A dose of Health & Wellbeing

Your bitesize guide to a healthier lifestyle, from your School Nursing team

Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

Primary School Edition (December 2025)

Hello and welcome

Season's Greetings from your School Nursing team!

This newsletter is full of useful information, hints and tips for keeping healthy.

What do you think of our newsletter?

Do you find this newsletter helpful? What would you like to hear about?

School Nursing Newsletter feedback form

Thank you!

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Healthy eating

For advice to help the family eat well visit Healthy Steps You can sign up to receive information on small steps to improve your and your family's health and wellbeing from nutrition experts, as well as Disney-themed games to get children active, and budget-friendly recipes.

If you struggle to get your child to eat vegetables, visit Simply Veg - they have lots of advice to help if you are short of time, feeling the squeeze of the cost of living, or facing other challenges.

Healthy Steps Simply Veg

Getting more active

Children need to be active for at least 60 minutes every day. It's a great time of year to start thinking about making changes to your routine to get the whole family more active.

NHS Better Health has some great ideas for how to be more active, even indoors:

Activities for kids - Healthier Families - NHS Youth Community Sessions | Sport in Mind

Sport in Mind run free sport and physical activity sessions for children, which can build up their confidence and self-esteem, help them to meet new people and improve low mood and/or other emotional health concerns. To find out more the activities they have available and where visit:

Parkrun

What is Parkrun?

A free, fun and friendly weekly 5k community event. Walk, jog, run, or volunteer or spectate, it's up to you! Simply turn up and take part. Everyone is welcome! It's a great introduction for all the family to be physically active outside together, have fun and just join along at your own pace.

Junior parkrun is 2k, dedicated to 4-14 year olds and their families. Children are given FREE wrist bands for when they complete 11 half marathons, 21 marathons, and 50 Ultra! Marathons.

Every Sunday morning starting at 9am.

Where? Our local Parkrun events take place at:

Prospect Park, Liebenrood Road, Reading RG30 2ND

Dinton Activity Centre, Sandford Lane, Hurst RG10 0SU

Woodford Park, Headley Road Woodley RG5 4JZ

Great Hollands Recreation Ground, South Road, Bracknell RG40 3EE

You can REGISTER online beforehand, then track your progress and earn achievements by participating! Visit parkrun | junior parkrun

The importance of Vitamin D in winter

To keep bones and muscles healthy, everyone should consider taking a daily vitamin D supplement in autumn and winter, when we cannot make enough vitamin D from sunlight. Some people should take them all year round, including children up to the age of four and people who are at risk of not getting enough vitamin D.

Just ten micrograms a day is all you need – it's the same for kids and grown-ups.

For more information visit the NHS website.

Physical activity
for children and young people (5–18 Years)

- BUILDS **CONFIDENCE & SOCIAL SKILLS**
- MAINTAINS **HEALTHY WEIGHT**
- DEVELOPS **CO-ORDINATION**
- STRENGTHENS **MUSCLES & BONES**
- IMPROVES **SLEEP**
- IMPROVES **CONCENTRATION & LEARNING**
- IMPROVES **HEALTH & FITNESS**
- MAKES **YOU FEEL GOOD**

Be physically active

Spread activity throughout the day

Aim for an average of at least 60 minutes per day across week

All activities should make you breathe faster & feel warmer

Get strong

Move more

Find ways to help all children and young people accumulate an average of at least 60 minutes physical activity per day across the week

UK Chief Medical Officers' Physical Activity Guidelines, 2019

Keeping safe online

It can be hard to implement rules for keeping your child safe online. Building your child's trust is vital. If they trust you, they will be more open and honest about what they are doing online, and more willing to follow your rules.

Here are some things you can do to build your child's trust and help them to open up to you:

💙 Take an interest in what they are doing online so you can understand their online activity and you can build a rapport together.
💙Ask them to use their device in a shared area so you can supervise what they are doing.
💙Learn and explore online safety issues and privacy settings together.
💙Try and be aware of your child's internet use without being intrusive – the more your child wants to share things with you, the better chance you have of protecting them.
💙Listen to them and take every complaint they make about the internet seriously. Even if you think it's only something minor, it might seem like a huge deal to them.

ⓘ For more advice on keeping your child safe visit the NSPCC website

Screen time

It can also be challenging to know just how much screen time is too much.

Our biggest advice is to stop the use of all electronic devices at least 1 hour before bedtime. This means TVs, tablets, computers, phones, etc. The blue light from these devices tricks the brain into thinking it's daytime and stops the body releasing a hormone called melatonin. Melatonin is nature's way of winding down and preparing for bed and starts to be released a couple of hours before bedtime. It's hard to wind down without this hormone being released.

