

HELLO...

AND WELCOME TO OUR MARCH HEALTHIER MIND NEWSLETTER.

This month we highlight several Healthier Mind campaigns: World Sleep Day, Young People's Mental Health, University Mental Health Day, Self-Injury Awareness Day, and World Bipolar day.

Our Healthier Mind Newsletter focusses on all things mental health and wellbeing. You'll be able to find lots of hints, tips and resources to help you and your mental wellbeing.

Our Mindful Moment and Toolbox Talk this month gives you info on supporting mental health at work and how you can support yourself and others that may be struggling. Read on to find out more...

Harjeet Moore
Head of People



MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS: SUPPORTING MENTAL HEALTH AT WORK

For so many people, work is a major part of our lives. It's where we spend a lot of our time. Therefore, your job can have a big impact on your mental health and general wellbeing which in turn can affect your life outside of work too.

Sometimes we all have times where we feel overwhelmed, perhaps it's deadlines, conflict at work or difficulties in our personal lives.

At ESS, we believe in workplaces that support everyone to thrive and that is why we have developed a Wellness Action Plan to support you with your mental health at work.



WELLNESS ACTION PLAN

Supporting your mental health and wellbeing is at the top of our priorities.

We have developed a Wellness Action Plan, as a tool to help you identify what good wellbeing looks like for you, as well as what it looks like when things aren't so good.

The Wellness Action Plan is an easy, practical way of helping you to support your own mental health at work and, if you are a manager, helping you to support the mental health of your team members.

Everyone can complete a Wellness Action Plan; you don't need to have a mental health problem to feel the benefits. It just means that you already have practical steps in place to ensure you are supported when you aren't feeling great.

Please note all the information can be found [HERE](#).



WORLD SLEEP DAY

8th March

Sleep is an important part of our day—we spend about 1/3 of our lives asleep. Ensuring we get enough good quality sleep is as essential to human survival as food and water, especially if we want to live a long and healthy life. Sleep supports our ability to learn and store new memories, it helps us to process our emotions, as well as providing time for our body to rest and repair itself. But increasingly often, sleep is not being treated as a priority in our busy, modern lives. With some sleep experts concerned that we are entering a global sleep crisis.

The NHS states that currently 1 in 3 of us suffers from poor sleep. Sleep is very complex and there are many factors that can influence our sleep quantity and quality, though stress, screens and a heavy workload are often being held responsible for sleep disturbances.

Experts recommend getting between 7-9 hours of quality sleep per night to support good health, though it is important to note that we are all unique and this does vary from person to person, so it is recommended to try and discover how much sleep you need to feel your best and to stick to this as much as possible.

MARCH WELLNESS WEBINAR: THE IMPORTANCE OF SLEEP

Earlier this month we hosted a webinar discussing how sleep can impact our mental and physical health and providing a range of tips on how to improve our sleep, in aid of World Sleep Day on 18th March. If you missed it, you can click [HERE](#) to catch up on our @WeAreESS YouTube channel.



HAVING DISCUSSIONS WITH YOUNG PEOPLE ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

Young people's mental health and resilience is strengthened when they feel listened to and when their concerns are taken seriously. Everyone's experiences are different and young people today have different stresses than previous generations. Although we may not always fully understand what they are going through, we can support and educate young people about how better to cope with a particular situation that may cause them stress and how to build their resilience by equipping them with the necessary tools.

Information retrieved from: [Young people's resources - Mental Health UK \(mentalhealth-uk.org\)](https://www.mentalhealth-uk.org/young-people-resources)

THE IMPORTANCE OF CURIOSITY:



'Curiosity is one of the great secrets of happiness, it can conquer fear more than bravery.'

Curiosity is about being open to new possibilities, instead of being 'closed' to new ideas or things that don't chime with your current beliefs and values. Being curious when talking about mental health is important to help us see more options.

Curiosity in young people will accelerate learning and development and open up possibilities for the future. They might also be serious about what they can achieve and how successful they can be.

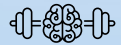
LEARNING TO USE RESILIENCE:



Resilience is very important in a young person's mental health. We need to gain an understanding of what it means and how we can build resilience.

A resilient young person will not simply 'bounce back' or 'forward' after a stressful situation. However, protective factors, such as having tools to support emotional resilience, can help them to work through situations and cope with difficult times in positive ways.

INNER CRITIC VS INNER COACH:



Human beings feel happier when they surround themselves with people who encourage them and positively challenge their negative thinking. Unfortunately, we typically do not apply this enough to our own thinking. Managing our inner critic and inner coach is important.

