

## The importance of breathing

The quickest way to calm ourselves when stressed is to slow our breathing. By slowing it down, we activate the body's parasympathetic nervous system, which reduces our heart rate, blood pressure and the adrenaline rush of the fight or flight response.

Diaphragmatic (sometimes called abdominal) breathing uses the diaphragm rather than chest muscles. This enables us to take nice relaxing deep breaths. Shallow (chest) breathing can actually add to our agitation.

Put one hand on your stomach and one on your upper chest. The hand on the stomach should be the one moving. If it isn't, deepen your inhalations until it does!

Once you have done this, simply take a nice slow deep breath in, feeling the air gently expand your lungs and tummy....hold it for a few seconds....then let it out as slowly as possible. Repeat 10 times. Notice the difference!

## Mindfulness

The apps below can be used for free. They use breathing techniques to develop mindfulness, a state of being able to observe thoughts without responding to them....it takes practice but helps our minds become calmer and us to feel less stressed and anxious.



STOP, BREATHE  
& THINK

## Top tips:

**Drink and eat well**—have enough water (2 litres or 8 glasses a day). Choose water/sugar-free squash rather than fizzy, sugary drinks or juice. Eat your (minimum!) 5 a day fruit and veg — fresh, frozen or tinned all counts.

For more advice on healthy eating, go to: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/the-eatwell-guide/>

**Keep moving**—regular exercise is as good for our mental as our physical health. Try to build it into your weekly routine. Walking is free and requires no fancy equipment. Take the stairs instead of the lift. Get off the bus a few stop early. Leave the car at home for short journeys.

Look here for more suggestions and at home workouts, or try the Couch25k: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/>

**Get a decent sleep**— try to have at least an hour screen-free before bed to help you switch off. Get organised for the next day, try a breathing exercise, do something relaxing; take a bath, read, whatever helps you wind down.

If sleep's a problem, read this: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/sleep-and-tiredness/>

**Phone someone** — have a catch up with a friend or a relative, or one of the helplines listed in this leaflet if you need extra support.

**Take some time** —remember the oxygen mask! You can only support others if you support yourself. Hobbies and interests allow us time to re-set, re-connect and lose ourselves. Whatever your hobby is, indulge it! And if you don't have one, what have you always wanted to try?

## CONTACT US

WELLBEING IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

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# Haggerston School

## HAGGERSTON SCHOOL SELF CARE GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

Haggerston School Safeguarding Team

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RESPONSIBILITY

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City & Hackney



Alliance

# HELPFUL RESOURCES

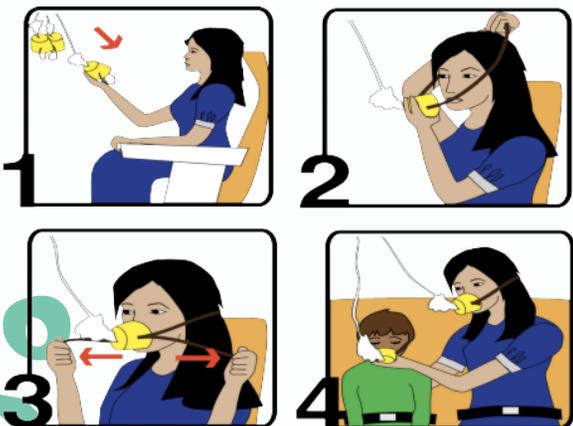
## SUPPORT FOR YOUR CHILD...AND YOU

At Haggerston School, we are committed to helping your child be the best version of themselves.

You may wish to take a look at the self care leaflet for students, as most of the online resources we have recommended have advice and support sections for parents and carers.

We also know that there will be times when you as a parent/carer will need support.

The idea to remember is that of the oxygen mask on the plane —we need to fit our own first, before helping others.



### 5 TO THRIVE

Five simple, free, evidence-based steps that can have a huge and positive impact on your overall mental health and wellbeing. <https://fivetothrive.net>



### ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

Provides resources, information and advice on the scientifically-proven steps we can all take to be happier. <https://www.actionforhappiness.org/>



### ADVICE IN HACKNEY

Advice relating to employment, debt, welfare benefits and housing for residents of Hackney. <http://www.hackneyadvice.org.uk/index.php>

ADVICE IN HACKNEY



### CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU (CAB)

The East End CAB offers online, phone and in person advice and support for a range of areas including benefits, legal matters and housing.



<http://www.eastendcab.org.uk/>

### GET SELF HELP

Website full of self-help advice, strategies and resources including a free online course based upon cognitive behavioural therapy. <https://www.getselfhelp.co.uk/>



### HACKNEY COUNCIL

All council services available online, including employment support via Hackney Works, information on local sports and parks, and cultural information.



<https://hackney.gov.uk/>

### HACKNEY COMMUNITY LAW CENTRE

Free legal advice relating to immigration, benefits, housing and employment. Very popular so may not have the capacity to see you immediately. Moved online due to the pandemic. <https://www.hclc.org.uk/>



### MONEY ADVICE SERVICE

Free independent advice on managing money and debts. Useful money saving tips and budget planners. <https://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en>



### MENTAL HEALTH FOUNDATION

Provides advice, support, information and tips on maintaining good mental health. <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/your-mental-health>



### MIND

Charity offering support, advice and campaigns to improve mental health.

<https://www.mind.org.uk/>

They also have an excellent local service offering groups, benefits advice and wellbeing support

<https://www.mindchwf.org.uk/our-services//>



### NOT FINE IN SCHOOL



Not Fine in School

NFIS provide parents with a safe space so that they feel part of a community who understand the issues they are facing and offer peer advice and empathy to each other.

<https://notfineinschool.co.uk/>

### PSYCHOLOGY TOOLS

The website is aimed at health care professionals but has an excellent self help section on common difficulties such as low mood, low self-esteem and anxiety. Also has a great self-help resource for coping with anxiety during the coronavirus pandemic.

<https://www.psychologytools.com/> PSYCHOLOGYTOOLS®

### SAMARITANS

Samaritans offer a safe place for you to talk any time you like, in your own way — about whatever's getting to you.

Call on 116 123 or go to <https://www.samaritans.org/>



They won't judge or tell you what to do, they'll listen.

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