

The 5-a-day for wellbeing test



1. Connect



2. Be active



3. Take notice



4. Keep learning



5. Give

How to Ask For Help

It is really useful to find one trusted adult in your life who you can confide in. They can be those very close to you or it might be someone you know and who understands where you're at. Your one trusted adult could be you:

- **Mam**
- **Dad**
- **Older siblings**
- **Aunts / Uncles**
- **A teacher**
- **A sports coach**
- **A youth worker**
- **Your GP**

Try to avoid self-diagnosis and using the internet to solve issues that arise. Research what services are available close to you and talk to a responsible adult.

Positive Mental Health

Promoting positive mental health amongst young people is an integral part of promoting mental health in the overall population. The recent 'My World' National Survey of Youth Mental Health found that almost one in three young people had at some time experienced mental health difficulties (Headstrong and UCD School of Psychology, 2012). The study found that these difficulties generally emerged in early adolescence and peaked in the late teens and early twenties and that self-esteem and coping strategies are strong protective factors for mental health during this key transitional period into adulthood.

Promoting mental, emotional and social wellbeing can enable young people to fulfil their potential and cope with the challenges they face during this key developmental period and into the future. It requires action and collaboration across a variety of sectors including the education, health and community sectors.

As an example, the school setting provides an opportunity to reach many young people during these formative years. There is strong evidence that mental health promotion programmes in schools, when implemented effectively, can produce long-term emotional, social and academic benefits for young people (National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence, 2009; Barry et al, 2009).

Local and National Services

LOCAL

Mental health services - mentalhealthireland.ie

Kildare hospital - naashospital.ie

Tos Coca

Kildare counselling services -

kildarecounsellingservice.ie

Primary Care - 1850 24 1850

CAMHS - (01) 879 6800

Kildare Youth Services - www.kys.ie

NATIONAL

Spun out - spunout.ie

Childline - childline.ie

Teenline - ispcc.ie/services/teenline

Shine - shine.ie

Jigsaw - jigsaw.ie

M.H.I. - mentalhealthireland.ie

Growing Ireland - grow.ie

Samaritan - samaritans.org

Hope.(D) - 087 151 3535

This pamphlet has been created by the youth group from Kildare Comhairle na nÓg.

Some people believe that focusing on ones mental health is a waste of time, however mental health is just as important as physical health if not more so because its harder.

In this pamphlet we present the **'5 a day for wellbeing system'**. A simple way of improving your situation based on a very broad base of research, from psychological to economic literature. It contains five aims for you to keep in mind as you go through your day.

1. Connect



Humans are social creatures. We crave connection just as we crave food and water. Evidence shows that good relationships with family, friends, colleagues and the wider community are important for mental wellbeing. Many of us would like to spend more time with the people who are most important to us but sometimes life just gets in the way of that. We must make time to connect with the people that matter to us. By nurturing these relationships we feel happier and more secure, giving a better sense of purpose. A 2002 study of 222 students in the US found that the happiest amongst the group had stronger social relationships than those who were less happy.

2. Be Active



Being active is great for your physical and mental wellbeing. Evidence proves there is a link between being physically active and good mental wellbeing. Mental wellbeing means being feeling good about yourself and about the world around you and having the ability to get on with life in the way you want. Being active doesn't mean you need to train for a marathon. You need to find physical activity that you enjoy and can fit into your daily/ weekly routine. This may be a daily walk to the shops instead of taking the car, a weekly gardening session, some yoga, swimming or a weekend walk. To get active and keep active you could join a local walking or sports group/club and make new connections while keeping active. There are many fitness apps available to help you get up and out with programmes for all abilities and activities. Being active for one hour is just 4% of your day.

3. Take notice



It is easy to rush through daily life without stopping to notice much. Paying attention to the present moment – to our own thoughts, feelings and to the world around you can improve your mental wellbeing. Taking Notice is also called Mindfulness. It is easy to incorporate mindfulness into your life and can be a very powerful tool if learnt and practiced daily. Mental wellbeing means being feeling good about life and yourself and having the ability to get on with life in the way you want. To Take Notice is to notice the sights, smells, sounds and tastes you experience as well as your thoughts and feelings that occur from one moment to the next.

4. Keep learning



Learning new skills is both useful and it can also positively affect our mental wellbeing. Learning means different things to everyone. To some it will be a new qualification and to others it will be learning a new recipe in the kitchen. Evidence shows that continuing to learn throughout life can help improve and maintain our mental wellbeing. Mental Wellbeing means feeling good about yourself and the world around you and being able to get on with your life the way you choose. Learning new 'things' can boost your self-confidence, self-esteem, build a sense of purpose and help us connect with others. Start a new course in a local college or school. Setting goals and working towards them plays an important part in the way learning influences wellbeing. Many forms of learning involve contact with others which connects us to our communities and peers.

5. Give



Most agree that giving to others is a good idea however giving to others has a knock on effect on ourselves by improving the givers mental wellbeing. From small acts of kindness to volunteering, giving can give you a sense of purpose, community and connectedness. Sometimes we think of our wellbeing in terms of what we have; our income, car, home or job. Evidence shows that what we do and the way we think has the biggest impact on mental wellbeing. Positive mental wellbeing means feeling good about yourself and the world around you and being able to get on with your life.

