

Sep  
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# mental health awareness

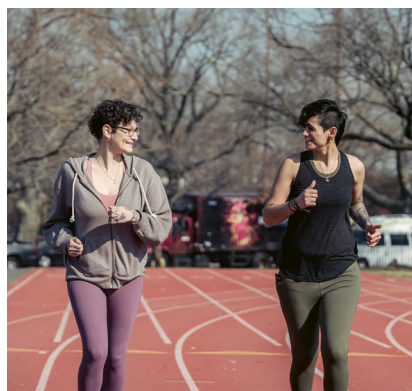


## Olympics Highlight Mental Health

A hugely encouraging and profound aspect of this year's Olympic Games was the fact that mental health took centre stage. The candid and honest admissions of world-renowned athletes goes to show that mental health affects everyone, and that peak performance and mental wellbeing are very closely linked. In the wake of the pandemic, this mainstreaming of conversation around mental health is incredibly important, and the positive reception very encouraging.

We remain fully equipped to deal with all the challenges of the return to normality, as well as the mental health effects of the pandemic in general. We are aware that this is still a particularly tough time, and our counsellors, 24/7 helpline and online resources are, as always, here to help.

Steven Stanbury Managing Director – Wellbeing Solutions



## Get Moving This National Fitness Day

If you feel like exercise is unappealing, challenge yourself to find something outside the box. Any activity that elevates your heart-rate should work. Exercise builds stamina and strength for our body and improves our mood. As our heart pressure increases, the brain releases a protein called BDNF (Brain-Derived Neurotrophic Factor) which acts as a reset switch. That's why we often feel things are clearer after exercising.

Be pragmatic. If you don't like a certain type of exercise, then move on to a different one. The main goal is to find something that you can enjoy and then find a way to do it frequently, take advantage of National Fitness Day and establish some good habits!

## What's going on this month?



World  
Suicide  
Prevention  
Day  
10th September

### 10th September | World Suicide Prevention Day

A day dedicated to promoting worldwide commitment and action to the prevention of suicides.



### 22nd September | National Fitness Day

A day to get active in your community, whether that is going to the gym, exercising at home, or simply going for a walk in the park.



### 27th September to 3rd October | UK National Inclusion Week

A day to celebrate everyday inclusion in all of its forms, at work and in society at large.

## Stay Hydrated

- ✓ Make sure you drink while exercising, and stop if you feel dizzy
- ✓ Sip 7 to 10 ounces of fluid every 10 to 20 minutes during exercise
- ✓ Sports drinks are not always necessary; water should do the trick just fine
- ✓ Make sure you take a sip or two whenever you feel thirsty. Mild thirst is still a sign of impending dehydration



## Supporting Kids

All of the recent conversation surrounding mental health has been incredibly encouraging. From Simone Biles to Lionel Messi, openly candid displays of raw emotion are more commonplace than ever, and certainly speaks to a culture that is starting to fully recognise the legitimacy of mental health.

However, what is lost is that a lot of the conversation is centred around the mental health of adults, and can sometimes ignore the mental wellbeing of younger people and children – a demographic that has been deeply affected by the trauma of the pandemic. In fact, some surveys have reported that around 67% of young people and children believe that the pandemic has had a long-term negative effect on their mental health.

What makes this issue so challenging is that negative mental health manifests differently to that of adults, making it more of a challenge to spot. Is my child simply being moody, or are they genuinely struggling? You know your child better than anyone, so if you're concerned, first think if there has been a significant, lasting change in behaviour.

If your child is struggling, know that there is support available. Coordinate with your child's school and wider support network; utilise the multiple helplines available, such as the Young Minds Parents Helpline; or, for children 16 and above, try and organise help through an employer-funded benefit such as an EAP.

## Signs That your Child Is Struggling

It can be a challenge to discern between run-of-the-mill moodiness and genuine mental health struggles in children. Here are some red flags to look out for before the return to school:

- ✓ Significant changes in behaviour
- ✓ Ongoing difficulty sleeping
- ✓ A loss of interest in things they usually like
- ✓ Self-harm or neglecting themselves
- ✓ Changes in academic performance
- ✓ Outbursts or extreme irritability

If you're concerned about your child's mental health, consult your child's teacher, close friends and doctor.

## employee assistance

Your Employee Assistance Helpline provides you and your family with counselling and advice, covering a variety of personal or workplace issues.

Whatever our age, background or role in life, we all have problems from time to time. Talking to a counsellor or advisor about a problem can help us find a way forward.

This service is paid for by your employer and is provided by an independent company, Wellbeing Solutions Management. There is no cost to you and all calls are confidential.

**24/7 freephone: 0800 328 1437**

Visit: [employeeassistance.org.uk](https://employeeassistance.org.uk)



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