionals



Sometimes, we may need support from a health professional. There are lots of different types of health professionals that may support you and/or your family.

Whilst you may not be able to connect with a health professional as much as family, friends or teachers they are still there for you and you can always share anything with them when you meet.

If you feel nervous or worried when connecting with a health professional you could make a list of things you want to talk about before you meet them, or write it down and show them!

There are lots of ways to reach out and connect with health professionals, you can talk to parents/carers, teachers or another adult you trust, they can guide you to the type of support/health professional that will be able to help the most



# Back-Up Team

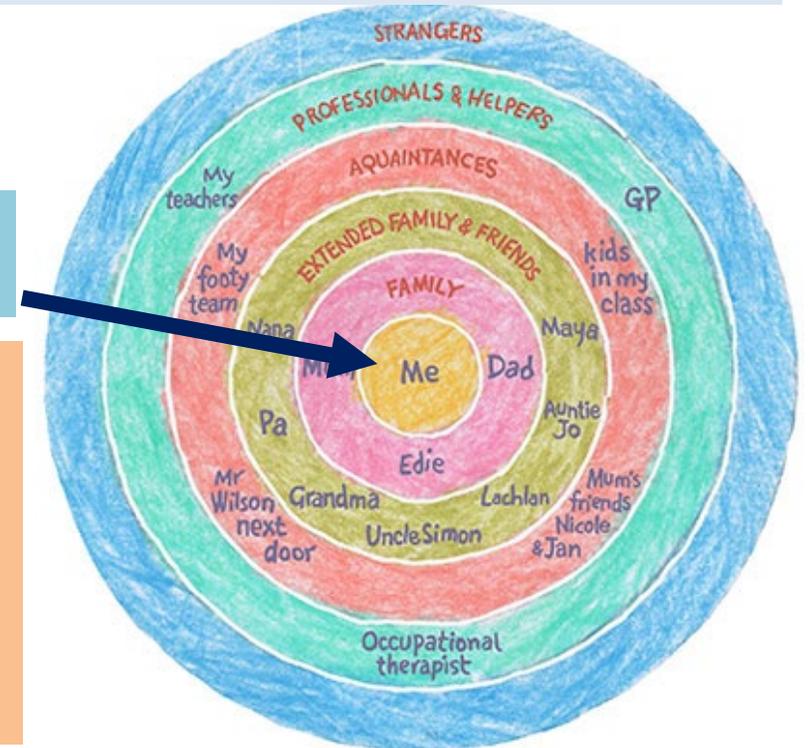


It can be helpful to think about your 'Back-Up Team'. Your 'Back-Up Team' is everyone in your life who is important to you and **connects** to you in some way.

A closeness circle is one activity which can be used. In the smaller circles, write down the names of people closer to you. In the further circles, write down the names of those less close to you (but still people in your team!).

You go here!

Think about how and why you connect to each person – is it to play your favourite sport, or is it for advice and support? Maybe write down how you are connected to each person, so you always know who you can reach out and go to!



# Connecting with yourself



Most importantly, it is key for you to connect with yourself.

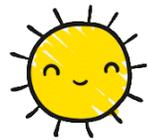
Reflect on your likes, dislikes, strengths, and weaknesses.

Connect and identify your thoughts, feelings, bodily symptoms, and behaviours in difficult situations.

## Self-Care & Mental Health for Kids



Share your own feelings to encourage self-awareness.



Find social groups that help them feel like they belong.

Set aside time for low-stress or solo activities.



Practice self-care for yourself to set the standard.



Focus on articulating feelings.  
"I am angry."  
"I am sad."

Encourage journaling and diaries.

Encourage your child to focus on the moment.



Establish a self-care routine.



Recognize toxic stress events.

Blessing Manifesting

Cultivate interests and hobbies.

### What is self-care?

*Self-care* is defined as taking action to improve one's own health and wellbeing.

### Examples of self-care are:

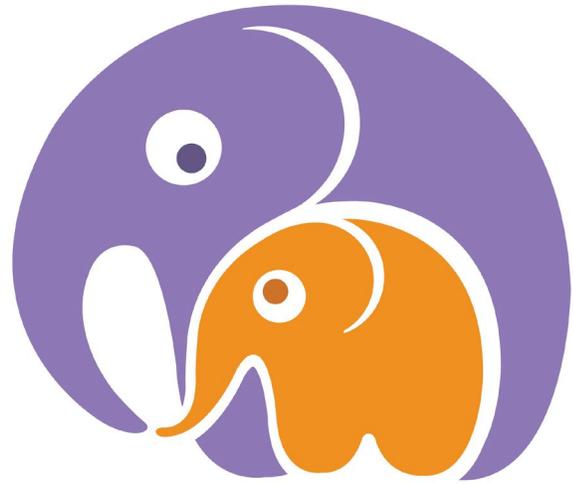
- Getting enough sleep, as the amount you get can impact your mood
- Eating healthy and nutritious foods
- Rewarding yourself for trying something or overcoming a difficult situation
- Do a relaxing activity
- Journal/document your thoughts and feelings



# Remember...

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Always remember to connect with others and yourself



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IMPROVING LIVES

