



### What is mental health?

Mental health is about how we think, how we feel and how we behave. Having good mental health means that you are able to make the most of your life, reach your potential and cope with the ups and downs of life.



### Communicate any concerns with school

If you have any worries or concerns about your child's emotional behaviour or wellbeing, then please let school know. There will be things that we can do to help and support you.

We would love to know if this newsletter is useful to you or if there are other support ideas you might need.

Please let us know by speaking to a member of SLT or by emailing the school at [office@johnperry.bardaglea.org.uk](mailto:office@johnperry.bardaglea.org.uk)



## The Negative Effects of News and How to Protect Your Mental Health

**News flash: the news may not be the best thing for your mental health.**

For better or worse, staying informed about current events and the news is easier than ever. Between TV, social media, the internet, and more old-school news outlets, we are constantly bombarded with information. The 24-hour news cycle never stops.

According to a survey of 266 therapists conducted by Grow Therapy, almost all those who were polled (99.6%) said that news consumption can have a negative impact on mental health on some level. While staying informed is important, there's clearly a growing concern about the effects that the news may have on people's well-being.

Research shows that people are more likely to feel negatively affected by the news when it's personally relevant to them. For example, a person struggling financially may be more likely to have an intense visceral reaction to news about a rise in inflation.

Negative or worrying news puts you on high alert and results in physiological changes like an increased heart rate, increased blood pressure, and more rapid breathing. Cortisol, the stress hormone, is released as well. News fuels feelings of anxiety; anxiety may build up and you may become even more hyper-aware of negativity in the world. With all the depressing news out there, it's no surprise that recent research has linked news consumption with depression symptoms.

Whilst all of the above is true, the good news is that not everything currently happening in the world is necessarily bad, worrying or depressing. Unfortunately, 'happy news' hardly ever make headlines.

Have a look at the following websites if you – and your child!- would like to read news that should be celebrated and that can change our opinion on current affairs from negative to positive:

<https://www.behappyresources.co.uk/happy-news/>: fun weekly news leaflet for kids and teens, bringing you a round up of feel-good, funny, strange and uplifting news stories from around the world. Happy News is released every Wednesday to bring you a much-needed boost to the mid-week slump - and it's absolutely free! You can either subscribe or access the news leaflets by simply clicking on them.

<https://www.goodnewsnetwork.org/>: Since 1997, millions of people have turned to the Good News Network® as an antidote to the barrage of negativity experienced in the mainstream media. Because of its long history, staying power, and public trust, GNN is number 1 on Google for good news.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/topics/cx2pk70323et>: A collection of uplifting stories published on the BBC website.



## Can the Start of Spring Impact Your Mental Health?

It's fairly well-known that as the seasons change from autumn to winter, many people experience the winter blues or even [seasonal affective disorder](#) (seasonal depression). But what about the much anticipated and welcome shift from winter to spring? If you find yourself frustrated by mental health challenges like depression, anxiety, mania, and even suicidal ideation during spring, know that there are legitimate reasons.

The nature of the shift from winter to spring can disrupt mental health in several ways:

- **Changing light:** Our circadian rhythms change with the increased length and intensity of sunlight, affecting sleep-wake cycles, energy, and mood. Studies have shown that both suicide rates and manic episodes of bipolar disorder peak during the spring season due to change in our circadian rhythm.
- **Differing routines:** While it can be refreshing to be able to spend more time outdoors and do different activities, it's still a change our minds and bodies must adjust to. A change in routine can cause or worsen anxiety and stress.
- **Expectations:** Often, we feel we should be happy and active because it's spring. The sight of other people enjoying the sunshine can make us hard on ourselves if we simply can't muster the energy or desire to do so, too. Imposing expectations on ourselves can worsen anxiety, depression and other mental health disorders.

The start of spring can indeed negatively impact mental health.

[Practising self-care](#) and even working with a mental health professional can help you through it.



## Barking and Dagenham access and assessment team (BDAAT)

DAAT is the assessment service for adults aged 18 to 65 that need to access community mental health services in Barking and Dagenham.

They provide an initial mental health assessment. Once assessed they will refer or signpost you to other mental health services or organisations or offer brief intervention for a time limited period.

If needed, they offer a:

- full assessment of mental health and social care needs
- access to a psychiatrist talking therapies and other psychological
- help advice and information
- crisis intervention
- psychiatric medication review
- and if appropriate self-guided support with social problems recovery and wellbeing approaches

They also provide:

- a single telephone number for anyone enquiring about mental health services in Barking and Dagenham
- urgent mental health assessment where needed and management of referrals to other specialist mental health services.

The team is made up of psychiatrists, community mental health nurses, mental health social workers, support time and recovery workers, occupational therapists.

### Contact Barking Community Hospital

Barking Community Hospital, Upney Lane, Barking, IG11 9LX

0300 555 1038

0300 555 1200

[NHS - Barking Access and Assessment Team](#)

[mhi.cas@nhs.net](mailto:mhi.cas@nhs.net)

**Barking &  
Dagenham**