

22nd September 2017

This week at school it has been HeadsUp@Howell's Week, a five day programme full of activities to launch our new initiative, which plans to create a school culture where everyone has the tools to take the lead in nurturing their own mental wellbeing.

Over the week, the students have been able to explore different ways to take care of their emotional wellbeing. Watching a film with friends; writing a poem; taking the school dog, Disney, for a walk; accessing support if they need someone to talk to; getting creative with a ball of wool or a packet of coloring pencils; exploring the library for a book to help them understand how they are feeling. It's definitely not a one-size-fits all approach, but all the students have had the chance to think about which techniques could work for them. Away from school, a winning solution for so many people is getting outside in the fresh air. Dragging reluctant children and teens out for a Sunday walk may not be your idea of a good time, but get them outdoors, hunting for conkers and talking about their week, even if you have to bribe them with a bacon roll at the half way point, and almost everyone will come home with flushed cheeks, cold ears and lighter, brighter head. If you need more motivation than a hot chocolate at the end of a crispy autumn walk, over the next ten weeks, the Snowdogs Trail is raising money for Ty Hafan with their technicoloured, decorated dogs. The pooches have popped up all over Cardiff and the Vale, from Llandaff Fields to Penarth Pier, and there are printable maps available to help you follow the trail.

If you are happier on two wheels than two feet, this weekend is the Family Cycling Festival at Tredegar House in Newport. There are organised rides on a varies of routes, bike maintenance classes, BMX skills workshops and cycle skills training for those of us who are perhaps a little rusty. The Howell's School Champagne Cycle Challenge is not for several months, but get your training in now and you'll be able to pull on your Lycra with pride next summer. As a child I never learned to ride a bike, but I do have a bicycle, a forget-me-not blue shopper with a natty wicker basket, so I might see you there, though the Lycra may stay in the closet for another day.

<http://snowdogstailsin.wales>

<http://www.newportfamilycyclingfestival.org>

