



# Archbishop Cranmer C of E Primary Academy Mental Health and Wellbeing Newsletter

April 2021 – Summer Term 1



Welcome to the fifth edition of our Mental Health and Wellbeing newsletter. We wanted to create a space to share some of the amazing resources that are available to support the mental wealth of our school community.

## Outdoor Health and Wellbeing Activities and Games

Being outdoors is good for us in so many ways, and as the weather gets warmer, why not use this opportunity to boost wellbeing and connect with nature as a family by trying out some of these activities and games:

- **Barefoot Walking:** Did you know that it is thought that walking barefoot on the earth enhances health and provides feelings of well-being? This practice occurs in diverse cultures around the world and walking barefoot on uneven ground helps to strengthen core muscles and supports balance development. Simply choose an appropriate and safe spot, remove your shoes and socks and take a moment to reflect upon how this feels before you start walking around!
- **Special Spot:** Choose a special spot that captures your interest, away from others. Sit or lie quietly in a position comfortable to you and look around, focus on small details or choose to zone-out.
- **Rock and Roll:** Using two small stones, place them onto the back of each of your hands and then walk from A to B, turn around and try to return without dropping either of the stones.
- **Mud Painting:** Use sticks or your hands to make marks in mud, on paper, tree trunks or rocks. Why not try using chalk too, to add highlights to your painting? If you're feeling brave, you could use an old bedsheet to create a large or group picture, using leaves and other natural objects to print details within your artwork.
- **Group Hug:** In a safe area with trees, choose a tree to hug. Perhaps the tree is too large for you to hug on your own – join hands with friends or family members to form a full circle to hug the tree. Try resting your cheek on the trunk, listening to and smelling the tree at the same time.
- **Wilderness Workouts:** Why not try balancing on fallen tree trunks or branches or doing some yoga outdoors? Maybe you could create your own nature gym using trees or fallen objects as points to run, skip or jump off?



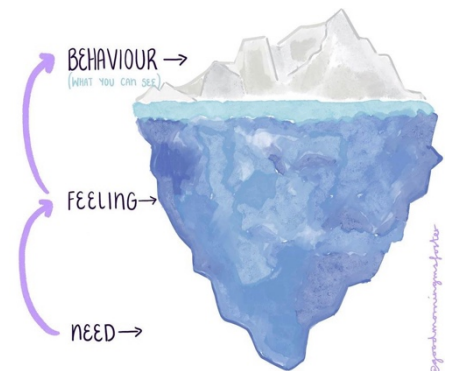
Find lots more ideas [here](#).

## Understanding Emotions

We all have emotions and there are hard-wired for our survival. Behaviours are a communication of our emotions/ feelings. Our relationships with others help us to learn to understand our experiences and regulate our emotions.

Recognising children's feelings and empathising with them is one of the first steps in supporting children in being able to understand and express their emotions. Remember to 'Be a STAR' when empathising with children:

- **STOP** – don't act or react straight away
- **THINK** – what is going on for the child right now? What feeling may be lay underneath the behaviour I'm seeing?
- **ATTUNE** – yourself with that feeling by putting yourself in the child's shoes and maybe...
- **REFLECT** – what would be an equivalent situation for you that could cause you to feel that way?



Helping children to regulate and understand their emotions can be achieved with four steps:

1. **Recognise** their feelings and empathise with them: *"I can see that you are upset; I'm here."*
2. **Label** their feelings and **validate** them: *"Sounds like you might be feeling angry about that. I might be feeling angry if that had happened to me."*
3. Set **limits** on behaviour if needed: *"These are the rules that we follow, doing that is not okay."*
4. **Problem-solving** with the child when they are calm in a relaxed, rational state to explore their feelings and scaffold alternative ideas and actions that could lead to more appropriate and productive outcomes whilst empowering them to believe that they can overcome and manage their behaviour: *"Let's think about what we could have done instead."*

## Coping with Stress

Most people feel stressed sometimes, and it's completely natural! But that doesn't mean it's easy to deal with. Here are some tips from [Childline](#) to help with stress, no matter what's causing it.



- **Write, type or draw:** writing down your thoughts can help you to let out these feelings and think differently. Writing a diary, making notes or drawing can also help you to work out what's making you feel this way.
- **Relaxing:** relaxation means doing something safe and enjoyable which helps you to feel calm. You could try: meditation or mindfulness; muscle relaxation; breathing exercises; listening to your favourite music; going for a walk or spending time outside; or having a bath. Try setting aside some time to relax every day – you could even take inspiration from the well-known Pixar characters in the adjacent illustration! Smiling Mind have a free mindfulness app which you can download [here](#).
- **Plan and prepare:** sometimes, problems can seem too big to deal with so we end up just worrying, without feeling able to solve anything. Try breaking up things into smaller chunks. Laddering is a great tool to help to break down things into manageable steps. Find out more [here](#).
- **Run, walk, skip, swim or skate:** getting active can help to manage stress. Doing something physical releases chemical endorphins into our bodies which help us to cope with difficult feelings.

## Practising Self-Kindness and Self-Compassion

It is thought that people who develop self-compassion are more motivated, resilient, and more able to cope with life's difficulties. Not only can it help us to feel happier, but also lessen feelings of anxiety and depression. Research has found that developing our compassion can create positive effects on our brain and immune system and practising self-kindness in-turn increases empathy for others. This is something which we teach our pupils as part of our HeartSmart RHSE curriculum (learn more about this [here](#)). What kind words can you say to yourself today?

[@laurajaneillustrations](#) on Instagram encourages us to be kind to ourselves with positive affirmations, self-care tips and more!



**You talk, we listen, we help.**

**Turning Point Nottinghamshire Mental Health Helpline**

**0300 555 0730**  
**9am - 11pm, 7 days a week**

[www.turning-point.co.uk/nottingham-helpline](http://www.turning-point.co.uk/nottingham-helpline)



**Healthy Family Teams**  
**Contact Details**

**Advice Line**

0300 123 3387 (OPTION 4)

**ChatHealth**

TEXT ONLY 07507 329952 (11-19 YEAR OLDS)

**Parentline**

TEXT ONLY 07520 619919

**Health for U5s**

[WWW.HEALTHFORUSS.CO.UK](http://WWW.HEALTHFORUSS.CO.UK)

**Family Nurse Partnership**

01623 484829

**Health for Kids**

[WWW.HEALTHFORKIDS.CO.UK](http://WWW.HEALTHFORKIDS.CO.UK)

**Health for Teens**

[WWW.HEALTHFORTEENS.CO.UK](http://WWW.HEALTHFORTEENS.CO.UK)

[www.nottinghamshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/healthy-family-teams](http://www.nottinghamshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/healthy-family-teams)

**For more links, resources and support, please see our school website:**

<https://www.archbishopcranmer.co.uk/covid-19-useful-links/>

*If you come across any useful links, resources or organisations which could feature on our future newsletters, please contact Mrs Hodgson via the school office. Thank you.*