Safety advice

E-scooter and e-bike fire safety guidance

Lithium-ion batteries, similar to those in our mobile phones, are used to power many e-scooters and e-bikes. If these and associated charging equipment are substandard, damaged or misused then there is a risk of the batteries overheating. This may lead to an unusually intense fire that can give off toxic gases and large amounts of smoke with very little warning.

Fire safety guidance for e-scooters and e-bikes | Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service

Buying and receiving toys

Sadly, there are an increasing number of unsafe toys being sold online, but with many people feeling the pinch this Christmas the appeal of cheap toys could have fatal or serious consequences. If you have or have contact with younger children carefully check the toys they receive this Christmas or indeed at any time of year.

For free fact sheets visit:

CAPT_ToySafety_factsheet.pdf

For top tips on buying safe toys:

8 dangerous gifts that could be a nightmare this Christmas

How to buy safe toys online

Toy safety guide

Do you know the risks of button batteries?

Not only can they get stuck in a small child's food pipe and cause choking, they can cause internal bleeding and even death if swallowed. Batteries react with saliva to create caustic soda, the same chemical used to unblock drains!

There may be even more in your home over Christmas, so be extra vigilant.

For more information visit: Button batteries – The dangers of button batteries and how to stay safe – Home Safety - RoSPA

Outdoor winter safety

Lots of serious accidents happen because drivers don't see another road user until it's too late.

The evenings are getting darker, so make sure your child is as safe as possible while outside in the dark.

Wearing or carrying something bright or fluorescent helps your child to be seen. Yellow and orange are the brightest.

Give them something reflective; even just a small reflective patch of material will shine in a car's headlight from far away, and reflect light from streetlights.

If they cycle or use a scooter, make sure they have working lights on the front and back as well as reflectors.

And be strict on your child wearing their helmet while riding their bike or scooter

This video shows the importance of bike helmets

This website shows you how to teach road safety in an age appropriate way

Asthma advice in the cold weather

Managing your child's asthma can sometimes be more tricky in the winter. As the temperature gets colder outside you might find their asthma symptoms worsen. It might make breathing more difficult or they might wheeze and cough more.

- To help prevent asthma attacks caused by the cold, cover their mouth and nose loosely with a scarf so that the air is warmed before it is breathed in.
- Get them to drink lots of fluids to help keep the mucus in their lungs thinner so the body can remove it more easily.
- Make sure they take their preventer inhaler regularly as directed by their GP and that their reliever inhaler is always available.
- Have their asthma reviewed regularly by their GP or asthma clinic.
- If they are using their reliever inhaler three or more times a week, book an extra asthma review.
- Make sure your child has an up-to-date care plan in school.

For further hints and tips about managing asthma please visit Asthma UK.

Ward off winter bugs and germs

One of the easiest ways to protect yourself & your family from getting sick and stop the spread of infection from those nasty bugs & germs is by washing our hands.

Follow this 'handy' advice!

- Wash your hands with soap and clean water for at least 20 seconds. Be sure to get a good lather going and clean the back of the hands, between the fingers and under the nails. Dry them using a clean towel.

- Wash your hands before and after eating, when they are dirty, after going to the toilet (or changing a nappy), before and after handling food, after you blow your nose, cough or sneeze, after touching pets/animals and their food or equipment, and after handling rubbish/the bins.

Watch this video from WHO with your child and check how properly they are washing their hands.

Is your child up to date with their immunisations?

Vaccines are free, they prevent children becoming ill from infectious diseases and have helped to save millions of lives globally.

We are starting to see local outbreaks of some nasty illnesses and diseases such as measles.

You can check your child's red book (PCHR), speak to your GP, or phone our local child health service (0300 5611851) to check whether they have received all their immunisations. If your child was vaccinated outside of the UK, you'll need to provide evidence to your GP practice so that they can check whether your child needs any further vaccinations.

To find out more visit the NHS Vaccinations website and the Berkshire Healthcare website.

Hearing concerns

It is always important to look out for any signs of a possible hearing problem.

This could mean:

- Inattentiveness or poor concentration
- Not responding when their name is called
- Talking loudly
- Needing to be close to the TV &/or having it on a loud volume
- Difficulty pinpointing where a sound is coming from
- Mispronouncing words
- A change in their progress at school

Please contact your **school nursing service** or GP straightaway if you have any concerns.

Getting rid of head lice

Head lice are very common but the idea of them does tend to fill us with dread!

