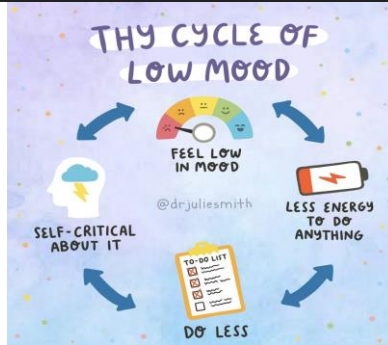


SEMH SPOTLIGHT – LOW MOOD & DEPRESSION

This spotlight accompanies the Warwickshire Educational Psychology Service short webinar on understanding, identifying, and supporting Low Mood and Depression in schools. The webinar can be accessed through the website:

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/educationalpsychology>











Low Mood – The importance of breaking the cycle:



Strategies that can help:

Ideas taken from the resource: [My Depression Jigsaw Puzzle Worksheet – Mental Health Center Kids](#)

Strategy	Examples
<p>Behavioural Activation</p> <p>The worksheet shows a cycle of 'The sad bit' with arrows indicating a cycle. It includes a 'To-do list' and 'Aims' section.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical Exercise Creative outlets such as music or art Accomplishing daily goals such as routine based activities. <p>Small steps, plan, organise and repeat!</p>
<p>Relaxation skills</p> <p>The poster lists relaxation skills: MOVE, PLAY, STRETCH, FEEL, BREATHE, BELIEVE, RELAX.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deep breathing Progressive muscle relaxing (Tensing and releasing exercises – TRE) Mindfulness Visualisation Listening to music
<p>Good health habits</p> <p>The poster lists lifestyle tips to fight depression: eat plenty of fruit and veg, take gentle exercise, get 8 hours sleep a night, yoga or meditation, don't drink too much or use drugs, spend time with friends and family.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diet and nutrition Sleep hygiene Exercise Water intake Good personal hygiene and self-care Healthy coping strategies over 'unhealthy' e.g., over-reliance on drugs and/or alcohol.

<p style="text-align: center;">Social Contact</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Warwickshire Educational Psychology Service Warwickshire County Council Adopting the Wellbeing Curriculum</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time with friends during school hours • Time with friends face to face outside of school (evenings/ weekends / holidays) • Safe use of social media • Attendance at clubs and hobbies • Volunteering 				
<p style="text-align: center;">Thinking / mental skills</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Warwickshire Educational Psychology Service Warwickshire County Council Adopting the Wellbeing Curriculum</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of positive self-talk • Developing problem solving strategies • Challenging negative thinking and adopting balanced thoughts • Gratitude diaries and journalling • Growth mindset, with hope and optimism. 				
<p style="text-align: center;">Happy chemicals</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 5px;"> <p>Dopamine The rewarding chemical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completing a task • Doing self-care activities • Eating food • Celebrating little wins  </td> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 5px;"> <p>Oxytocin The love hormone</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hugging your loved ones • Playing with a dog • Playing with a baby • Holding hands  </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 5px;"> <p>Serotonin The mood stabilizer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sun exposure (be sun safe) • Meditating • Running • Being in nature  </td> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 5px;"> <p>Endorphin The pain killer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laughing • Exercising • Dark chocolate • Essential oils  </td> </tr> </table> <p style="text-align: center;">Warwickshire Educational Psychology Service Warwickshire County Council Adopting the Wellbeing Curriculum</p>	<p>Dopamine The rewarding chemical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completing a task • Doing self-care activities • Eating food • Celebrating little wins 	<p>Oxytocin The love hormone</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hugging your loved ones • Playing with a dog • Playing with a baby • Holding hands 	<p>Serotonin The mood stabilizer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sun exposure (be sun safe) • Meditating • Running • Being in nature 	<p>Endorphin The pain killer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laughing • Exercising • Dark chocolate • Essential oils 	<p>Releasing ‘happy hormones’ through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise • Time with animals / pets • Completing tasks / lists • Getting out in the sun • Being in nature • Yoga • Cold shower • Spending time with those you care about.
<p>Dopamine The rewarding chemical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completing a task • Doing self-care activities • Eating food • Celebrating little wins 	<p>Oxytocin The love hormone</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hugging your loved ones • Playing with a dog • Playing with a baby • Holding hands 				
<p>Serotonin The mood stabilizer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sun exposure (be sun safe) • Meditating • Running • Being in nature 	<p>Endorphin The pain killer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laughing • Exercising • Dark chocolate • Essential oils 				

This supporting document also provides signposting to local and national organisations who can support children and young people with their experiences of low mood and depression. You will also find charity helplines detailed, guidance documents for parents/ carers and other useful websites.

