

March 2024  
2nd EDITION



HSC Northern Health  
and Social Care Trust

# RISE Higher

RISE NI (NHSCT) KS2 NEWSLETTER

Welcome back! This is the second edition of the RISE NI NHSCT Key Stage 2 newsletter! We welcome you back and hope you enjoyed our last edition of this newsletter. This newsletter aims to bring some insight into how to support children who are in Key Stage 2 (Primary 5, 6 and 7)! This edition of RISE Higher will focus on what you as parents/carers/families can do to promote good social, emotional and mental wellbeing. We hope you find some great tips, strategies and advice to try at home with your children!  
But first....

## A REMINDER OF WHAT WE DO...

RISE NI stands for the Regional Integrated Support for Education (RISE) NI. We work in mainstream primary schools in the Northern Health & Social Care Trust (NHSCT) area to support staff and children from Key Stage 2 (Primary 5, 6 & 7) in the following areas:

Social,  
Emotional  
and/or  
Behavioural

Speech,  
Language  
and  
Communication

Sensory  
Processing,  
Fine Motor and  
Visual  
Perception

RISE NI has received some additional funding to pilot supports into Key Stage 2 (Years 5, 6 & 7). The focus of these supports is on children's social, emotional and mental health needs.



## FOR PARENTS/CARERS...

The KS2 RISE NI Parent Website can be accessed as follows:

<https://view.pagetiger.com/RISENI/parents>

On the website you'll find lots of useful information, leaflets, video demonstrations and training opportunities. Please check it out...especially the Key Stage 2 training, advice and resources!

Take time to go through this using the QR or link provided!



This newsletter is going to provide support on how to support children in regard to the following:

- Anxiety
- Sleep
- Breathing and Relaxation Techniques
- The Importance of Physical Movement
- Top Tips in regard to Gaming and Online Usage



## WHAT IS ANXIETY?

Anxiety is the feeling of fear, worry and uneasiness. It can present emotionally, mentally and physically throughout our bodies in many ways. According to the Youth Wellbeing Prevalence Survey (2020), **1 in 8 children** within Northern Ireland meet the criteria of anxiety disorders. Anxiety disorders can impact children accessing the curriculum.

Anxiety can look very different in different children - some children may feel fear and worry, whilst others may present as angry and irritable. Anxiety can impact sleep, can present physically in stomach ache and headaches and can be very easily missed due to children internalising their feelings.

## SLEEP



Sleep is vital for the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of everyone - children and adults both. Sleeping restores and repairs our brains and allows us to become the best version of ourselves on a daily basis. Children who do not gain a sufficient amount of sleep are more likely to:

- Lack in the ability to attend and concentrate
- Not meet their full potential
- Feel restless or agitated
- Have a reduced immune system and much more!!

The amount of sleep needed is dependent on the child's age.

Age	Recommended amount of sleep
6 years	10 hours 45 minutes
7 years	10 hours 30 minutes
8 years	10 hours 15 minutes
9 years	10 hours
10 years	9 hours 45 minutes
11 years	9 hours 30 minutes
12 years	9 hours 15 minutes
13 years	9 hours 15 minutes
14-16 years	9 hours

Action for Children provided this table to ensure you know how much sleep your child should be getting.

### RELAXING BEFORE BED

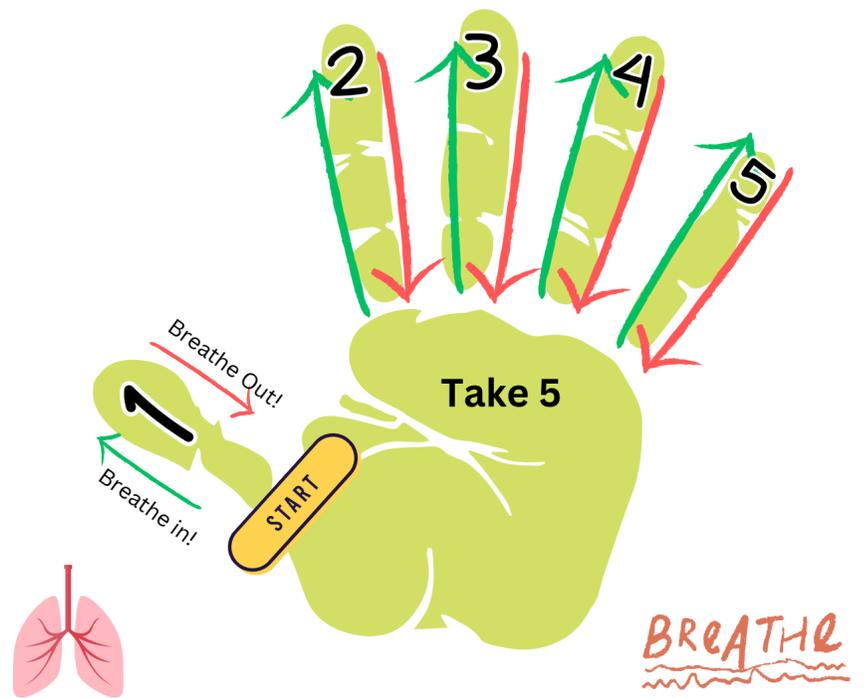
Below are some ideas of how you can encourage your child to relax and unwind before bed.

