

Mental health and well being

Just like our physical health, our mental health needs looking after. AAS is committed to providing a safe and happy environment for girls and young adults to come together to play netball.

Mental health can be defined as *“the emotional and spiritual resilience which allows us to enjoy life and survive pain, disappointment and sadness. It is a positive sense of wellbeing and an underlying belief in our own, and others, dignity and worth”* (Health Education Authority, Mental Health Promotion: A Quality Framework. 1997). Mental health affects how we think and feel about ourselves and others, our capacity to learn and communicate and our ability to cope with change and life events.

Sport, physical activity and social wellbeing can increase resilience to help us (children and adults) cope with stress and feelings of anxiety or uncertainty. During adolescence, young people change rapidly both physically, emotionally and socially and some of the changes seen in mental health issues may go unnoticed. In a club of our size, it is likely that at any one time we will have one or more members experiencing mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, self-harm and eating disorders. One of the most useful things you can do if you find yourself in this situation is to talk to someone you trust. If you are approached by someone with mental health issues the most useful thing you can do for them is to listen without judging (accepting that their worries are real for them) and encourage the young person to get help and/or support.

England Netball lists some useful resources for boosting wellbeing:

<https://www.englandnetball.co.uk/governance/safeguarding/wellbeing/>

One of the sites listed (and also recommended by Mental Health First Aid England) is www.actionforhappiness.org which gives 10 keys to happier living.

www.youngminds.org.uk is a UK charity committed to improving emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people and empowering their parents and carers.

Headspace www.headspace.com and Headspace Kids www.headspace.com/meditation/kids (for age 5 years and under, 6-8 years and 9-12 years) are useful mindfulness apps.

At AAS there are opportunities to connect with people, help others and keep active – all important aspects of happier living. As a competitive and friendly local sports club we hope that membership of AAS has a positive influence on mental as well as physical health.