

Dear Parents/Carers



Welcome to week 12 of our Wellbeing Wednesday updates. We hope you found Wellness Week interesting and that you found some of the resources useful.

This week's theme is Connect with a focus on Mindful activities. Through mindfulness, we learn to observe and watch our day-to-day experiences. This means using our senses and experiences to learn. Learning about how to focus, improve concentration and be calm. Mindfulness can also help us learn how to manage difficult emotions.

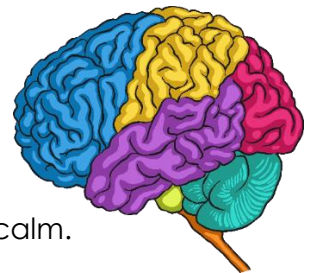
This week's update contains the following:

1. Mindfulness explained and some activities to try.
2. Week 12 Quiz
3. This week's 'Challenge'
4. A new recipe to try
5. Useful websites and resources

Mindfulness explained:

Mindfulness is not about getting the right or wrong answers, we just want to see what we think and feel. An important part of mindfulness is learning to be OK with not knowing all the answers. It's about making time to be in the moment to reflect and to look closely at our own experiences. Mindfulness helps us to understand ourselves, our behaviour and our habits. Mindfulness practices train us to be more focused, settled and calm. Through mindfulness, we learn to pay attention to our:

- thoughts;
- emotions;
- Physical feelings.



We can then see how these affect our mood and behaviour. Learning to pay attention also helps us notice when our mind has become busy or scattered.

Do you ever feel that the mind is unsettled and full of thoughts?

This is the mind being scattered. It is quite normal to have a scattered mind but it can make it very difficult to concentrate. It can also affect how we are feeling. Psychologists have discovered that when our minds are scattered, we are more likely to feel worried, sad and unsettled. This is because we are not focused on how things are but on the thoughts and worries in our minds. These thoughts may not be real or true but they affect our mood, behaviour and how we feel because we focus on them and not on how things actually are. A key part of mindfulness is learning to recognise the scattered mind and what to do to help settle our minds and feel calm.

Five Minutes of mindfulness:

There are many short activities you or your children can do to take just 5 minutes out of a busy day to practice mindfulness. Over time you will find that you are able to settle and calm active 'scattered' minds more quickly and in turn feel calmer.

Bubble Breathing:

1. Pretend you are holding a bubble wand in your hand
2. Breathe in deeply and breathe out slowly. Now imagine you are blowing bubbles around the room.
3. Breathe in and breathe out. Imagine the bubbles have happy faces on them.
4. Blow happy face bubbles around the room.
5. Imagine you are sending out happy thoughts and love in the bubbles as you blow them around the room.
6. Feel yourself becoming calm and relaxed with each breath.



Note: Some children might find this easier using actual bubbles.



Bumblebee Breathing:

1. Sit comfortably on the floor and open your hands out in front of your face.
2. Put your fingers over your eyes and your thumbs gently in your ears.
3. Breathe in through your nose and hum quietly like a bee as you slowly breathe out.
4. Remember to hum like a bee. As you are humming, think happy and calm thoughts.
5. Pretend to be a bee buzzing around the flowers happily.

A Mindful Minute

Whenever you feel you need to, to take a mindful minute during each day. Choose an activity to do mindfully. For example, colour a picture, eat a snack, look out of the window or go for a walk. Whatever you choose to do, make sure you are being mindful when you are doing it, consider:

- What can you see?
- What can you hear?
- What can you smell?
- How does it feel or taste?
- Take time to really think about what you notice.
- Relax your breathing and lose yourself in the moment.
- Your mind might start to wander or you might realise you are daydreaming. This is OK. Simply notice this has happened, then bring your attention back to the mindful activity and gentle breathing.

Well done for taking a mindful minute! How do you feel?

To get you started, we have attached a range of mindfulness colouring activities to try. Take a minute or two to focus on colouring in the images. Focus on the colours you choose, the feel of the pen or pencils on the paper. How does it feel, really try and focus your mind.

Body Scan Guided Meditation for children

Meditation is a way in which we can practise being calm and still, really noticing what we feel right in the moment. It can help to keep our mind and body healthy. Attached is a guide sheet to support you in helping your child or students to practice simple meditation.



This week's Quiz:

Have some fun and try to answer these questions. We will send out the answers with next week's Wellbeing Wednesday update.

1. With reference to time, what do the letters GMT stand for?
2. What company was co-founded by Bill gates and Paul Allen?
3. British stamps are different to any other stamps in the world as they do not bear what?
4. What is a quarter of 100%?
5. How many days are there in a leap year?
6. Which two continents does Russia belong to?
7. Veinte is Spanish for which number?
8. What is the smallest of the eight official planets in our solar system?
9. Which famous actor starred alongside his son in the 2013 film 'After Earth'?
10. What nationality was Albert Einstein?

The answers to last week's quiz questions are below:

Quiz Week 10 answers:

1. Greenwich Mean Time
2. Microsoft
3. The name of the country
4. 25%
5. 366
6. Europe and Asia (Eurasia)
7. 20
8. Mercury
9. Will Smith
10. Red, blue, yellow

Weekly Challenge

Try Hot Writing:

Choose a short period of time such as one minute and try to keep your pen or pencil moving for the entire time. Choose a subject to focus your thoughts or simply write about whatever arises in your mind. If you can't think of what to write then write 'I can't think of what to write...' Do whatever you need to in order to keep writing for a minute.

Weekly Recipe to try at home:

Malteser Rocky Road recipe



This easy Malteser Rocky Road recipe is a fun and quick No Bake Malteser Cake. Perfect as a chocolate treat for children and grown-ups too, this tray bake is a take on traditional chocolate tiffin, packed with Maltesers and marshmallows.

Prep Time 15 minutes

Ingredients

150 g Butter
200 g [Milk chocolate](#)
200 g Dark chocolate
4 tbsp Golden syrup
300 g Maltesers
180 g Mini marshmallows



To decorate:

200 g White chocolate
100 g Maltesers

Instructions

1. Melt the butter, milk chocolate, dark chocolate and golden syrup together and stir thoroughly. (See recipe tips above regarding melting.)
2. Allow the chocolate to cool slightly and then stir in the Maltesers and mini marshmallows.
3. Line a 20cm x 20cm baking tin with baking paper and press the mixture firmly in.
4. Over the top. Press in the remaining Maltesers.
5. Allow to set in the fridge for at least a couple of hours.
6. Turn out of the tin and cut into small chunks using a very sharp knife.
7. This recipe is fun and easy and very delicious – ENJOY

Useful Contacts:

Six Simple Mindfulness Practices for Kids with Autism

<http://blog.stageslearning.com/blog/six-simple-mindfulness-practices-for-kids-with-autism>

Mindfulness NHS

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/mindfulness/>

NHS Bedtime meditation video

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/nhs-fitness-studio/bedtime-meditation/>

We hope you find this week's Wellbeing Wednesday helpful, we would be grateful for any feedback or pictures

Many thanks
Ms Sweetlove and Mrs Halton

