

# WOWSI Newsletter



## Welcome

We know that parenting a child who struggles with anxiety can feel overwhelming – especially when they're trying to make sense of big emotions. If your child is finding things tough, please know you're not alone.

At West Sussex Parent Carer Forum (WSPCF), we're here to support families of children and young people with SEND. We provide information, signposting, workshops, and opportunities to connect with other Parent Carers, so you feel informed and empowered.

Our WOWSI sessions and resources are designed to help you every step of the way. Whether you're looking to connect with other parents, build your confidence, or simply find a moment to breathe – we've got you.

## WOWSI Online Parent Chat Session

WOWSI (Working on Worries Support and Intervention) is has been designed by clinical psychologists to help parents support their children with anxiety and big emotions, using practical, evidence-based tools and guidance.

Join our next WOWSI Online Parent Chat with Vik Machin, Mental Health and Wellbeing Advisor at West Sussex County Council. Vik will explain how WOWSI works and how it can help your child. If you're not currently taking part in the programme but want to learn more, this is your chance to find out and ask questions.

## Join a WOWSI Parent Chat Session

These relaxed, friendly online meet-ups are a space just for parent carers.

Come along to talk, listen, or simply connect with others who "get it."

No pressure, no prep – just come as you are.

### Upcoming Dates (Online):



**Tuesday**  
**13th January**  
6:30 – 8pm



**Tuesday**  
**10th February**  
9:30 – 11am



**Tuesday**  
**17th March**  
6:30 – 8pm



**Tuesday**  
**28th April**  
10 – 11:30am

# Helping Your Child Understand Their Worries

For younger children, big feelings can be confusing and hard to explain. One really helpful first step is teaching them to notice when they feel worried and what it feels like in their body.

## A few simple tools you can try at home:

### 1. Name the Feeling Together

Children often don't have the words yet, so you can help by gently wondering aloud:

"Your tummy looks a bit tight... I wonder if you're feeling worried?"

Over time, they learn to connect physical sensations with emotions.

### 2. Use a Feelings Scale (0–10)

This gives your child a clear way to show how strong their feeling is.

#### You might say:

"On a scale from 0 to 10... 0 means calm and happy, 10 means really worried or upset.

Where do you feel today?"

Even if they point instead of speaking, it still helps them communicate and gives you both something to work with.

### 3. Try the Colour Zones

Colours can feel more natural for younger children:

- **Green** calm, settled, happy
- **Yellow** something's not quite right
- **Red** really worried, distressed, overwhelmed

#### You can ask:

"What colour are you right now?"

or

"When your tummy hurts in the morning, what colour does it feel like?"

### 4. Notice Where Worry Shows Up

Help your child pay attention to the body signals that worry brings.

Tight chest? Wobbly legs? Tummy ache? Frozen or quiet?

Let them know these sensations are normal and a sign that their body is trying to tell them something important.



### 5. Look for Patterns Together

If you can, jot things down for a few days:

What happened before the feeling?

What time of day was it?

Who was around?

This can help you spot triggers – and helps school understand what's going on too.

## The Body Scanner - Mindfulness for children

This body scanner activity is recommended by NHS Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and is a mindfulness brain break for children to help them check-in with their bodies and to regulate their emotions and relax. Why not give it a try with your child after school.

[Click here for the Body Scanner](#)

## Explore Our NEW Wellbeing Page

Looking for a little calm in the chaos?

We've created a Wellbeing page packed with ideas, videos and tools to support your mental health and help you prioritise your own self-care. From types of rest to simple breathing exercises, it's all in one easy place.

👉 Visit: [www.wspcf.org.uk/wellbeing](http://www.wspcf.org.uk/wellbeing)



## Book a Call with Us

Need to speak to someone who gets it? You can now book a chat with a member of the WSPCF team at a time that suits you. We're here to listen, offer guidance and help you find the right support.

👉 Book here: [www.wspcf.org.uk/contact-us](http://www.wspcf.org.uk/contact-us)

## Become a WSPCF Member – It's Free!

By joining our forum, you'll get access to member-only competitions, the latest updates, and exclusive chances to share your views with local and national decision-makers – helping to shape the future for SEND families in West Sussex.

👉 Sign up today: [Join Here](#)



## Working Together Across Sussex: The Sussex Parent Carer Forum Collaborative

**Did you know that WSPCF is part of a wider partnership across Sussex?**

Alongside the parent carer forums in Brighton & Hove and East Sussex, we work together through the Sussex Parent Carer Forum Collaborative (SPCFC). This partnership is funded across all three local authority areas and exists to make sure parent carers' voices are heard not just locally, but across the whole region.

### What does that mean for you?

It means the experiences you share with us go further. Through the Collaborative, we take parent carers' insights directly to senior leaders across education, health and social care in West Sussex, East Sussex and Brighton & Hove. Together, we highlight challenges, share solutions and push for joined-up improvements that can genuinely make a difference to children and families.

The Collaborative also works closely with the Sussex Health and Care System, so your voices help influence how services plan, design and improve across the whole of Sussex.

Every time you attend a session, complete a survey or share your story, you're strengthening that collective voice – and helping shape change far beyond your own area.

👉 Find out more here: [www.wspcf.org.uk/sussex-parent-carer-forum-collaborative](http://www.wspcf.org.uk/sussex-parent-carer-forum-collaborative)



### WSPCF Guide to SEND Support in Mainstream Settings

A practical guide for parent carers, based on the West Sussex QAIR to help you understand, navigate and make use of the support your child should receive in mainstream education.

## Our Parent Carer Guide to SEND Support in Mainstream Settings is here!!

We know how overwhelming it can be to know what support is/should be in place at school when your child is struggling at school. So, we've created a clear, practical guide to help parent carers understand what support should look like for children and young people in mainstream education.

Inside the guide you'll find:

- ✓ What support should be in place without an EHCP
- ✓ Practical examples of inclusive practice
- ✓ Checklists and tools to help you prepare for conversations with your child's setting
- ✓ Simple explanations written by parent carers, for parent carers

We hope this guide helps you feel informed, confident and empowered.

[Download the guide here](#)

## A Little Calm for You & Your Child 🧘♀️

Looking for more ways to help your child manage big emotions?

The BBC Children in Need Mindfulness Hub has some lovely, simple videos created especially for primary-aged children. Breathing exercises, calming stories, mindful movement... perfect for helping little minds find a bit more ease.

Try it out: [BBC Children in Need Mindfulness Hub](#)

## Share Your Story

Sharing your experiences with us about WOWSI or your child's experiences at school or in other areas helps us understand the real challenges you face, where change is most needed, and allows us to feed this back to the local authority, NHS and other organisations to influence change to the systems that aren't working for your children.

[Please share your story with us here and help influence change.](#)

## Upcoming WSPCF Events

### Chat and Chill Drop-in:

#### Bognor Regis

Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> January | 9am – 11am  
Arun West Family Hub, Laburnham Grove, Bognor Regis, PO22 9HT

#### Burgess Hill

Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> January | 10am – 12pm  
King's Church, Victoria Road, Burgess Hill, RH15 9LR

#### Worthing

Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> January | 10am – 12pm  
Bay Cafe at SAND, 1 Thorn Road, Worthing, BN11 3ND

#### Crawley

Friday 30<sup>th</sup> January | 10am – 12pm  
The Charis Centre, West Green Drive, Crawley, RH11 7EL

#### Burgess Hill

Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> February | 10am – 12pm  
King's Church, Victoria Road, Burgess Hill, RH15 9LR