Our inner critic – just like you, young people have thoughts about themselves that aren't always helpful or based on the reality of their lives. We can be really harsh on ourselves – this isn't a major problem if it happens occasionally. However, over time self-critical comments can have a serious impact on our self-esteem.

Our inner coach – one of the best ways to build resilience is to work on building up our inner coach. Our inner coach can respond directly to the inner critic. For example, 'I am useless at everything!' would be from our inner critic, but our inner coach is able to offer a more balanced point of view such as 'I might struggle at times, but I am smart and able to do a lot of things.'

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RATIONAL COPING STATEMENTS (RCS):



Challenging these negative thoughts can be a very powerful tool for a young person. This can play a central role in resilience building and become something they can use for life.

Alongside taking a few deep breaths, RCSs help us to stay calm and to respond to situations, rather than react emotionally; they help to keep us grounded.

Rather than saying or doing something (in the spur of the moment) that we might regret – e.g. panicking, losing your temper, saying something you don't really believe – using these statements can help us take a step back and act in a more measured way.

Examples:

- Do what I can do from where I am now
- Progress, not perfection
- I can't change what's already happened, but I can choose what to do next
- I'll be okay
- These are just thoughts. I don't have to believe them
- Press the pause button

CELEBRATE SMALL STEPS:



Celebrating small wins encourages motivation. Research has found that if you record your progress, it helps to boost your confidence.

We should encourage celebration of small wins. Start this conversation by reminding them of the small wins they perhaps haven't noticed themselves.

When you accomplish something, it activates the reward centre of our brains, allowing us to feel a sense of pride. Specifically, dopamine is released and energises us with feelgood emotions and contributes to us feeling in control.

Top tips for celebrating small steps:

- **Ask your child to make their bed before they leave for school** – a simple task to complete in the morning leads to a nice burst of dopamine first thing in the morning.
- **The 'two-minute rule'** – if the task can be completed in 2 minutes, encourage them to do it. a small thing like this can help motivate and push them forward to accomplish much larger tasks.
- **Ten-minute creativity time** – taking time to reflect internally is linked with emotional wellbeing. Encourage your child to write, doodle, create a new outfit or new setting in their favourite video game.
- **The power of reward** – set a small reward for each day, having something to look forward to improves wellbeing. Maybe some time to watch their favourite TV show or going to the park after school with friends.

UNIVERSITY MENTAL HEALTH DAY

3rd March

University Mental Health Day is the biggest day of the year for student mental health. The day brings together the university community to make mental health a university-wide priority, in the hope of creating ongoing change to the future of student mental health. You can get involved on social media by using #UniMentalHealthDay.

The transition from school to university is a significant one, often involving leaving the family home, relocating to a new city and feeling as though we are starting over from scratch. With this can come changes in lifestyle such as having to buy and prepare our own meals, pressure to consume alcohol, more sporadic sleeping patterns and increased levels of stress. All of this change can have a huge impact on our mental and physical health.

Here are some signs to look out for which may indicate that a student is struggling with their mental health:



Social isolation and withdrawal



Signs of excessive alcohol or drug use



Not attending class for a prolonged period of time



Significant change in appetite or weight



Consistently failing to meet deadlines



Financial issues



Significant change in character for prolonged periods

It's also important to note that some students who are struggling with their mental health may not display any of these signs but this doesn't mean that they don't also need support.

When we are worried about someone's mental health, it can be hard to know what to say and when to say it. Fortunately, there are lots of resources available to help. Student Minds is the UK's student mental health charity who provide helpful resources to support students and loved ones who may be concerned about mental health. For more information and support around student mental health, please see our signposting section at the end of this newsletter.



SELF-INJURY AWARENESS DAY

1st March

Self-Injury Awareness Day (SIAD) is an international event which aims to raise awareness about self-injury and self-harm. Many different charities and organisations take part each year to raise awareness to banish judgement and fear by increasing understanding and empathy around the topic. SIAD is known for encouraging individuals struggling with self-injury tendencies to open up about their experiences and seek support.

WHAT IS SELF-HARM?

Self-harm is essentially the opposite of looking after yourself. It can include restriction of food, drug and alcohol abuse and intentionally putting yourself into risky situations. People who self-harm may also have thoughts of suicide, so it is really important to seek help.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SELF-HARM?

Anyone may self-harm. If someone is struggling to manage difficult situations and doesn't feel like they have the support they need, they could fall into unhealthy coping strategies, such as self-harm.

