

What is wellbeing?

Some of the questions in the WMF are about: '*emotional difficulties*'; '*positive wellbeing*' and '*coping with stress*'...

We all have mental health in the same way we have physical health.

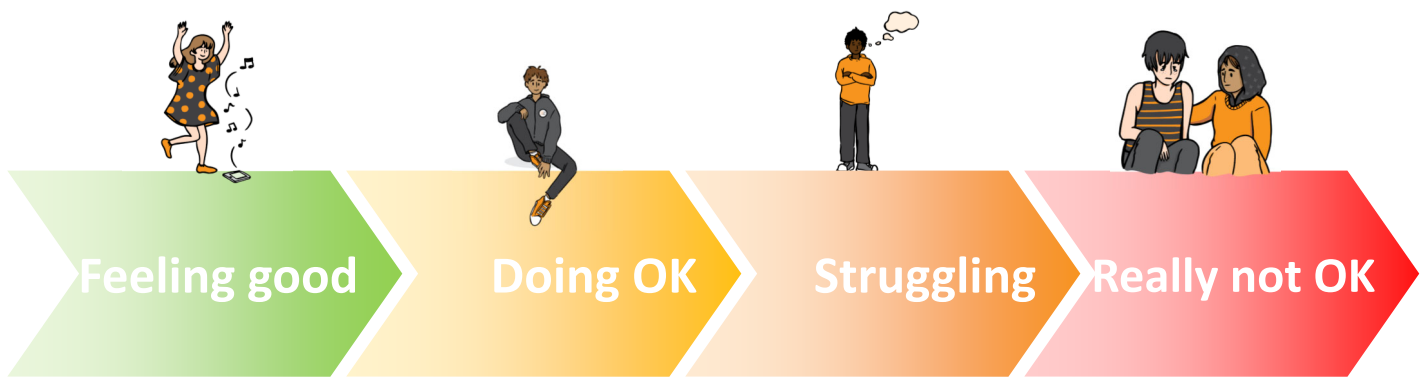
Sometimes:

You feel great!

You're just about OK

You can be a bit down and you're not OK

Sometimes your mental health can get to the point where it's not OK at all and it's important to get some extra support.



But it's not a straight line. Our wellbeing can change with ups and downs happening depending on what's happening to us and around us. Sometimes it can feel a bit like being on a roller coaster!



Lots of different things can affect our mental health and emotional wellbeing.

The affect can be positive or negative.

Changes in our wellbeing can happen at different times in our lives and sometimes we can have a really bumpy rollercoaster ride in just one day!

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Things that can affect wellbeing:



What other things can you think of that might affect your wellbeing?

There are two things that can really help overcome challenges to our wellbeing:

- 1. Resilience** is about **'bouncebackability'**. It is the ability to cope when facing setbacks. Resilience is something we all have to some degree. Having a **'Wellbeing toolkit'** is a great way of building resilience. In your toolkit can be things like knowing **how to look after your own wellbeing and mental health** and to:
Be aware when you need help, **know where** to get it and **be confident to ask**.
 - 2. Protective Factors**—can help too. Protective Factors include **support** at home, at school & from friends...
- With a little help, anybody can bounce forward and up through tough times.**

Being OK is about having the **'tools' and support** to overcome the difficulties and challenges we can all face at times in our lives, and knowing when and where to get help.

Being mentally healthy is also about having **confidence and self-esteem**, to be able to make decisions and to **believe in ourselves**.

Being OK is
not about how
fast you run
or how high
you climb but
how well you
bounce!



Have a look at **"Chris and Sam's story"** to explore this.

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Things that affect my wellbeing

Things that affect my wellbeing **positively** (make me feel more positive about my wellbeing)

Things that affect my wellbeing **negatively** (make me feel less positive about my wellbeing)

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Meet Chris and Sam

Both are perfectly ordinary, everyday students in Year 11 at St. Kernow's College, Cornwall.

