

THINGS TO DO

A weekly newsletter from SEND Supported



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We are acutely aware of the challenging circumstances schools, children, young people and their families have had to endure over the past few months. Jordan Day, SEND Learning Support Assistant and autistic adult, talks about his role in school, supporting children during the pandemic and ways he will be helping with their return to school. You can watch his interview with Tess Moreton from Act for Autism [here](#)

“During the pandemic I have continued to support pupils with Special Educational Needs, ensuring continuity at this challenging time. Moving forward to the new academic year, our hope is that we will all be able to settle into a new norm and reassuring structure ensuring as far as possible that our children feel safe and secure.”

Warmest wishes, Joanna and team



EMOTIONAL WELLBEING - Kate Griffiths

Normally at this time of year students are thinking about transitioning either from primary to secondary school or just from one year group or teacher to the next. This has obviously been much more challenging this year but schools that I have been working with have been trying to do their best for their current and prospective pupils. A useful general resource that pupils could watch at home or in school is Young Minds Film '[Transitioning to Secondary School](#)'. Also useful from the same organisation is a [Top Tips Resource](#) for parents who want to support their children with the transition process.

Young minds have also teamed up with The Beano to create a [Wellbeing Activities Calendar](#) which I think could be really useful over the upcoming holidays. It's designed to help the whole family take 5 minutes a day to do an activity that will boost wellbeing and look after everybody's mental health. The activities may be things you can do virtually with family or friends and can also be a great way for parents to provide a space to check in with their children during this time. You can also share pictures of you completing the activities using the hashtag #BeanoFunFam and tag @YoungMindsUK and @BeanoOfficial on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram.



I know colouring and Mindfulness has been included in previous newsletters but I came across some beautiful [Mindfulness Colouring](#) pages that may appeal to older students. They are perfect for those times that will come up over the long summer holidays when children can just sit and relax (hopefully in the sunshine) and spend a bit of time with their thoughts.

For those who have kept up with Dr Tina Rae's [CPD Coffee Time sessions](#) the most recent one is very timely, focusing on reflection and supporting staff who work with young children to reflect on their practice and look at how it has changed and evolved particularly over the past term and what we can learn and take from our experiences.

LEARNING - Clair Cole



The National Literacy Trust (NLT) continues to provide some great resources and advice. They have posted the findings from their **Annual Literacy Survey** which suggests that children and young people have been listening to audiobooks and engaging in creative writing more during lockdown.

Their research shows that [Audiobooks](#) have the potential to be a key resource for children's literacy and wellbeing. Nearly a quarter of children and young people have listened to audiobooks more during lockdown than they did before and a third said that audiobooks have helped them to feel better. Also, half of children and young people said that listening to audiobooks got them more interested in reading and 2 in 5 said that listening to audiobooks made them more interested in writing. Go to [THINGS TO DO Issue 16 - RESOURCES](#) for the NLT's '**Top tips for using audiobooks in the classroom**' and '**Sharing audiobooks as a family**' information sheets.

They also report that 1 in 5 children have been [Writing more](#) in their free time during lockdown, with children saying that it has given them more time and space to think, inspired their writing and made more digital writing formats available to them. 2 in 5 children said writing makes them feel better, particularly writing poetry.

If you want inspiration, watch their video of the poem '[Dear Key Workers](#)' written and performed by more than 80 children from around the world, as part of Laura Mucha's digital poetry workshops. Then watch Laura explain how to write your own poem. Or watch a film on how to write a limerick and find their limerick resource sheet in our Issue 16 resource folder.



AUTISM - Jules McLean

New Coronavirus Symbols from Widgit:

In response to the coronavirus outbreak, Widgit have created an additional 51 symbols to help you create resources around the subject. These symbols are now live and available to use in Widgit Online. InPrint 3 and SymWriter 2 users can download the latest software updates free [Coronavirus Widgit Symbols](#)



Transitioning to a new phase of school can be a difficult time under normal circumstances, but in this pandemic, the change may bring up more complex emotions than usual. We know that there is a lot of concern about what the new school year may bring. Mentally Healthy Schools-[Coronavirus-Toolkit-Managing-Transition](#) have pulled together lots of fantastic resources for teachers, parents and carers, to help prepare children for the change and help them manage and understand their emotions at this time. They have split the toolkit into the general managing of transitions, transition to primary and transition to secondary, to help people more easily find the resources required.



FAMILY & CHILDREN AT HOME - Clare Viney

[Warwickshire County Council](#) has created a leaflet to provide a simple guide to help parents get their children school ready before they start in September. Children are all different and make progress at different rates, so if your child can't do all these things, your child's school or your health visitor can advise you further.

The [Education Endowment Fund](#) have developed some resources for supporting families with home routines and valuable learning opportunities, such as shared reading.

The [Mentally Healthy Schools](#) team at the Anna Freud Centre have pulled together lots of fantastic resources for teachers, parents and carers in their latest toolkit aimed at helping to prepare children for change. The resources will help many children manage and understand their emotions at a time when they are transitioning to a new phase in their schooling, may that be a new year group or a new school.

Warwickshire Educational Psychology Service have developed a series of webinars for secondary school students, parents/carers and staff to help support emotional wellbeing through ACT (Acceptance and Commitment Therapy). They have been available from 22nd June, For further details download the information sheet from [THINGS TO DO Issue 16 - RESOURCES](#).



Heart-warming good news stories

This week 73 year-old [Dic Evans](#) has completed his lockdown challenge of running 1000 miles! He has so far raised £6000 for the Bronlais Hospital in Aberystwyth.



Also, this past weekend saw the NHS celebrate 72 years since it was formed back in 1948, a milestone marked particularly by the people of [Cleobury Mortimer](#) who knitted more than 130 flowers and pompoms to create this very special NHS rainbow.

If you would like to connect with other families of children or young people with SEND, please email enquiries@sensupported.com to join the last online Parent 'Drop-in' of this school year, which will be 10.00 am – 11.00 am. on Friday 10th July.



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