



## Top Tips for Schools to Nurture Early Years Children's Well-being and Self-esteem

- Make a visual time table of the day. Reassure the children by explaining the routines.
- Revisit your boundaries with the children, making it clear what is expected of them.
- Show children around the setting, reminding them of each area. Show them how resources can be used.
- Explain to children what is happening regarding social distancing and what is going to happen next, using age appropriate information and language.
- Provide children with a physical and emotionally safe environment.
- Make lots of time to listen to children's thoughts and fears. This will validate how they are feeling.
- Help children to name their emotions. They could mark-make or draw a picture of what the emotion looks like and ask whereabouts they feel it? Let them know that this is normal as we all have emotions. Giving children vocabulary to identify their emotions helps them to understand how they are feeling and that it will pass. Provide a range of resources and activities to support feelings /emotions (see attached book list)
- Create pictures and books about their experiences of lock down.
- Ensure that children take part in regular physical exercise and movement. Provide opportunities for children to run, climb, spin, balance, jump throughout the day inside and outside.
- Offer lots of creative opportunities inside and on a larger scale outdoors.
- Provide opportunities for children to do relaxation exercises e.g. Yoga/stretches. This has proven to decrease worries and increase focus, improve mood and help sleep
- Practice deep breathing techniques together.
- Learn some mindfulness techniques. E.g. go for a listening walk and see how many different sounds you hear.
- Practise daily positive affirmations. A lovely book to help start practising affirmations is, **Tomorrow I'll Be Brave** by Jessica Hische
- Put on some music and dance. Dancing is fun and releases endorphins, lowers stress and boosts confidence and self-esteem.
- Encourage independence and responsibility. Expect the children to join in jobs and give them responsibility for the running of the day. Children will need you to support them and do jobs alongside them.
- Make a calm corner or box that children can go into when they feel they need quiet time or their own personal space.
- Provide lots of opportunities to go outdoors in nature as this improves mood.
- Play turn taking games.

- Read stories. There are a range of books to support children's well-being and resilience. Listening to stories provides comfort and relaxation.
- Before home time ask your children to think of 1 or 2 things that they enjoyed doing at the setting today. Write them down or draw them and ask the children to put them on a display board.

## **Books**

### **Mindfulness**

- Mindful ideas booklet – Cumbria Early Years Learning Improvement
- Imagine eating a lemon by Jason Rhodes and Richard Dearing
- The listening walk by Paul Showers
- Silence by Lemniscates
- Happy by Nicola Edwards and Katie Hickey

### **Emotional Wellbeing and Self-esteem**

- Red-a crayon story by Michael Hall
- Tough Guys Have feelings Too by Keith Negley
- Dear Girl by Amy Krouse Rosenthal and Paris Rosenthal
- Giraffe Problems by Jory John
- Don't Feed the WorryBug by Andi Green
- The Lion inside by Rachel Bright
- What's My Superpower? by Aviaq Johnston
- I like myself by Karen Beaumont
- The Magic is inside you by Cathy Domoney
- The Invisible string by Patrice Karst
- Only one you by Linda Kranz
- The Huge Bag of Worries by Virginia Ironside
- Giraffes Can't Dance by Giles Andreae and Guy Parker-Rees
- The Little White Owl by Tracey Corderoy
- The Dot by Peter H Reynolds
- Tiny Whale a fishy tail by Joshua George
- The Girl that Never Made Mistakes by Mark Pett and Gary Rubinstein
- I Am Human by Susan Verde
- The Way I Feel by Janan Cain
- Lucy's Blue Day by Chris Duke
- The Colour Monster by Anna Llenas
- The way i feel by Janan Cain
- In my heart by Jo Witek
- Have You Filled a Bucket today by Carol McClod