Pen portraits

Chris

Aged 16. Sporty, likes hockey and football. Not brilliant at school work but if he sticks at it he should do OK in his GCSEs. Doesn't get into trouble at school. Chris lives at home with mum and dad and younger sister, Sally. He follows Chelsea football club, likes surfing, computer games and current music. Chris has been going out with Sam since Year 9.



Sam



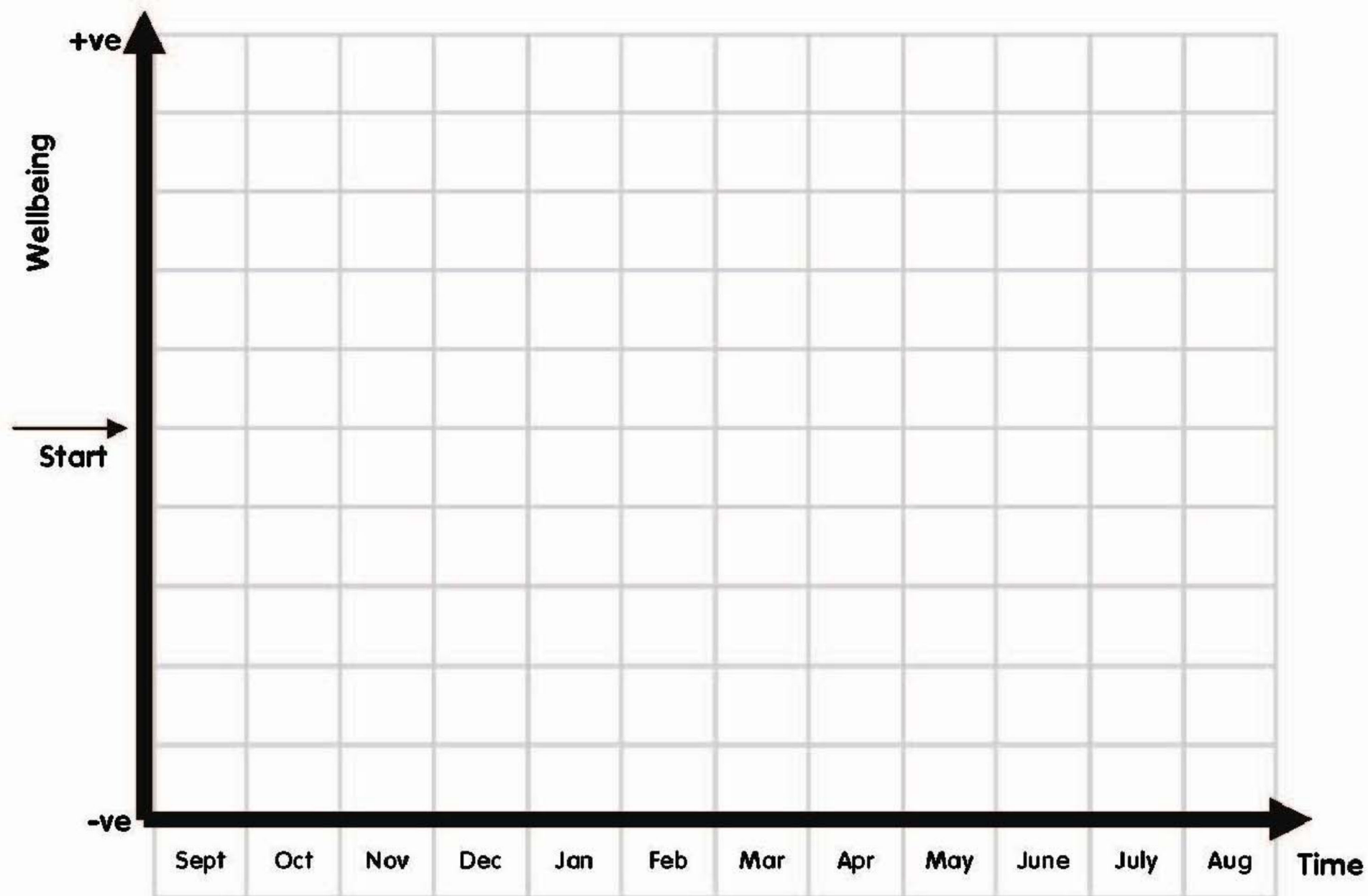
Aged 16. Likes surfing and swimming but hates other sports. Very bright and should get top marks in her GCSE's, if she can be bothered. Quite often in trouble at school for being late, answering back and mucking about. Lives at home with mum and step-dad, older brother and two step-sisters (both younger than she is) including baby Jess.

