

Wellbeing @ MPS



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Self-regulation for wellbeing

Welcome back to term 2. Hopefully everyone had a wonderful holiday.

This week's newsletter will be focusing on self-regulation and mindfulness.

Self-regulation is the ability to manage your emotions and behaviour in accordance with the demands of the situation. It is about being able to resist highly emotional reactions to upsetting events or situations, to calm yourself down before you get upset, to adjust to a change in expectations, and how to handle frustration without an outburst. In short, it is the ability to:

Identify and modulate emotions - Control impulses - Make thoughtful and conscious choices - Set goals and achieve them.

Self-regulation is an essential aspect of overall emotional intelligence. Adults and children with self-regulating skills cope better with stress and anxiety. They make better decisions because they listen to their own inner voice rather than external influences. However, self-regulation is a journey. Children learn through many strategies, one is through the imitation of the adult role models.

Here are 5 simple but effective steps for adults to improve their own self-regulation skills:

1. Breathe deeply – when stressed, take 3-10 slow, deep breaths 2. Drink water – our nervous systems are far more sensitive when we are dehydrated. 3. Pause – Place your hand over your heart and pause, do this a few times throughout the day. 4. Think – about positive experiences or feelings 5. Visualise – see positive outcomes in your mind. This does take practice.

As well as modelling these strategies, we can teach children self-control skills using these techniques:

1. Get down to their level – kneeling down creates safety 2. Give Empathy 3. Match their emotional tone – match their emotion with your tone of voice. This helps them feel heard and understood. 4. Give them time - 5. Let them play.

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Mindfulness

Following on from self-regulation, we are going to look at Mindfulness which ties in with self-regulation very well.

What is Mindfulness? Well, Mindfulness about finding strategies to calm the mind depending on the situation you are in. There are huge benefits to practicing Mindfulness. It has been shown to: decrease stress, anxiety and depression, allow connection with the yourself, bring a sense of peacefulness and clarity, increase self-awareness, develop your own confidence, decrease worrying thoughts and allow compassion and empathy to grow, improve sleep, strengthen the immune system and improve concentration and memory.

Being Mindful in everyday life can be encouraged through simple activities such as cooking, eating and helping out in the garden. Simple activities to promote Mindfulness include: jigsaws, colouring in books, arts and crafts activities, nature walks, listening to music and sports.

6 tips for teaching Mindfulness to children:

1. Practice Mindfulness yourself – the more you do it, the more likely children will want to engage with it.
2. Get the children involved – set aside some time to explain what Mindfulness is and why it is important.
3. Start small – Mindfulness doesn't need to be long.
4. Make it a habit – allocate time each day to practice it together and choose a time that works for you all. https://www.actionforhappiness.org/media/852570/march_2020.jpg - good website for ideas.
5. Get moving – You don't need to be still to be Mindful. It can involve movement. Yoga is perfect: Cosmic kids on YouTube, lots of different videos to try out.
6. Be patient – changes take time. Consistency is key.

Mindful Activities for children to try at home:

Counting Breaths – sit comfortably with eyes open or shut and listen to your natural breathing. Count the breaths in and count the breaths out. You can repeat this as many times as you like.

Blowing bubbles – Have a small bottle of bubbles and encourage the children to gently blow bubbles. Can they blow the perfect bubble?

Breathing buddies – Bring a teddy or any soft toy, lay on the floor and put the teddy/toy on their stomach. Breathe in silence for one minute, watching their teddies going up and down on their tummy.

My beautiful place – visualise a beautiful place that makes you feel happy and calm.

Make a calm jar – get a jar, some glitter glue with water and a few drops of food colouring and whisk together until it is all mixed. Secure the lid onto the jar and shake it when you need time to calm.



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Why does school attendance matter?

Missing a few days of school here and there may not seem a big deal, but research shows that it can have a significant impact on children's learning.

Children who miss a substantial amount of school fall behind their peers, and struggle to catch up.

Most of the work they miss is never made up, which can lead to big gaps in their learning.

Friendships can be affected by persistent absence, too: it can be hard for a child who misses lots of school to form relationships with their classmates.

Students who miss 15 days of school per year will miss a year of school before their senior year. A student with 90% attendance will miss 4 weeks of school per year.

Being 10 minutes late for class every day means the student will miss 6 days of instruction over the year.

Students who attend regularly have an increased likelihood of graduating.

