



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.