

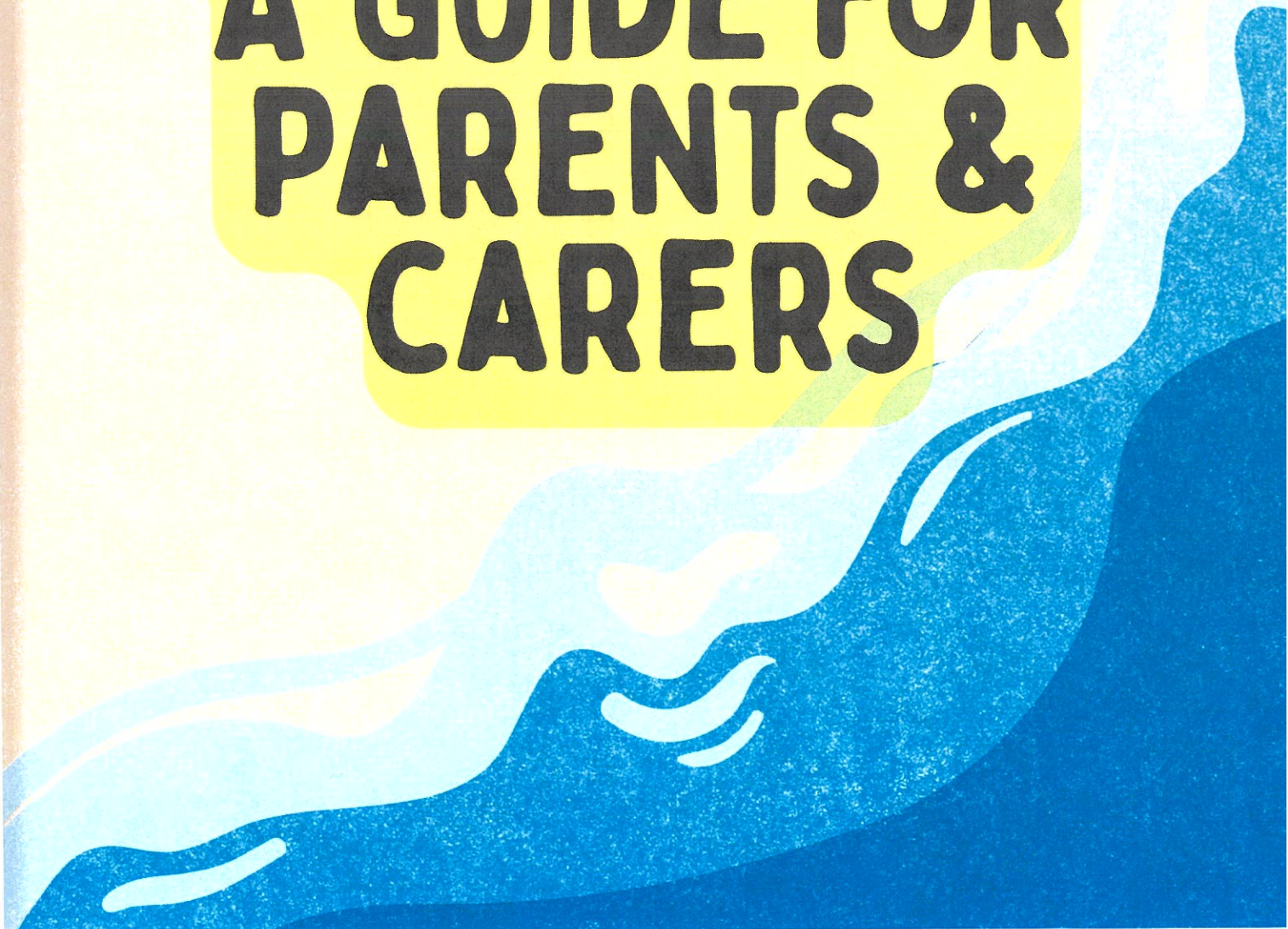


Dorset  
Mental  
Health  
Support  
Team in  
Schools



Dorset HealthCare  
University  
NHS Foundation Trust

# SUPPORT OVER THE SUMMER: A GUIDE FOR PARENTS & CARERS





Based on feedback from  
our Supporters Forum,  
we've pulled together  
key tips and resources  
to help you feel more  
confident and supported  
this summer.