Head lice are spread by head-to-head contact but are not a sign of dirty hair, poor hygiene or an unclean home. They do not carry diseases. There is no need for your child to stay off school or for you to wash laundry on a hot wash.

Although you can't prevent them, you do need to get rid of them quickly to stop them spreading. Wet combing is the best method to use – medicated shampoos can irritate the scalp. Simply wash hair as usual and apply lots of conditioner, then use a special fine-tooth comb to comb the whole head. You need to do this regularly to catch any newly hatched lice.

Remember to check everyone in the house and start treating anyone who has lice on the same day.

For further advice visit Head lice and nits - NHS (www.nhs.uk)

Bedwetting: nothing to be ashamed of

Bedwetting, otherwise known as enuresis, affects approximately half a million children and teenagers in the UK. It can be embarrassing to talk about which can delay people from asking for help. But it's nothing to be ashamed of and it's important to get help if you need it.

The ERIC website offers support and advice for young people with a bowel or bladder condition.

Did you know that drinking well and staying hydrated can affect bed wetting? Find out more in our blog.

https://cypf.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/blog/posts/2020/july-2020/bedwetting/

Please follow the advice on the Eric website. If you still need support after following the recommended advice, our school nurses run enuresis (bedwetting) clinics. You can find our contact details at the end of this newsletter.

https://eric.org.uk/

Dental care

Tooth decay can cause problems eating, sleeping, talking & socialising. Keep tooth decay at bay by:

- Brushing teeth twice daily with fluoride toothpaste; last thing at night and at least one other time during the day.
- Supervise or brush your child's teeth until they are at least 7 years old.
- After brushing, tell them to spit not rinse to keep the fluoride on the teeth.
- Reduce foods and drinks that contain sugar and have them at mealtimes to limit the amount of time that sugar comes into contact with their teeth.
- Take your child to the dentist regularly.
- Information For Parents/Carers from Teeth Team has lots of easy-to-follow advice
- This Toothbrushing Chart can be put on the wall to remind children to brush twice a day
- This Food & Drink Diary can help children keep track of their food choices over the week

Children's teeth - NHS

Toothbrushing Chart_Chart

Teeth Team

Food Diary_Home & School

Supporting your child with anxiety

It can be worrying if your child is struggling with anxiety. But there are many ways you can support them and there is lots of help available.

Young Minds has some great tips and advice:

Supporting A Child With Anxiety | Tips and Advice | YoungMinds

Charlie Waller also has some great ways to support:

Supporting a child with anxiety | Charlie Waller Trust

How to tackle anxiety: Rainbow of Avoidance:

How to tackle anxiety: Rainbow of Avoidance - BBC Parents' Toolkit - BBC Bitesize

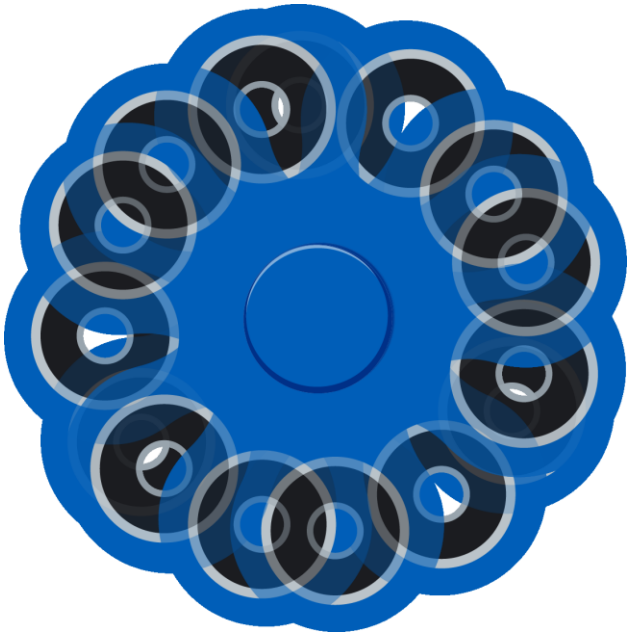
For wellbeing tips to help you support your child:

Parents' Toolkit - BBC Bitesize

Sensory processing online workshops

Does your child:

- Feel distressed by the way certain things feel?
- Strugglele to focus or sit still?
- Become easily overwhelmed in busy or noisy places?