Why not try the 5-a-day for wellbeing test

The aim is to try and include as many of the following five points below into each day. Keep a count of how many you included each day and fill in your daily number out of five on your wellbeing tree to the right.

At the end of the week just add up your numbers and give yourself a weekly score out of 35 by writing that number into the circle in the middle of the tree. Then we would encourage you to try it again the week after by simply keeping a score yourself or by printing out a new wellbeing tree by visiting our website at www.kys.ie/wellbeing where you can download a new tree to print out at home.

1. Connect

Try and make sure you've spent time connecting with friends, family and the people around you.

2. Be active

Try and include exercise in your day. This could be walking, running, cycling or sports.

3. Take notice

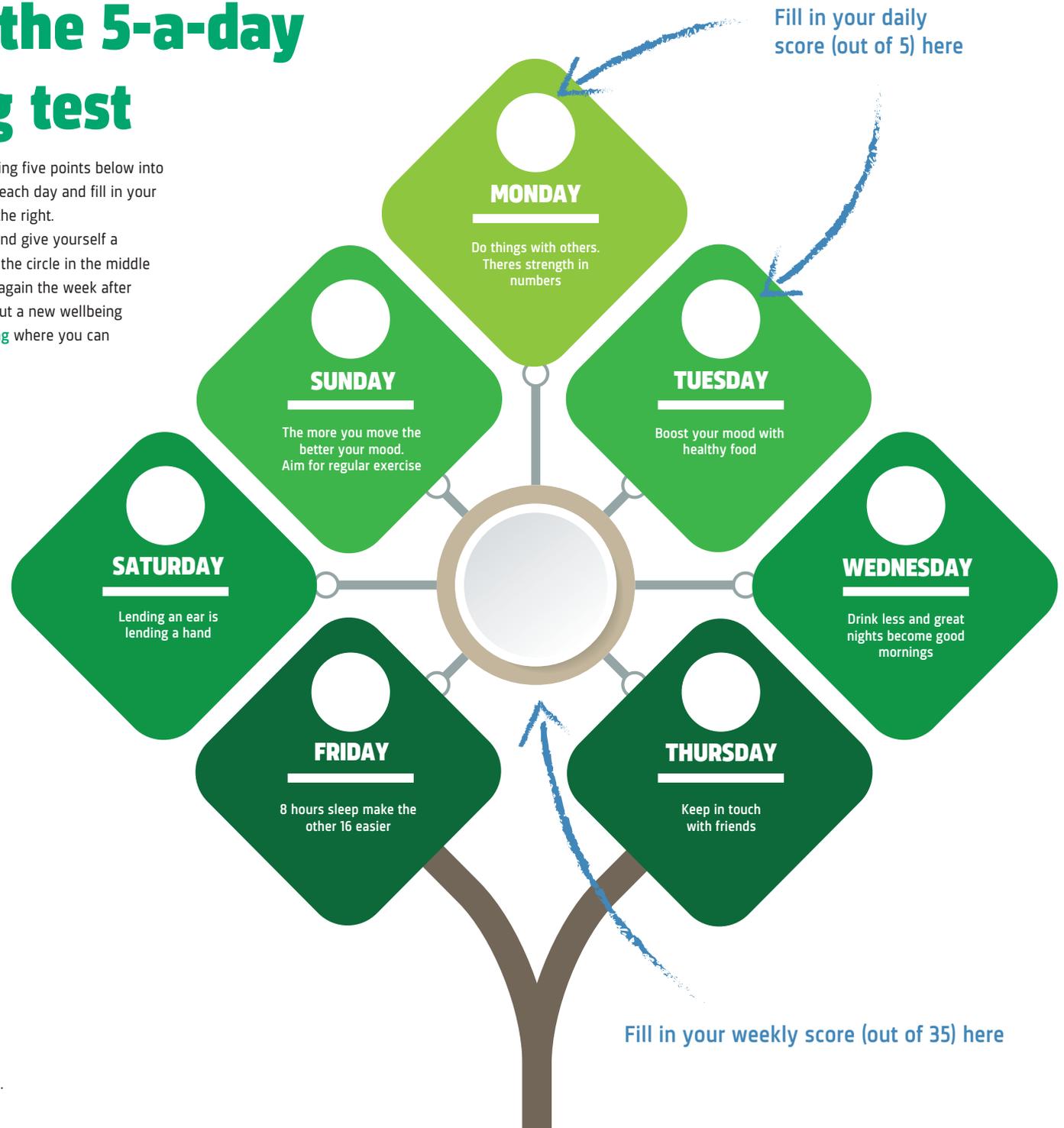
Spend at least 10 quiet minutes each day reflecting on the day that your having. Checking in with yourself.

4. Keep learning

Try to learn at least one new thing during your day however small.

5. Give

Look for opportunities to give your time to others. Small acts of kindness go a long way for everyone.



Keep track on how you're doing through the week below

Tick each circle



Daily Tally

3

MONDAY

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TUESDAY

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WEDNESDAY

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THURSDAY

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FRIDAY

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SATURDAY

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SUNDAY

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