Local Organisations

- RISE <https://cwrise.com/>
 - Navigation Hub: Tel: 0300 200 2021 (Mon-Fri 8am – 6pm)
 - Primary Mental Health Service: <https://cwrise.com/primary-mental-health/>
 - Mental Health in Schools Team: <https://cwrise.com/mhst/>
 - <https://cwrise.com/coping-with-low-mood>
 - How to make a referral: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RrcZKiDTRIk>
- Dimensions Kooth: <https://www.kooth.com/>
- Mind Coventry and Warwickshire Wellbeing Advisers: <https://cwmind.org.uk/wellbeing-advisers/>
- CW Mind: <https://cwmind.org.uk/>
- Warwickshire School Health and Wellbeing Service: <https://www.compass-uk.org/introduction-to-wshwbs/>

National Organisations

- CAMHS resources: <https://www.camhs-resources.co.uk/>
- Young Minds: <https://www.youngminds.org.uk/>
- Anna Freud: <https://www.annafreud.org/on-my-mind/>
- Stem4 (Supporting teenage mental health): <https://stem4.org.uk/>
- Switchboard LGBT+ helpline: <https://switchboard.lgbt/>
- Papyrus: <https://www.papyrus-uk.org/>

Charity Helplines:

- The Mix: <https://www.themix.org.uk/get-support/speak-to-our-team> 0808 808 4994
- Childline: <https://www.childline.org.uk/> 0800 1111
- Samaritans: <https://www.samaritans.org/> 116 123
- Shout: <https://giveusashout.org/> 85258

Useful websites:

- Childline: [Depression | Childline](#)
- MIND: <https://www.mind.org.uk/>
- Action for Children: [Low mood and depression - Support for Parents from Action For Children](#)
- Young Minds: [Depression | Signs and Symptoms | Mental Health | YoungMinds](#)
- NHS [Depression in children and young people - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)
- Therapist Aid: [Depression Worksheets | Therapist Aid](#)

Supporting Parents

- [Depression in children and young people - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)

Strategies include:

- Talking to children
 - Encourage young person to talk to others they trust
 - Let them know you're concerned
 - Look for clues in their play and behaviour
 - Develop empathic scripts
 - Speak to GP
- Young minds parent guide to depression: <https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/parents-a-z-mental-health-guide/depression-and-low-mood/>
 - A Parent's Guide to Depression: Charlie Waller Memorial: [b5791d_ce3f739d96654cc8859a09d9a12d3720.pdf \(filesusr.com\)](https://www.filesusr.com/ce3f739d96654cc8859a09d9a12d3720.pdf)

- Barnardo's: [Depression in children and young people | Barnardo's \(barnardos.org.uk\)](https://www.barnardos.org.uk)
- Parents and carers can get help and advice about children's mental health from Young Minds' free parent helpline on 0808 802 5544, from Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 4pm.

Videos

- [Depression in Adolescents - YouTube](#)

Apps

- **Combined Minds** – Free – An app to help families and friends provide mental health support to others.
www.combinedminds.co.uk | [@combmindsapp](#)
- Wider list of apps for children and young people – mostly free, but do check - <https://smilecounselling.org.uk/videos-apps/>



School Resources

- Dimensions Tool: <https://cwrise.com/dimensions-tool/>
- <https://mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/media/2026/mindfulness-calendar-daily-5-minute-activities.pdf>
- [PSHE KS3 / GCSE: My Troubled Mind - Stories about teenage mental health - BBC Teach](#)
- Feeling low workbook, Mentally Healthy schools: <https://bwc.nhs.uk/download.cfm?doc=docm93jjm4n3491.pdf&ver=5129>
- My Feelings and Me by Poppy O'Neill (Activity book for children aged 7-11 years)
- A Nifflenoo Called Nevermind by Margot Sunderland (A Story for Children Who Bottle Up Their Feelings – Primary)
- The Emotion Cards: [The Emotion Cards \(Draw On\): Amazon.co.uk: Sunderland, Margot, Armstrong, Nicky: 9781138070981: Books](#)
- Helping teenagers talk about their lives: [Helping teenagers talk about their lives cards : Margot Sunderland, Nicky Armstrong: Amazon.co.uk: Books](#)

Please note that information is subject to change and the authors cannot take responsibility for any advice obtained from third parties. Information collated November 2023.