

NEWS BULLETIN

**Riverside
College**
Widnes & Runcorn

**CRANTON
SIXTHFORM
COLLEGE**

WELLBEING

Welcome to Our Easter Wellbeing Newsletter

As spring begins to stretch its way across college, there's something undeniably uplifting about this time of year. The lighter evenings and first flowers remind us that new beginnings are possible even after the coldest seasons. Easter, in its broadest sense, is a celebration of renewal, a moment to pause, breathe, and consider how we want to move forward next with our own lives.

This year, some of us will be carrying more emotional weight than usual. With the ongoing conflict involving the US and Iran dominating headlines, it's completely natural to feel unsettled or anxious. Global events can make the world feel unpredictable, and that uncertainty can spill into our day-to-day lives, affecting concentration, sleep, and our general sense of calm. If you've found yourself feeling tense, distracted, or overwhelmed, you're far from alone.

In times like these, the idea of 'new beginnings' becomes even more meaningful. Fresh starts aren't about ignoring what's happening around us; they're about finding small, steady ways to ground ourselves when the world feels shaky. That might mean reconnecting with friends, setting gentle goals, or simply giving yourself permission to rest. Just as spring arrives slowly but surely, wellbeing grows through small, consistent acts of care.

This newsletter is here to offer a bit of lightness, reassurance, and practical support as we move into the new season together.

Samaritans


Free, confidential emotional support:

 116 123

 www.samaritans.org


Shout

Free, confidential 24/7 text messaging support:

 Text 'SHOUT' to 85258

Papyrus

Free confidential support if you are 35 and under and struggling with suicidal thoughts or are supporting someone who is.:

 0800 086 41 41

 www.papyrus-uk.org

NHS urgent mental health helpline

 111 Option 2

The AI Effect

The NSPCC has released a report, which explains how generative artificial intelligence is creating new risks for children and what needs to change to protect them. It describes how AI tools can be misused to harm or manipulate young people and calls for stronger safeguards from government and technology companies.

While AI is undeniably useful in many respects of our lives, it is essential that we keep up to date with its potential risks.

Generative AI refers to technology that can create new content such as images, videos, voices or text and it bring much advantage. However, NSPCC highlight that children and young people use these tools enthusiastically, which means they may encounter risks before safety measures are in place.

Their report identifies several risks. Offenders may use AI to groom children by creating convincing fake identities. AI generated images or deepfakes can be used to threaten or coerce children in cases of sexual extortion. Children may also be exposed to harmful or inappropriate content that AI systems generate or recommend. Realistic deepfakes, scams and misleading information can be used to manipulate or deceive them.

Polling shows that most people in the United Kingdom are concerned about these risks and want stronger protections for children.

The NSPCC recommends that government and technology companies take responsibility for child safety in AI development. Safety checks should be built into AI products before they are released. Child protection should be a legal requirement within AI regulation. Companies should design AI systems with children's safety in mind from the beginning.

Young people involved in the research recognise both the benefits and the dangers of AI. They want tools that are safe to use and systems that prevent harmful content from reaching them. It is great to hear that young people are driving change in their field.

You can read the full document here:

Viewing Generative AI and children's safety in the round | NSPCC Learning

How kids are actually using AI | BBC

War, huh (What is it good for?)

We'll let you finish the lyrics. Catchy right? Sadly, despite this song being written in 1969, the lyrics feel ever relevant. It is understandable to feel anxious when the news is filled with stories about war. Even when the conflict is far away, the constant flow of information can make it feel close and personal. You might find yourself checking updates more often than you want to, waiting for the next worrying development and wondering what it means for the future. The feeling can sit quietly in the background of your day, making ordinary moments feel heavier.

A lot of this anxiety comes from uncertainty. War creates questions that no one can answer quickly, and the mind often fills those gaps with fear. It is natural to imagine worst case scenarios or to feel unsettled when events seem too big to influence. Many people experience this kind of worry during times of global tension, even if they do not talk about it.