- Take a hot bath
- Set aside worry talk time earlier in the day and try not discuss worries and fears closer to bedtime.
- Placing a warm cloth on your child's face and take part in moisturising their skin after.
- Keeping the bedroom light dimmed.
- Read quietly or listen to slow and relaxing music.
- Mindfulness and breathing can help to relax, unwind and settle before bed.
- Relaxing our muscles - direct your child to tense certain parts of their bodies and then tell them to relax counting down from 5, 4, 3, 2, 1.



### TAKE 5 BREATHING TECHNIQUE

Place your pointer finger from your opposite hand at the base of your thumb, follow your thumb up to the top, breathing in through your nose and then down the other side breathing out through your mouth. Continue this for your whole hand!



“Sleep is the **golden** chain that ties health and our bodies together!”

Thomas Dekker

Let's get into healthy sleeping routines!



## YOGA STRETCHES

Yoga helps people to relax and unwind, slowing their breath and focusing on the moment.



**The Cobra** - Get your child to lie on their stomach. Get them to place their hands below their shoulders and then push up to stretch their back. Hold this position for 1, 2, 3 and then lower themselves back to their stomach. repeat several times.



**The Bridge** - Get your child to lie on their back. Hands by their sides, once they are ready get them to lift their hips near the sky! Hold their hips up for a count of 1, 2, 3 and then lower their hips. Repeat several times.



## THE IMPORTANCE OF PHYSICAL MOVEMENT

Physical exercise is known to have a positive impact on mental health. It also supports better physical health and there are benefits to academic performance. According to a recent study only 38% of children within Northern Ireland are getting the appropriate amount of physical activity per day. The NHS note that young people between the ages of 5-18 years old should be participating in 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity per day each week.



### IDEAS:



A family walk, going to the play park, running in the garden, swimming, dancing, YouTube - online dance/children's exercise videos, skipping, making a homemade exercise circuit.

## MINDFULNESS AND BREATHING

Mindfulness can help to reduce stress, anxiety and worry. Mindfulness is the ability to pay attention to what is happening inside us and outside us. Mindfulness is connecting to our bodies and understanding the experiences we feel.

**TASK:** Ask your child to lie on their bed or somewhere comfortable. You can then play a mindful listening track from YouTube - Cosmic Kids. This is a link to one (there are others available):

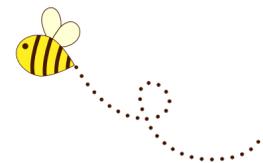
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m-CYBzxulSM>

### BUMBLEBEE BREATHING TASK:

This type of breathing involves humming which is known to be calming, grounding and soothing.

#### How to do Bumble Bee Breathing...

- Sit in a comfortable position
- Rub your hands together
- Breathe in through your nose and reach your arms as high as they will go.
- Audibly breathe out through your mouth making a humming sound and bring your arms back to your side.
- Repeat this several times.

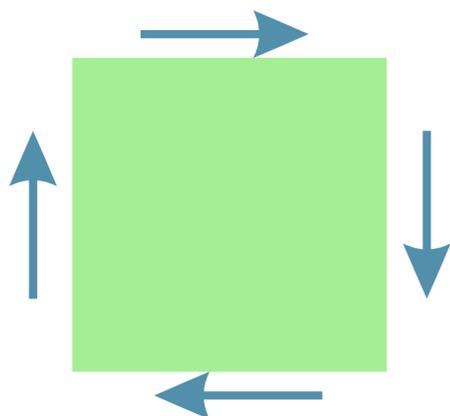


### SQUARE BREATHING TASK:

Deep breathing is the most common practice used to reduce stress and anxiety.

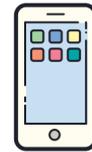
#### How to do Square Breathing...

- Look for a comfortable place to lie down on your back.
- You can draw a square in the air while breathing or do it in your mind.
- Breathe in through your nose for a count of 4 - 1, 2, 3, 4
- And breathe out for a count of 4 via your mouth - 1, 2, 3, 4
- Repeat this making a square.





## 5 TOP TIPS TO SUPPORT HEALTHY GAMING OR ONLINE USAGE



### Set Boundaries

- Find a communal area for your child to play on their game or phone.
- Set time restrictions or have a routine in place which allows for a regulated time on their device.
- Make sure to check what they are using and if it is age appropriate.



### Talk about Safety



- Take time to discuss with your child the safety issues surrounding the use of online gaming or social media.
- Discuss with them various scenarios and ensure they know they can always discuss any concerns with you.
- Make sure you check what online features they are using and monitor this use regularly.



### Take Time Away from the Screen

- Take time outside or doing something other than gaming or being online for example, go for a walk or play a game in reality e.g. eye spy or a card game.
- Ensure your child has their meals away from the screen and encourage them to have family discussions in person.
- Turn off devices 1hr before going to sleep to allow time to regulate and get ready to sleep.



### Be Open

- Be open with your child, discuss what they use their online device for, be open to discussing issues that may arise.
- Make them aware of various dangers.
- Make time to talk to your child away from the screen to see how they are managing daily in the real world.



### Speech, Language and Communication and Gaming/Online Usage



- Excessive gaming can impact a child's ability to learn and develop their knowledge in relation to social communication e.g. reading facial expressions, body language and having the ability to turn take.
  - Language development can be reduced due to excessive screen time as children have less effective interactions with their caregivers.
- Therefore it is so important to take time to play and interact with your child away from a screen or online world.

### ✉ EMAIL US:

If you have any comments on the content of this newsletter or indeed any queries, please send an email to us at [riseni.nhsct@northerntrust.hscni.net](mailto:riseni.nhsct@northerntrust.hscni.net)