

Hove Junior School Pupil Wellbeing Newsletter



Welcome to another wellbeing newsletter, we do hope you found some useful tips and ideas in the last edition. As before, this newsletter isn't designed to tell you how your child should be feeling or what you should be doing. We all manage situations differently and need different things at different times. This newsletter aims to give you a few simple ideas to support your child's resilience and some more play ideas for you to try at home.

Resilience

Facing further weeks of uncertainty ahead, now more than ever, we need to help our children navigate these difficult times and build their resilience. Resilience is our ability to thrive or bounce back after a stressful situation. Fortunately, resilience can be taught, and resilient children are happier, more motivated and adopt a more positive attitude to difficult or challenging situations. As a parent or carer you can help your child to build their resilience by creating an environment full of opportunities to learn resilience skills.

Strategies and Activities that Develop Resilience

1) Emotional Identification

Being able to identify and name a range of emotions is an important skill to teach your child. Children also need to understand that it is healthy to experience a range of emotions. Follow the link below to download a useful 'Feelings Wheel' resource.

<https://www.gottman.com/blog/printable-feeling-wheel/>

Activity Idea: Make Feelings Sticks or Emojis



Make your own 'feeling sticks' to support everyone in the family to name and identify emotions. Reiterate that it is OK to feel this way and give examples of when you have felt this way before.

2) Emotional Regulation

When children are stressed, sad or angry, the amygdala's natural fight, flight or freeze response kicks in, making rational decision making nearly impossible.

As discussed in the last newsletter, if your child is struggling to regulate their emotions, coregulation may be helpful.



Activity Idea: Making a Glitter Jar

Glitter jars are a useful mindfulness tool to use at home. Watching the glitter swirl to the bottom of the jar can give children a chance to calm down and begin to regain control. It's worth noting that at the point of 'meltdown' it takes a full 90 minutes for the stress hormone cortisol to reduce in a child's body.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/thingstodo/mood-jar>

Make sure you teach your child to use the jar. Invite your child to sit down comfortably and focus on the swirling glitter, breathing deeply in and out as they watch it sink to the bottom of the jar. As they do this they should focus on their breathing and how their body feels.

3) Coping Skills

Teach your child when and how to ask for help. Feeling connection during this time is really important as children are isolated from people who they may have previously confided in.

Talk to your child about who they like to go to for support. Is there somebody they know who understands a certain emotion better?

Discuss the things that bring comfort to them and discuss the things that bring you comfort. You could use the resource below to help you with this discussion.

https://worksheetplace.com/mf_pdf/Calm-down-kit.pdf

Activity Idea: Make a Family 'Coping Box'

Find a box and fill it with items that different family members (or an individual) can use when they are experiencing difficult feelings.

Ideas for items to go in the box: Word searches, mazes, spot the difference, 'Where's Wally?' style books, play dough, a visual for a playlist that brings you joy, crunchy or chewy snacks, fidget toys, bubbles, a scented candle or lotion, a joke book, mindful colouring books, photos that bring joy, Lego, a skipping rope, glitter jar, pipe cleaners, bubble wrap, chew toys, mini massager, hair brush, doodle pad, calming essential oil spray, scratch and sniff stickers, yoga visuals, noise cancelling headphones.



Model the use of the box and encourage your child to access it if they are feeling sad, restless, angry, stressed, agitated etc.

4) Practicing Mindfulness

Mindfulness is a useful relaxation tool that can help us to slow down, pay attention and be present in the moment. It can be hard to teach mindfulness to children, so try a variety of activities to see what works best for your child. Follow the link to find this free handy A-Z of mindfulness to give you some initial ideas.



<https://www.elsa-support.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/A-TO-Z-OF-MINDFULNESS.pdf>

Activity Ideas: Breathing Practice

The following link takes you to some lovely free printable resources to help you teach your child breathing practices.



https://store.copingskillsforkids.com/products/deep-breathing-printsables?utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Pinterest



The 'Big Life Journal' has some lovely activities to support resilience.

5) Expressing Gratitude

Research has shown that teaching gratitude to children increases their happiness, optimism and generosity.

Activity Idea: Gratitude Pick Up Sticks



Red: Name a person you are thankful for.

Yellow- Name a place you are thankful for.

Green- Name a food you are thankful for.

Blue- Name an animal you are thankful for

Purple- Name anything you are thankful for.

6) Positive Affirmations

Children, like adults, need positive daily affirmations. When nurtured, positive thinking helps foster resilience in children. It is a powerful coping tool. Encouraging daily positive affirmations can help children to face the world with a positive outlook.



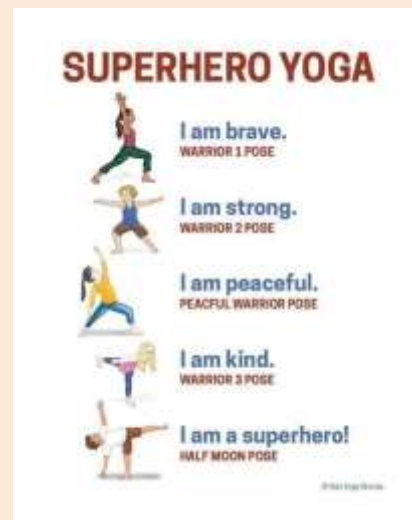
Activity Idea: Make a jar of strengths

Every time you or your child notice one of their strengths, write it down and pop it in a jar.

e.g. 'I can tell somebody when I am sad' or 'I can try a new vegetable'.

This will help them to build a positive view of themselves. Make sure you look at the jar each week and read all the things your child can do.

Activity Idea: Affirmations and Yoga



Most importantly, celebrate mistakes. Mistakes are part of learning and essential to help children develop, learn and grow.



Play Ideas that include younger siblings

If you would like to spend some time connecting with your child(ren) through play, here are a few play ideas that you can try at home.



Ice Play

Freeze flowers or herbs into ice and give them to your children to play with. You can give them spray bottles or toy hammers to try and melt/smash the ice.



Tinker Tray

Gather a selection of items from a toolbox for your child to use (under supervision). Offer egg cartons as an alternative to wood so your child can easily operate the tools safely.



Pom Pom Release

Fill a whisk with a selection of pom poms for your baby to pull out.

Great for developing fine motor skills.



Wall Collage

Create a grid like pattern on an outdoor wall using masking tape. Colour the different sections with coloured chalk. Remove the tape and you will have a colourful pattern.



Lolly Stick Construction

Use masking tape and lolly sticks to make different shapes and designs.



Rainbow Vegetables

Fill an ice cube tray with a variety of chopped vegetables (get your children to help prepare them). Allow your children to play with them and munch on. This is a great way to encourage children to try new foods.