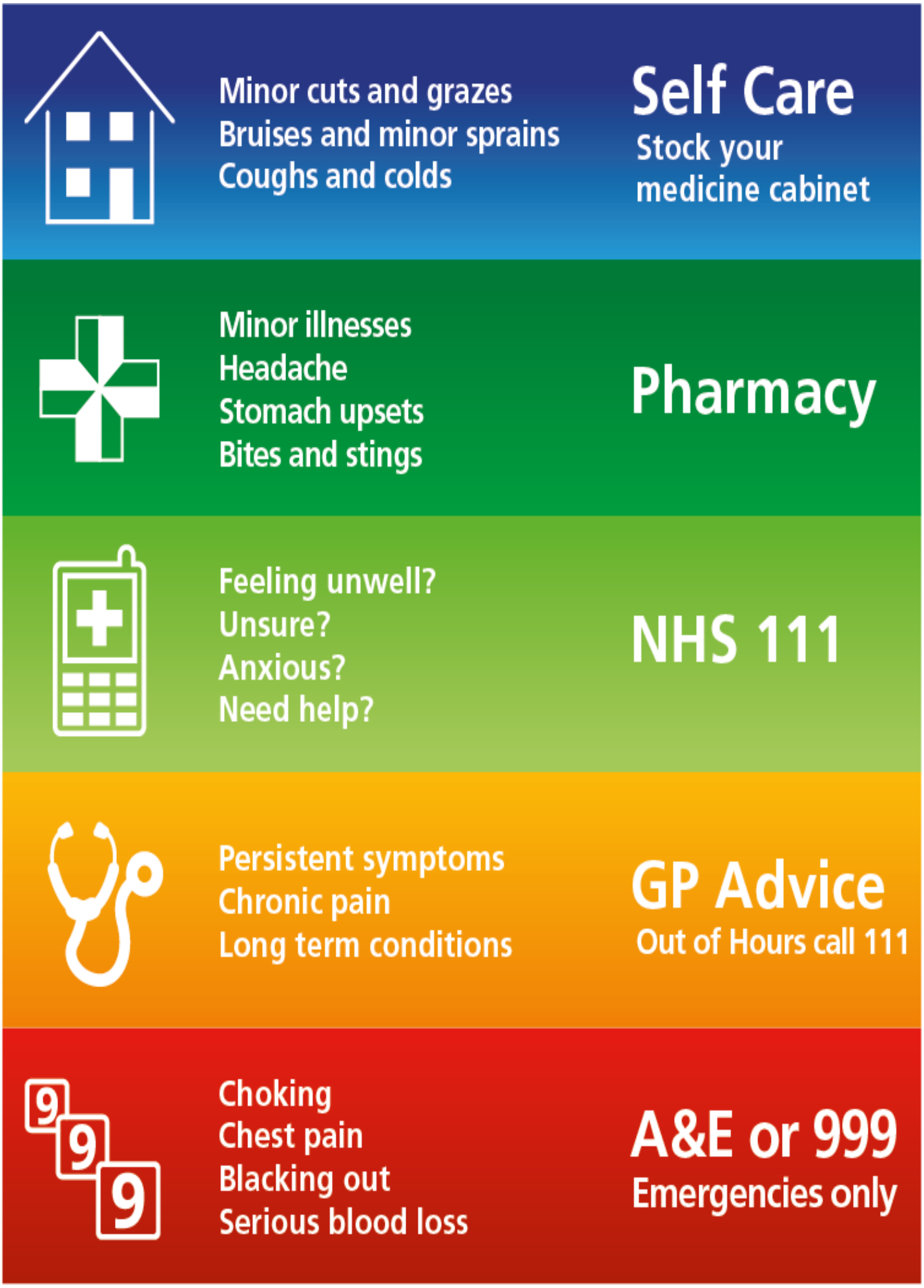
If you're a parent or carer or work with children and young people, our workshops will help you understand more about their sensory needs. We'll offer lots of simple strategies and advice to help.

Scan me

Sign up on our website or scan the QR code:

Sensory Processing online workshops | Children Young People and Families Online Resource

Know where to go if you need medical advice



How to contact us

ChatHealth

Young people Text: 07312 263266

Parents/Carers Text: 07312 263194

Open 9am - 4:30pm Monday-Friday (excluding bank holidays)

Young people aged 11-19 can contact a member of the school nursing team by text message for confidential, anonymous help and advice.

We can offer advice and support on many topics like:

- Sleep
- Low mood
- Bullying
- Self-harm
- Body changes
- Healthy eating
- Drugs, alcohol and smoking/vaping
- Anxiety and stress
- Emotional health and wellbeing
- Relationships

How to contact your School Nursing team

We are available Monday to Friday 9am-5pm.
(There is reduced cover during school holidays)

You can also use our website to make a referral to our service

cypf.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/school-nursing

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