♥ You're not alone.  
Support is out there - for  
you and your child. Let's  
make this summer a little  
easier, together.








## What parents told us

Many parents find the summer holidays rewarding but tough. Common challenges include:

 Financial strain – increased food costs, childcare fees, days out

 Work-life balance – juggling childcare and working hours

 Loss of structure – difficult to keep routines and engagement


 Mental health pressures – stress, burnout, isolation


 Return to school – anxiety and transition worries





## ✓ Top tips for a calmer summer

 **Create a Support Network**  
Link up with other parents, friends or neighbours to share the load.

 **Prioritise Self-Care**  
Even 10 minutes for yourself can help you reset and recharge.

 **Set Realistic Expectations**  
You don't need to plan a 'perfect summer'—focus on meaningful, simple moments.

 **Establish Gentle Routines**  
A loose plan for the day helps maintain calm and motivation.

 **Talk to Your Child**  
Ask them what they need and share how you're feeling too.



## ✓ Top tips from parents/carers

We asked parents and carers how they take care of themselves over the summer holidays. Their answers remind us that looking after your wellbeing doesn't have to mean doing anything big. It's often the small things - tiny moments of calm, a bit of time to yourself, or a quick catch-up with a friend - that can make the biggest difference.

"Going to the park  
or the beach"

"Go outside to the  
woodlands, go to the  
beach so they can run  
around"

"Put on music when  
it all goes fraught"

"Listen to a  
podcast when they  
are gaming"

"Sit in the  
garden and have  
a cup of tea"


"Yoga, running,  
cycling, walking"



# Helpful Resources

## Self-Care Summer Toolkit

Activities and tools to help children look after their mental health over the holidays.

 [Download from Mentally Healthy Schools](#)


## Summer Wellbeing Journal

A downloadable journal full of mindful activities for young people.

 [Download the PDF from Dorset MHST](#)


## Preparing for School Transition or Change

Tips and activities to support children starting or returning to school.

 [Download the Transition Guide from Dorset MHST](#)

