

Communicating the wellbeing message

Leaders and managers have needed to be more intentional and creative in making sure that staff are made fully aware of what resources are available, and more importantly how to access support when they need it.

A good way to show your commitment to promoting healthier lifestyles in the setting is by creating a staff health and wellbeing noticeboard. It's not something that is common practice, but in the current climate I'm seeing more and more wellbeing boards spring up in a variety of organisations.

If done well it provides not only useful support and inspiration for individuals, but it can also prompt positive reflection and discussion around wellbeing topics within the team. But to make sure that it sends out a positive message about health and wellbeing there are a number of things that are important to consider.

First and foremost, think about why you need a wellbeing board. It's important to consult with the team right from the start to establish clear objectives. Begin by asking, what's its purpose? Think about who will be interacting with the board and consider your goals and motives of how you want them to use it. Be mindful that people consume information in different ways and communicating about wellbeing should be happening across multiple channels. In my experience all too often wellbeing boards are created in isolation and merely become a nice to have rather than being a part of the overall wellbeing strategy.

It's a great way to keep everyone updated, but don't overwhelm staff with information overload. With constant changes on a daily basis people have so much information to process, so make sure updates and messages are delivered as efficiently as possible. This is a perfect place to share your wellbeing strategy but try and be creative and present it in a visual way that makes sense to people and that they are able to easily understand.

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Many settings already have a robust wellbeing strategy in place, but with the added pressure of Covid-19 the need to curate and communicate information to support staff wellbeing has been even more crucial, explains **Linda Baston-Pitt**, chief exec, PurpleBee Learning.

Share feedback from wellbeing evaluations and highlight the areas of wellbeing that you're currently working on and where you're doing really well and don't forget to celebrate your strengths.

Pull your wellbeing team together

Don't leave creating, maintaining and updating of the board up to one person. It will be more meaningful to the whole team if it is a collective responsibility. Use the board to highlight who the specialist wellbeing leads are in the setting i.e PANCo, MHFA, etc as well as naming who they are, make sure that staff understand what their role is by adding a short explanation and a photo of them in action. That way everybody has a clear touch point and knows who's who.

Create and maintain a positive and inclusive culture of health

I know space is often at a premium but where you place the board is an indication of how much you value it. If it's hidden away or on a staircase where it's difficult to access people are less likely to use it. Place it where staff can easily access it alone, or with their team. Make sure you keep messages and topics positive rather than punitive and focus on health benefits rather than fitness or weight. People want to feel

uplifted and inspired by what they see and read not guilty or deflated. Think about how you can combine wellbeing with team building activities. Food and exercise provide a powerful bonding

experience. Post and share fun monthly events for example a smoothie making competition or link to seasonal wellbeing campaigns.

Make the board interactive and use it as a positive learning opportunity. As a team share interesting bitesize health facts that you come across i.e., did you know that kiwi fruit are rich in serotonin and antioxidants, both of which help improve sleep. Pose a question a month to stimulate discussion i.e. What makes you happy? what would you do if you had extra ten minutes in the day? Lack of time is often a reason given as the reason why we don't look after ourselves. Make it easy for staff to practice selfcare during the day by sharing small, simple actions that they can tap into and use immediately to help improve their wellbeing, for example Action for Happiness. Encourage further reflection and invite staff to post a brief sentence or a photo explaining how they look after their wellbeing and what they've tried and how it helped as a result. The good news is that wellbeing is a skill that we can all learn so post information about up-and-coming wellbeing training, workshops and local and national events that staff can freely choose to access that supports both their personal and professional wellbeing.

Finally review and evaluate the board regularly with the staff team to discover what works well, what doesn't and how could it be improved. This avoids the wellbeing board becoming stagnant and simply a tick box exercise. Just as our wellbeing fluctuates and changes make sure your wellbeing board evolves over time and is based on the wellbeing needs of the team. ■