

# Millhouse News

29<sup>th</sup> January 2021



Email: [admin@millhouse.essex.sch.uk](mailto:admin@millhouse.essex.sch.uk)

Tel: 01268 543584

As you may have heard earlier in the week, the Government issued an update on re-opening schools. They have said that the earliest schools will reopen will be 8<sup>th</sup> March. This will only happen if the number of cases has dropped significantly and they have met their target for the number of vaccinations given. Therefore, this is not a confirmed date, only the earliest we will reopen – it may be later than this if the numbers are not where the Government want them. As soon as we have any further information we will let you know.

Next week is Children's Mental Health Week, so this week's newsletter will focus on mental wellbeing. We know it is tough for everyone at the moment so we hope the ideas and information that follow will help you and your children feel better and support you in ensuring everyone is mentally healthy.

## Home Learning

Next Thursday (4<sup>th</sup> February) we will be having a 'Screen Break' day. On this day, we are asking the children to take a break from all screens and choose to do other activities instead. We have sent home a letter that includes a table with a range of different activities and would like the children to choose one from each section if possible. However, please feel free to plan your own activities away from a screen. There will be no Google Class Meet on this day but we would like the children to share what they have done with their class on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> February.

Getting away from our screens is vital for our wellbeing and helps to develop better communication and social skills, helps to improve our quality of sleep and develops creativity. We hope you all enjoy a screen free day!

## SCREEN BREAK DAY – THURSDAY 4<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY – 50 ACTIVITIES

	Build the tallest tower	Build a den in your house or garden	Make a boat to float in your bath or sink	Create a large piece of art	Make a sock puppet	Make your own healthy lunch	Paint a pebble	Draw a picture on a cereal box and cut it to make a jigsaw	Create a board game to play with your family	Bake and decorate a cake
	Play Kim's Game (memory game with a tray of objects)	Learn to read/spell 5 new words	Learn some words in another language	Learn some sign language	Learn a magic trick	Write a rap song	Draw your family and any pets you have	Learn to juggle	Learn to tie a tie	Practice a musical instrument
	Find a picture in a book you never noticed before	Read a recipe or instructions to complete an activity	Read a poem	How many book titles can you read in 1 minute? Can you improve?	Turn your favourite story into a comic book	Read a description from a book and create your own illustration	Read to someone else in your family for THEIR enjoyment	Time how many words you can read in 1 minute. Can you improve?	Read someone else's favourite book	Begin to read your favourite book again
	Have a disco with your family and dance to your favourite tunes	Go on a safe walk with a family member	Make an obstacle course inside or out	Make up a fitness workout – Joe Wicks style	Touch every wall in your home	Take 200 steps around the house	Walk up and down the stairs 10 times	Do 50 star jumps	Throw and catch a ball as many times as you can without dropping it	Sit down on the floor and stand up straight again 20 times
	Draw a picture for someone	Make a phone call to a relative	Write a card or letter to someone to say "hello"	Tidy your room	Safely, make a drink or snack for someone in your family	Fold your clothes	Write a card or letter to someone to say "thank you"	Teach someone else how to do something	Hoover a room in your house (ask a parent first)	Do the washing up

## Get Creative!

One of our Core Values is 'Creativity'. This can be interpreted in different ways – from thinking creatively when solving problems or being creative with a piece of art work. Doing something creative supports our wellbeing by helping us to be mindful, uses a different part of our brain so creates more connections, making our brains work better and also helps to produce the 'feel-good' chemicals in our brains that are so important for positive mental health.

### Sewing Bee

If your child is interested in sewing, making things from textiles such as puppets, clothes, cushions etc, you can get free fabric off cuts from a company called 'Contrado'. Visit <https://www.contrado.co.uk/upholstery-fabric-remnants> to select the amount you would like and you only pay for the postage (around £4 for 5kg of remnants).

You could use the off cuts to make a collage or a patchwork cover or bunting to decorate a bedroom. We would love to see pictures of anything your child makes!

### Musical Time!

We know a lot of our children enjoy singing and it is one thing that Mrs Logan and Mrs Haken have missed this year. Not hearing the children sing in assemblies or singing with the choir and going to the O2 concert has been horrible! However, that doesn't mean that we can't still sing!

Music and singing has been proven to help improve our mental health (don't pretend you haven't belted out a power ballad or musical number in the shower or around the house!). Young Voices, who our choir are part of, are doing live sessions every Thursday at 11am on their Facebook Page. You can also join in with previous sessions on the Young Voices YouTube channel.

Young Voices have also been involved with a charity single alongside Billy Ocean, Jolanda Brown and Ruti. Last year as part of the Young Voices concerts the choir sang 'Lovely Day' by Bill Withers. This has now been re-mixed and released to support Children's Mental Health Week for the charity 'Place 2 Be'. The song can be downloaded from most streaming platforms.

We will also be taking part in the YV Biggest Sing on 15<sup>th</sup> June, where the children will join hundreds of thousands of other children from around the world to sing the song alongside Billy Ocean to try and break the record of the most people performing the song at the same time. So download it, get practising and get ready to join in on 15<sup>th</sup> June!

## Eating well

Part of making sure we are all mentally healthy is eating well. Food is our body's fuel and what we eat has a massive impact on how we feel physically and mentally. If we don't eat healthily, our brain sends messages around our body to shut certain parts down or make others work harder. This can lead to physical illnesses but also can put us into 'survival' mode (fight, flight or freeze) and it produces chemicals such as cortisol and adrenaline which in high amounts can cause or increase stress and anxiety.

Change for Life has produced ideas and recipes for easy and healthy lunch meals that can be produced on a budget.

<https://www.nhs.uk/change4life/recipes/lunch/cheap-lockdown-lunch-ideas>

## Wellbeing & Support

Place 2 Be is a charity which supports children's mental health. Every year they lead 'Children's Mental Health Week'. This year the theme is 'Express Yourself'. This is about expressing feelings, understanding our emotions and knowing it is ok to talk about how we are feeling.

Their website has lots of different ideas for activities and ways that we can support young people.

<https://www.place2be.org.uk/our-services/parents-and-carers/coronavirus-wellbeing-activity-ideas-for-families/> has ideas from different charities and organisations such as the RHS, Book Trust and BAFTA that can be enjoyed by the whole family during these challenging times.

<https://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk/parents-and-carers/> has ideas for how you can help children to express themselves.

### Other support

If you are worried about your child's mental health or emotional wellbeing the following websites and organisations are a useful reference point:

Young Minds <https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/for-parents/>

NHS <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/talking-to-children-about-feelings/>

Anna Freud Centre <https://www.annafreud.org/parents-and-carers/>

Remember... if you are worried about a child and not sure what to do, please contact Mrs Haken using the school email address ([admin@millhouse.essex.sch.uk](mailto:admin@millhouse.essex.sch.uk))