**Resources to Support Return to School**

**August/September 2020**

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Dear Parents/Guardians,

Following the extended period of school closure due to Covid-19, some children may feel anxious about returning to school following the summer holidays. This booklet is provided to signpost resourceswhich may be used at home, with your child/children to reduce potential anxieties. They are designed to be used **at your discretion**, and only **if you feel that that your child requires a little support with the transition to school for the new school year**. If these don’t match your child’s needs, there are many more available online which may be better tailored to your child’s requirements.

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TOP TIPS

Before returning to school, try and prepare children by g

etting them back into a routine

Go to bed at a reasonable time

Wake up early and learn to do the school walk/cycle/drive to school again

Help them to reconnect with friends, eg. meet

their

friend in a park or via zoom

Talk positively and

enthusiastically about the return to school

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USEFUL WEBSITES

 Resource Pack for Children and Young people

 http://www.cypsp.hscni.net/resource-pack-for-children-young-people/

 Services to improve mental health & emotional wellbeing

 https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/directory-services-help-improve-mental-health-and-emotional-wellbeing

 Family Support Hubs Newsletter

 http://www.cypsp.hscni.net/download/fs-hubs/COVID-19-Family-Support-Newsletter.pdf

 www.actionforchildren.org.uk www.barnardos.org.uk www.nspcc.org.uk www.autismni.org.uk

 www.familysupportni.gov.uk www.parentingni.org.uk

 **Safe and Well Support Line (Northern Health & Social Care Trust)** has been developed to offer both emotional and practical support for children, young people and their parents.

 Call: (028) 7936 5097; available for calls Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm

USEFUL STORIES

 You could access these stories on YouTube:

 **Huge Bag of Worries**

 **Tucker turtle likes to tuck- Incredible Years**

 **The Lion Inside**

 **The Koala who Could**

 **How to Catch a Star**

 **How are you Peeling?**

 **The Colour Monster**

 **The Rainbow Fish**

Useful Apps

 **Name**

**Category**

**Cost**

**Information**

**Catch It**

Mental Health

Free

Learn how to manage feelings like anxiety and depression with catch it. It will teach you how to look at problems in a different way, turn negative thoughts into positive ones and improve your mental wellbeing.

**Stress and Anxiety Companion**

Mental Health

Free

Learn how to handle stress and anxiety on-the-go. Using breathing exercises, relaxing music and games designed to calm the mind, it helps you change negative thoughts to help you better cope with life's ups and down

**Calm Harm**

Mental Health

Free

Calm harm is designed to help people resist or manage the urge to self-harm. It's private and password protected.

**Meetwo**

Mental Health, Online Community, Child Health

Free

Meetwo provides a safe and secure forum for teenagers wanting to discuss any issue affecting their lives. You can anonymously get advice from experts or other teenagers going through similar experiences in areas such as mental health, self-harming, relationships and friendships.

**Peanut**

Pregnancy and Baby, Online Community

Free

Peanut aims to make sure no one must navigate womanhood alone, especially the hard parts. It gives you access to a social network to connect with other women across fertility and motherhood. It aims to make it easy to meet, chat and learn from like-minded women.

**Pzizz**

Sleep

Free

Pzizz helps you quickly calm your mind, fall asleep fast, stay asleep, and wake up refreshed. It uses "dreamscapes" – a mix of music, voiceovers and sound effects designed using the latest clinical research to help you sleep better at night or take power naps during the day.

**Couch To 5K**

Health and Lifestyle

Free

Walk and run your way to 5k this couch to 5k app designed to take total beginners from walking to running for 30 minutes in just 9 weeks. Presented in association with BBC get inspired, it builds you up gradually with a mix of running and walking.

**Calm**

Meditation and Relaxation Aid

Free

In the calm app, the daily calm is a 10-minute meditation that's new every day. Relaxing nature sounds from the calm app for relaxation, deep sleep and focus

**My Affirmations**

Live Positive

Free

Life does not happen to you; it happens for you. Your life is your creation. What you believe in will become your reality. Affirmations help you to change the outlook of your life by impregnating positive thoughts in your subconscious mind. Once you believe in a thought, that thought begins to manifest into reality.

**Head Space**

Sleep and Guided Meditation

Free

Meditation has been shown to help people stress less, focus more and even sleep better. Headspace is meditation made simple. We'll teach you the life-changing skills of meditation and mindfulness in just a few minutes a day.

**7 Cups – Anxiety & Stress Chat**

Mental Health

Free

7 cups connect you to caring listeners for free emotional support. Grow at your own pace. Explore self-help guides & growth paths for proven tips and advice on how to feel better.

**Lets Meditate**

Sleep and Guided Meditation

Free

A very straightforward approach to guided meditation; no clutter, no distraction. Just choose a track and hit play. It’s as simple as it can get.

 **Going Back To**

**School**

 A Transition Story for Younger Pupils

Our school building closed in March this year. I have been learning at home for the past few months and going back to school is going to feel a little different. Although I am excited about going back to school, I am also a bit nervous because I have been at home for a long time.

 It is OK to feel nervous, everyone will be feeling nervous about going back to school and my teachers and classroom assistants will be there to make us feel better. It will be really great to see my friends and my teachers again.

When I go back to school things will be a bit different. This is OK, it is just to keep everyone safe.

 To stop germs spreading when we are at school there may be some new rules and routines.

Germs can only spread from one person to another when we stand close to each other. This means that when I play with my friends, we cannot stand too close to each other. It also means that I cannot stand too close to my teacher.

I may want to hug my friends and my teacher because it has been so

long since I have seen them but I will not be able to hug anyone.

I may want to hold hands with my friends or my teacher but I will not be able to hold hands with anyone.

This is OK. We are all safe.

When I am at school I will need to wash my hands regularly to make

sure there are no germs on them.

 My teacher will be setting a routine for us to wash our hands a few times a day. I should wash my hands with soap and water all over the back and front of my hands and between my fingers.

 It will be great to be with my friends and my teachers again.

 I will be happy being back at school.

 **We will be going back to school after the Summer Holidays**

 A Transition Story for Older Pupils

 Since March, our school building has been closed to pupils. Some children still went to school to learn each day because they have a parent or guardian who is a key worker. Other children have been at home learning each day.

 Home learning is not the same as learning in school. I have been doing some work from my teachers and some things the adults at home have chosen for me to learn.

 This time in Lockdown has become a new normal for me. I am usually following my own routine each day and most days this is okay.

 After the Summer holidays, we will be able to go back to school. People may feel anxious when something is unpredictable. To help me I can use a calendar to count my at home days. I can write the going back to school date on it and count down the days until I am back at school.

Mr McNamee might change some things at school, but lots of things will still be the same. We will have to make sure that we wash our hands often and keep spaces between ourselves and our friends and teacher. We will eat our lunch or school dinner in our classroom.

 The adults at home will help me get ready for that and tell me what will be the same or different so I can know what to expect.

 The teachers and classroom assistants will help me when I get back to school.

 Until then I can carry on learning and playing at home. I can follow the rules and keep safe with the other people in my house.

**First day back at school**

 **Think about your first day back at school. What will happen on your first day back?**

**Fill in the gaps.**

**My first day back at school will be .**

 (date)

**School will start at**

(time)

**I will go to school by**  .

(transport)

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_will take me to school**.

**I will see \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_when I get there**.