Recently Sam seems to have been having lots of rows with her parents. Likes current music and films. Sam has been going out with Chris since Year 9.

Because they are perfectly ordinary, everyday individuals their wellbeing is "OK". In the course of everyday life things affect their wellbeing both positively and negatively. Let's have a look at their experiences and their wellbeing over the course of Y11...

Below are lists of events in Chris's and Sam's lives over the course of Year 11. Use the graph below to chart how these events might affect their wellbeing over the year

Y11	Chris	Sam
September	Saves up enough money from helping dad over the Summer to get a new games console and some games. Picked for hockey and football first teams. Means lots of training and matches.	Decides she needs to do better this year after a tough year last year in school and at home. Picked for county swimming squad. Mum and dad really pleased and take her out for a special meal to celebrate.
October	GCSE work piling up, getting a bit stressed.	Gets her act together and starts getting work in on time
November	Gets 'Man of the Match' in big cup game after scoring twice and helping his team to a win over their arch rivals. Hasn't got a lot of time to go out with Sam.	Fed up with Chris because he's always busy with football / hockey or gaming with his mates. Meets Mark, who's new to the area, at swimming club, likes him and realises he fancies her.
December	Really good Christmas. Mum and Dad take him and Sally on holiday.	Starts going out with Mark behind Chris's back.
January	Finds out about Sam and Mark, splits up with Sam.	Really happy with Mark. Doing really well in county swimming team, getting picked for every competition and winning lots of her races.
February	Mum and Dad tell him and his sister Sally that they're getting a divorce. When Sam asks him if he wants to talk about it he tells her to get lost. He thinks he can't talk to anyone, boys don't do that. He doesn't want anyone to know and laugh at him.	Hears about Chris's mum and dad and feels sorry for Chris. Asks if he wants to talk about it. He tells her to get lost. Feels stupid for asking but still worried about Chris.
March	Is really angry and hurt about his mum and dad. Gets sent off for fighting in a big hockey match when somebody tackles him badly. Gets suspended from the team. Gets into trouble at school about work.	Gets injured and can't swim in big meet so will miss a chance to try out for a really big national competition. Really upset about it.
April	Gets kicked out of football team for missing loads of training. Feeling really angry all the time. Getting in trouble more and more in school. His PE teacher realises Chris needs some help and persuades Chris to talk to the school counsellor about what's been happening and how he's feeling. Gets some study support from his tutor and other teachers and tries to stay out of trouble and get on with preparing for his GCSEs	Goes on holiday with Mark and his family over Easter. Really good time. Still can't swim yet but puts time to studying for GCSEs. Mum and dad really pleased with how much Sam seems to have grown up this year.
May	Chelsea win the Champions League. Football coach gives Chris another chance and tells him he's good enough to try for the county youth team next season. His mates are glad to see him back in the team and are really supportive	Really works hard for her GCSEs.
June	Does OK in his GCSEs.	GCSEs go really well.
July	Decides to stay on in the school 6th form next term.	Back in swimming team, comes second in regional competition.
August	Starts training with the county youth football team.	Is really looking forward to going to sixth-form college (with Mark).



Chris and Sam's Y11—questions for discussion

- What were the high points for Chris during the year?
- What were his low points?
- Why was Chris reluctant to get help?
- What could have happened if Chris hadn't got help when he did?
- What were the high points for Sam?
- What were the low points for her?
- What were the 'protective factors' (the things / people) that helped them both over the year?
- How 'resilient' do you think Chris and Sam are?

This activity is based on one originally created for the Stop Stigma resource commissioned by Cornwall Partnership Foundation Trust. Thanks to them and Healthy Cornwall for permission to adapt

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