## 30 Ways to Stress Less

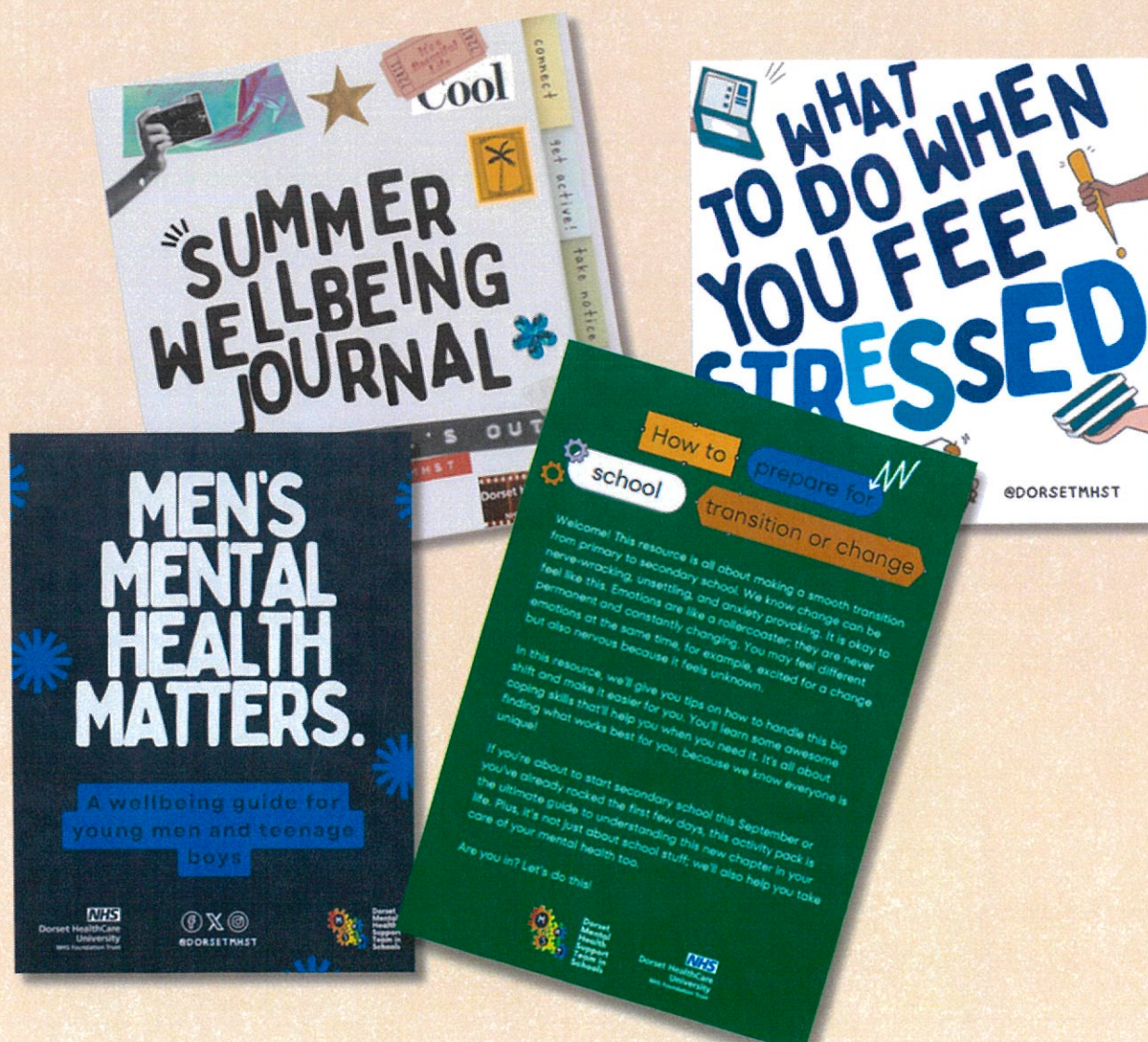
Quick, practical ideas to help reduce stress.

 [Download the resource from Dorset MHST](#)

## Men's Wellbeing Guide

A supportive resource for dads and male carers looking after their mental health.

 [Download the Men's Wellbeing Guide from Dorset MHST](#)

