

Welcome to Wellbeing newsletter No. 4 where you will find suggestions, website links and advice for supporting your child's mental health and wellbeing whilst we are away from school.

I'd love to hear what you've been up to and if you've tried any of the activities let me know how you get on. You can send me photographs too.

Children's Mental Health Awareness Week

Each year, a different theme is chosen to focus our attention, and this year's theme is **'Express Yourself'**

Expressing yourself is about finding ways to share feelings, thoughts, or ideas, through creativity. This could be through art, music, writing and poetry, dance and drama, photography and film, and doing activities that make you feel good. It's important to remember that being able to express yourself is not about being the best at something or putting on a performance for others. It is about finding a way to show who you are, and how you see the world, that can help you feel good about yourself.

- **Monday 1st February:** Understanding that we all have worries at times and they can come in different sizes. Have a class discussion on different ways to deal with worries: talking, deep breathing, distractions, writing them down etc...
- **Tuesday 2nd February:** choose different colours to represent each of these feelings. Happy, worried, calm, upset, excited, angry and confused - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dzy1O3NOE4s>
- **Wednesday 3rd February:** We all have special memories that are important to us. Talk, draw or write and share a happy memory that is special to you.
- **Thursday 4th February:** Mind map or talk about healthy habits to help them keep healthy and happy.
- **Friday 5th February :** listen to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yKpVM9QQzls>

For Children's Mental Health Week 2021 we will be encouraging children (and adults) to explore the different ways we can express ourselves, and the creative ways that we can share our feelings, our thoughts and our ideas.

With schools partially closed and lots of uncertainty, children's and young people mental health has never been more important. Times are always changing and throughout life you will face many changes. These can be expected or unexpected, small or big, welcome or unwelcome.

Self-expression – what is it? – Is about communicating your individuality 'Being You'. This can be done through **words – clothing – hairstyle – art – writing – drawing- music and dance.**

Self-expression is a great way to relieve yourself form stress and free your mind. By sharing and expressing your thoughts it helps you to reflect rather than keep them buried deep down. Talking is great !!

So by talking and expressing ourselves thoughtfully we can communicate and build relationships with others –

Ways of expressing ourselves



The basic breathing technique was shown in Newsletter 1.

Negative Judgment and Acceptance

The aim of this is to remain curious and open about the thoughts and feelings that children may be experiencing in the moment. Rather than trying to change them, acknowledge them and accept them for what they are in the moment. They are neither 'good' nor 'bad'. They are just there. It's like you're an observer of your body and mind, on the outside looking in. This can help in seeing things for what they are – a thought or an emotion and they can be changed.

Sit in a comfortable position, keeping your back straight but your body relaxed.

1. Close your eyes if you feel comfortable or soften your gaze and look at the floor.
2. Scan your body and notice how it feels.
3. Notice the sensations of each breath as it happens – don't try and control the breath, just notice it.
 - Focus on the breath going into your nostrils and out through your mouth.
 - Pay attention to the rise and fall of your chest.

- Notice the rise and fall of your belly as you breathe.
4. Remain curious and open about your thoughts and feelings. There is no such thing as good or bad feelings. Pretend that you are an observer of your body and mind, on the outside looking in.
 5. After five minutes take one more breath and feel your feet firmly on the ground. Notice the noises around you and come back to the here and now. When you're ready, gently open your eyes.

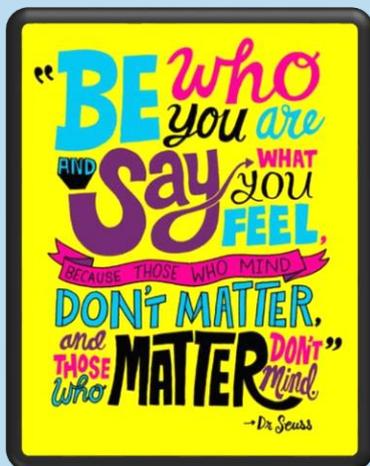
Tall like a tree

- Stand tall as if you were a tree.
- Breathe in and imagine what it would feel like to be strong like a tree.
- Notice any sensations within your body as you keep breathing.
- Continue this for a few minutes before bringing your awareness back to the room.



Notice that sound

- Sit comfortably with your back straight and you can close your eyes if you wish.
- Be silent and notice at least five sounds around you whilst you continue to breathe in and out.
- This is not a competition, but just a fun way to see what you can notice. Just relax and notice the sounds.
- After a few minutes, come back into this moment.



Conversation Corner

Some questions to discuss in your families:

- **Would you like to go for a trip in a spaceship and which three people would you take with you?**
- **What have you learned this week that you didn't know last week?**
- **How can you make another person's life happier?**
- **We share our world with birds, animals, fish and insects. How can you help care for them?**