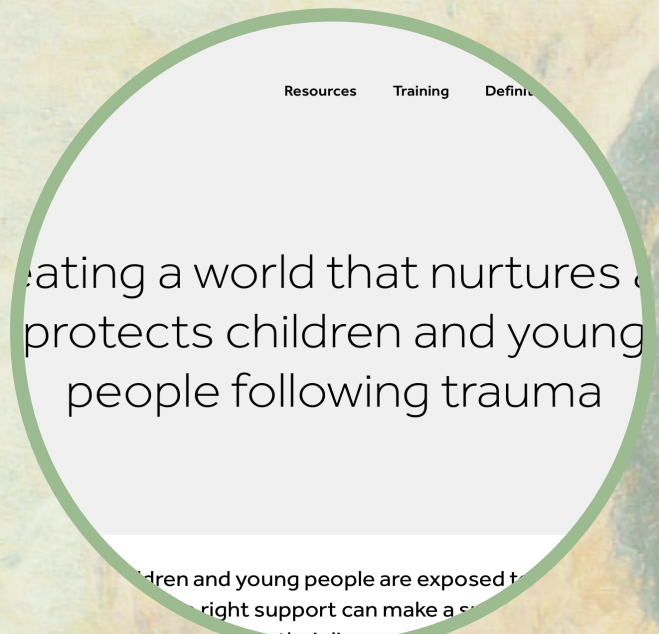
Feeling anxious about war does not mean you are overreacting. It means you care about safety, stability and the wellbeing of others. When the world feels overwhelming, it can help to focus on what steadies you, whether that is spending time with people you trust, taking breaks from the news or reminding yourself that fear does not predict the future. Even in uncertain times, moments of calm, connection and kindness still exist and deserve attention.



What to do if the conflict in

Parents  Support us

Mental Health Advice | The Conflict in the Middle East | YoungMinds



Resources Training Defin

Creating a world that nurtures and protects children and young people following trauma

Children and young people are exposed to...
Right support can make a significant difference to their lives.

Childhood Trauma, War and Conflict | UK Trauma Council

**DON'T BE AFRAID OF NEW BEGINNINGS.
DON'T SHY AWAY FROM NEW PEOPLE,
NEW ENERGY, AND NEW
SURROUNDINGS. EMBRACE NEW
CHANCES AT HAPPINESS.**

BILLY CHAPATA



There comes a moment when you realise that the version of yourself you have been carrying no longer fits the life you want to live. It is not a dramatic moment, not a sudden transformation, but a quiet awareness that something inside you is ready to shift. Working on yourself often begins there, in that small space between who you have been and who you are becoming.

Change can feel uncomfortable, especially when you are letting go of old habits, old fears or old stories you have told yourself for years. But growth rarely feels smooth. It asks you to be honest, patient and gentle with yourself. It asks you to show up even on the days when progress feels invisible. Every small step counts, even the ones no one else sees.

New beginnings are rarely loud. They start with simple choices. Choosing to try again. Choosing to believe you deserve better. Choosing to give yourself the same kindness you offer others. Over time, these choices build into something stronger, something steadier, something that feels like a life you can breathe in.

You do not have to have everything figured out to begin again. You only need the willingness to take one step forward, then another. The path will open as you walk it. And slowly, almost without noticing, you become someone who trusts their own direction, someone who knows that starting over is not a sign of failure but a sign of courage.

Student Spotlight

This edition's Student Spotlight features Sydney Caldwell, a fantastic Engineering student who has been at Riverside College since September 2025. She has been reflecting on the positive impact being at Riverside College has had on her life. At our college, the wellbeing of our students is paramount and while we have a Wellbeing Team, every member of our college community works together to create an environment in which our students can thrive. We are incredibly proud of the hard work Sydney has put into her college work and self-development.

"Being at Riverside college has shown me that you don't have to hide who you are. I don't need to have my barriers up here. I can be myself with my teachers and other students, everyone here is great. My teachers see worth in me, and they have shown me that I can achieve. They have taught me to put myself first and I have felt accepted at college more than I ever have. I have always felt different and that made me put my guard up but here, I am treated like everyone else, I feel supported. I can be myself and be honest if I am having a bad day and I know that those around me will understand and will help. I don't have to fight anymore. I can't wait to progress to L2."

Action For Happiness has some great tips to get started on making small changes to improve your wellbeing:

Giving | Action for Happiness



And finally...

And a final reminder, that the wellbeing team are able to support you with a range of issues, and if we can't help directly, we will know someone who will be able to. We are based in Programme management and can be contacted by email or Teams:

Riverside

anna.hopwood@riversidecollege.ac.uk
mandy.davies@riversidecollege.ac.uk
joanne.brant@riversidecollege.ac.uk

Cronton

helen.maddison@riversidecollege.ac.uk
jayne.barker@riversidecollege.ac.uk

CRMZ

james.williamson@riversidecollege.ac.uk
(James is also available at Riverside and Cronton)

Have a fantastic, safe Easter break.

The Wellbeing Team.