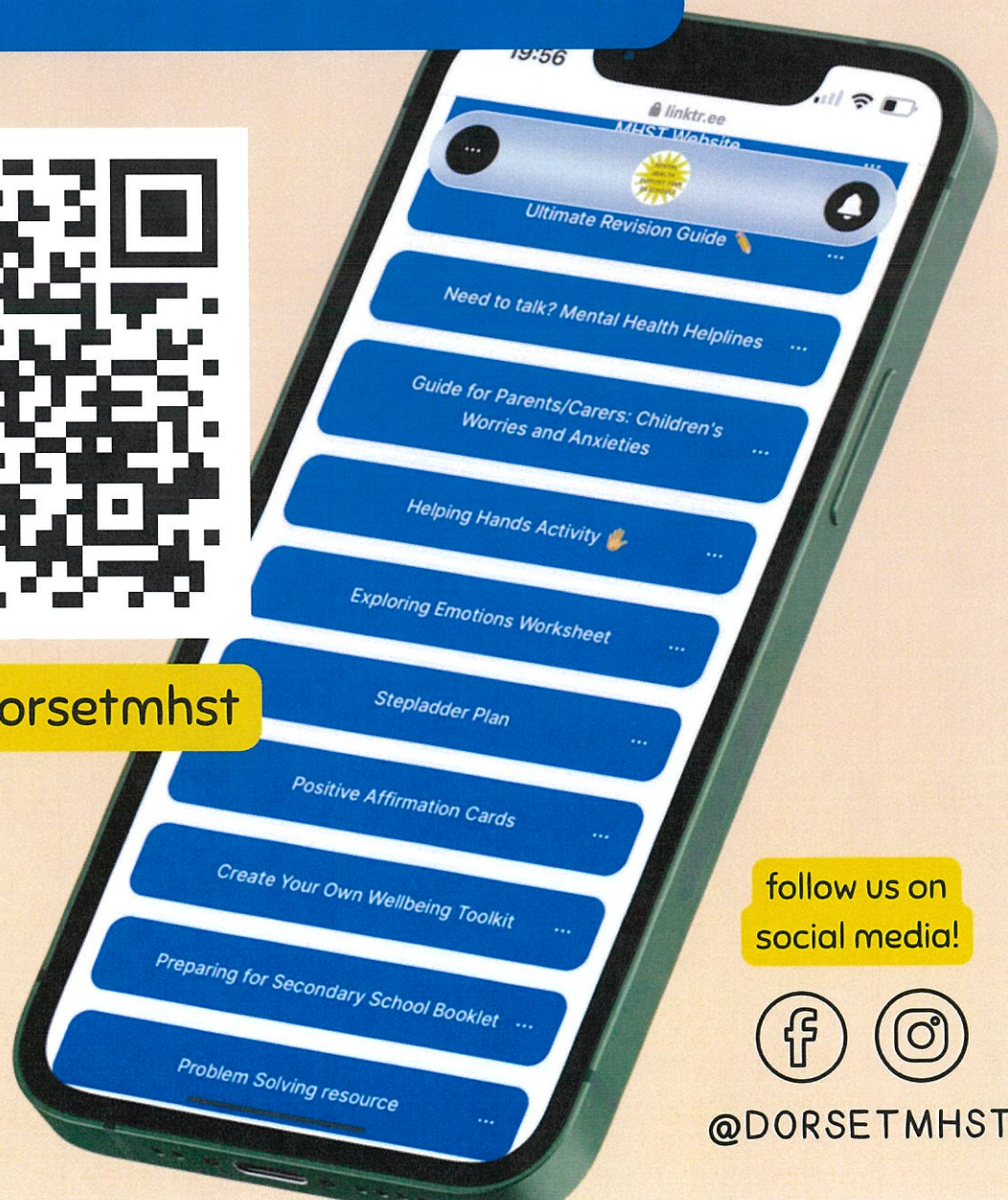




# FREE RESOURCES FOR PARENTS/CARERS, CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE TO HELP BUILD POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING



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## National advice and resources

💛 YoungMinds – Support, guidance, and signposting if you're worried about a child or young person up to the age of 25.

 [Visit YoungMinds Parent Hub](#)

🧠 Five Ways to Look After Your Mental Health This Summer

Tips written for young people, but great for families too.

 [Read the blog on YoungMinds](#)


🌙 Mind – Supporting Parents During the Holidays

Practical advice to help parents and carers look after their own wellbeing.

 [Read on Mind's website](#)

☀️ BBC Bitesize – Take the Stress Out of Summer

Simple ideas for making the school holidays feel more manageable.

 [Read the article](#)




# Helplines

YoungMinds Parents Helpline

0808 802 5544 (Mon–Fri, 9:30–4)


 [youngminds.org.uk/parent](https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent)

Family Support and Advice Line

 01305 228558

A friendly, confidential phone line offering advice and help to find the right support for your family.

Connection – 24/7 Mental Health Helpline

 0800 652 0190

Free, 24/7 mental health support for people of all ages in Dorset.

Find out more



If you're feeling overwhelmed or unsure where to turn, these Dorset services are here to help:

CAMHS Dorset

Support for children and young people with their mental health, plus advice for parents.

Parent Mental Health Hub

Offers tools, guidance and support for families and young people.

LiveWell Dorset

Free health and wellbeing support for adults in Dorset—covering mental health, activity, stopping smoking, and more.

Dorset Parent Carer Council

Meet other parents and carers with shared experiences.

Dorset Open Door

A partnership helping people get the right emotional or mental health support.

Steps2Wellbeing (NHS Talking Therapies)

Free talking therapies for anxiety, depression and more—available for adults.