HOW TO HELP IF YOU SUSPECT SOMEONE YOU KNOW MAY BE SELF-HARMING?

It's important to approach the subject with care and understanding. It can be very helpful to let the person know that you support them and that they are not alone. You can encourage them to speak to someone they trust or a trained professional on a self-harm website or helpline. Try to avoid forcing them to act or suggesting that they are attention seeking as this could prevent them from reaching out for help.

For more information on self-harm and appropriate support options, please see our signposting section at the end of the newsletter.



WORLD BIPOLAR DAY

30th March

World Bipolar day happens each year with the aim to improve understanding, education and reduce the stigma of bipolar disorders. Bipolar is a serious mental illness that affect over 1 million people in the UK. The disorder affects a person's mood, which can change from depression (feeling very low and lethargic) and mania (feeling very high and overactive). Unlike typical mood swings, each episode can last for weeks at a time, having a huge impact on the person's life.

Unfortunately, there is still considerable stigma around having mental health issues, which can cause individuals to feel ashamed and to not seek out the treatment or support they need to manage their symptoms.

To support World Bipolar Day this year, we have included some tips on how we can all help to reduce the stigma of Bipolar disorder in our daily lives:

1. Avoid making assumptions about people who have Bipolar disorder – The media often portrays people with Bipolar as being unpredictable, unable to work or maintain steady relationships but this is simply not the case. The odds are that we all know at least one person with bipolar disorder, and we probably have no idea.

2. Refrain from joking that someone is 'Bipolar' – when their mood changes or if they keep changing their mind. Professionals urge that this is simplistic and not accurate of the disorder, with the joke further perpetuating the stigma and misconceptions around bipolar disorder.

3. Be mindful of the language you use- Research suggests that using person-first language when discussing living with a mental illness is much more empowering e.g. "They have a diagnosis of bipolar disorder" instead of "They are bipolar" as a person's diagnosis does not define them.

This year Bipolar UK, the charity dedicated to empowering individuals and families affected by bipolar, are urging members of the public across the UK to use social media to help share information and get the event's hashtags trending: **#WorldBipolarDay**
#LetsTalkBipolar

For more information and support for bipolar disorder, please see our signposting section at the end of the newsletter.

SIGNPOSTING INFORMATION

For more information including resources and blog articles on supporting mental health at work, please head to the **Mental Health at Work website**

To learn more about the emotional and physical symptoms of self-harm, visit: **How to help someone else - NHS**

If you or a young person you know is struggling with self-harm or thoughts of suicide, you can contact HOPELINEUK for support and advice:

Call: 0800 068 4141

Text: 07860 039 967

Email: pat@papyrus-uk.org

9am – midnight every day.

For more support and information about Bipolar disorder, please head to: **bipolaruk.org**

If you would like to find out more about supporting student mental health, StudentMinds have lots of resources and advice for students and concerned love ones on their website: **studentminds.org.uk**

The charity have also created Student Space, a safe space online where students can access direct support via phone, text, email or webchat, explore tips, hear stories from other students and find out what support is available at their university. For more Information, head to:

studentspace.org.uk

MENTAL HEALTH AT WORK COMMITMENT

ESS has signed up to the **Mental Health at Work Commitment** for employers who want to lead the way, drive change and declare publicly that mental health is a priority. The **six standards** making up the commitment are shown below.

Head over to the [HSE Website](#) to find out more.

1

Prioritise mental health in the workplace by developing and delivering a systematic programme of activity

2

Proactively ensure work design and organisational culture drive positive mental health outcomes

3

Promote an open culture around mental health

The six standards

4

Increase organisational confidence and capability

5

Provide mental health tools and support

6

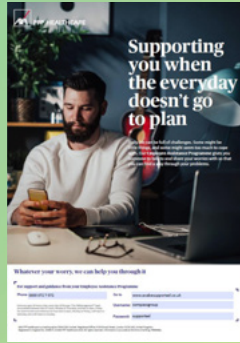
Increase transparency and accountability through internal and external reporting

**MENTAL
HEALTH
AT WORK**



EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME

Please click on the image to the right to see a reminder of the **Employee Assistance Programme** we currently have in place.



ASK YOUR MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID SPECIALIST

HEALTHIER MIND

If you're interested in finding out more about Mental Health First Aider training send us an email.

We are qualified in Mental Health First Aid.



HARJEET MOORE
HEAD OF PEOPLE
ESS



EVAN JUDGE
SENIOR HSE MANAGER
DEFENCE AND
GOVERNMENT SERVICES



ALLAN ERRINGTON
HSEQ MANAGER
OFFSHORE

If you have any questions, or ideas on how we can improve how we support our people, please get in touch with any one of us directly.

If you need to seek support in mental health issues, please contact: **harjeet.moore@compass-group.co.uk** or on **07971 096905**

Don't forget your Wellness Team are also here to support you and are all trained in Mental Health First Aid. Ask them any health and wellbeing questions or raise any concerns. You can also book one of their tailored sessions to include mindfulness.

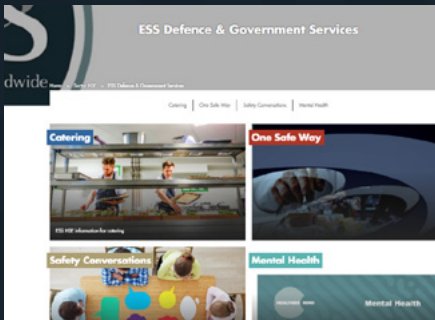
Get in touch with Harjeet by scanning the QR code



MENTAL HEALTH ON THE HSE WEBSITE

Click [HERE](#) to get to the Mental Health section! – make sure you're logged into Compass Connect.

You can find all our toolbox talks and 'how to's' including 'how to sleep better', 'how to manage and reduce stress' and 'how to support mental health at work'...



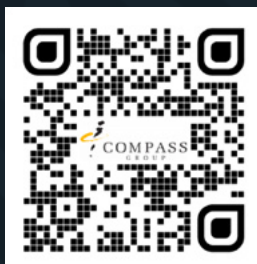
MINDFUL MOMENTS

Have you seen this month's Mindful Moments Toolbox Talk? This month we're discussing staying mentally well at work. Drop us an email at ess.wellness@compass-group.co.uk if you'd like a copy sent directly to your email inbox each month.



YOU MATTER

As a reminder, we have some great resources through our YOU matter campaign which can be found on the learning portal. Click [HERE](#) to visit the You Matter Portal or scan the QR code below.



EVAN TALKS

Senior HSE Manager, **Evan Judge**, launched his own podcast, Evan Talks, in 2019.

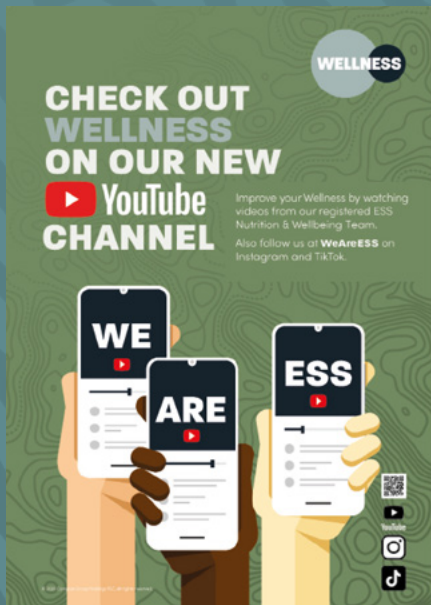
If you would like to hear more about Evan's own journey with mental health or listen to other stories of real people working through their own journeys, visit the podcast website [HERE](#) or search Evan Talks on your preferred podcast provider platform.



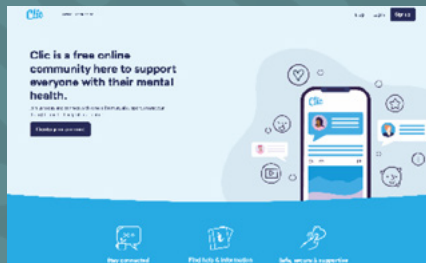
WELLNESS RESOURCES

Our Nutrition and Wellbeing Team create monthly resources to help support your overall health and wellbeing relating to national and international initiatives.

Email ess.wellness@compass-group.co.uk to sign up for their monthly newsletters, find out about their monthly wellness webinars and Q&A surgery's. You can also find them across social media, search WeAreESS on YouTube and Instagram.



CLIC ADULTS MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT



Clic is a free online community to support adults with their mental health. Clic's online chat room is there to connect people with others on the things that matter to them, wherever they are. Members can access a host of mental health information, tools, tips and resources to help people help themselves, as well as their carers, family and friends.

Clic is there for anyone 24/7 and is moderated so that anyone can find the support they need in a safe environment.