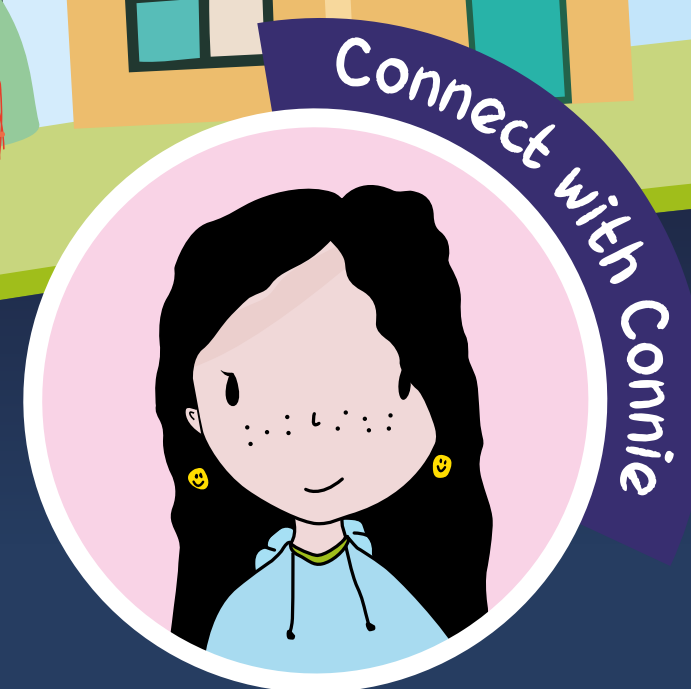


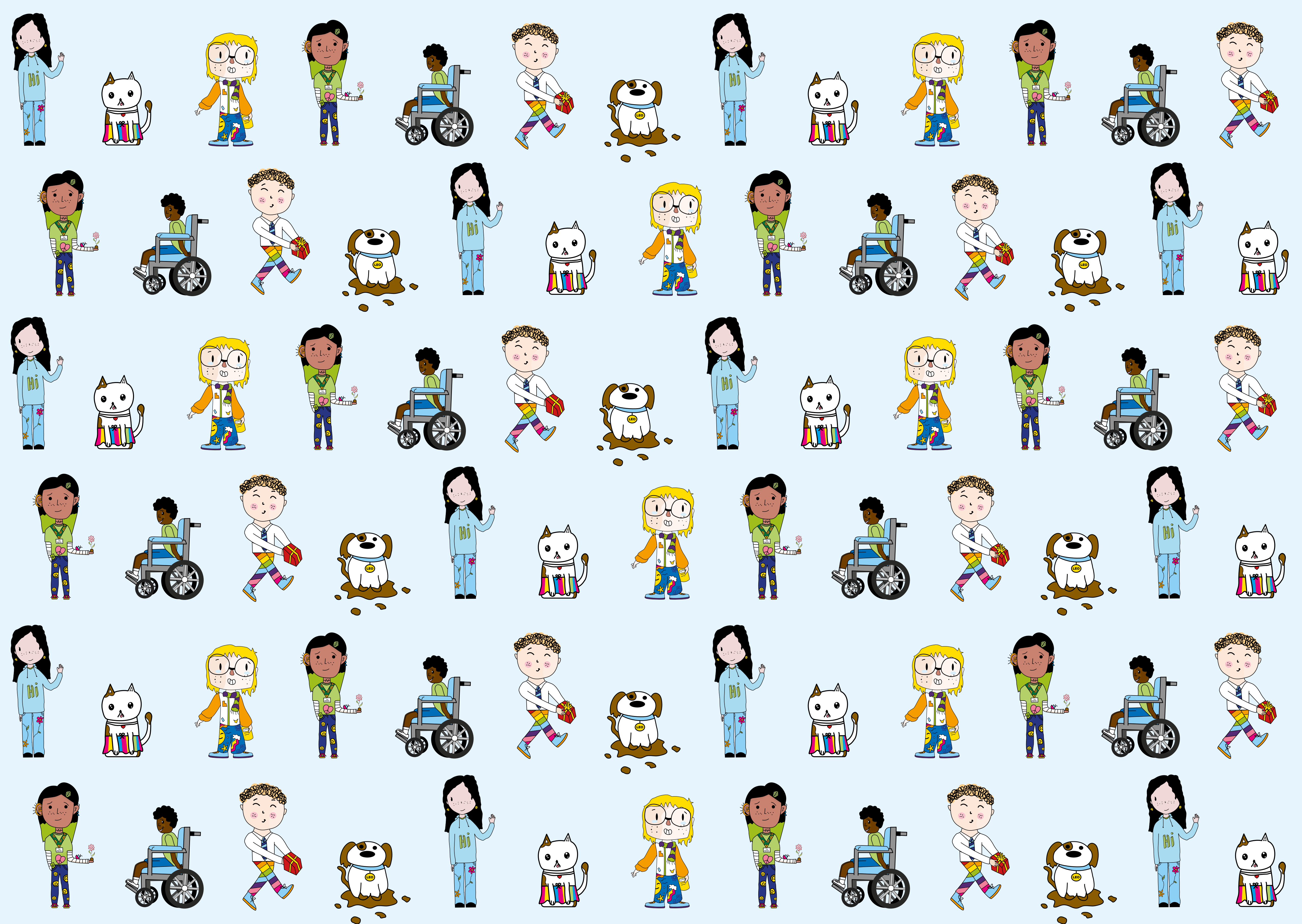
5 A Day

mental health
and wellbeing guide



CROYDON
www.croydon.gov.uk

How to put '5 Ways to Wellbeing' at the centre of everyday life for 0-7 Year olds



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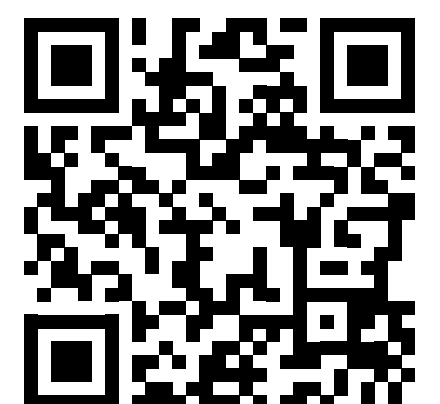
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Scan this QR code to access all the
5 Ways to Wellbeing resources.
Alternatively you can visit
www.wellbeingway.co.uk



Introduction

‘Positive wellbeing is about feeling good and functioning well’

(New Economics Foundation 2008)

These are the ‘5 Ways to Wellbeing’. They are the best ways to support and improve wellbeing for children and adults and are based on the latest scientific research. The approach uses the idea of 5 things we can do in every day life to improve our mental health and wellbeing.

CONNECT

BE ACTIVE

TAKE NOTICE

KEEP LEARNING

GIVE

The Aims

Croydon Council wishes to introduce the 5 ways to families and to practitioners working with children 0-7 years old. This will provide a shared language around wellbeing for everyone in the borough. We have produced a toolkit of resources that can be used by families and settings, which are designed to:

1. Ensure children have lots of experiences that develop the 5 Ways to Wellbeing each day, through activities done with parents, carers and professionals.
2. Ensure children develop direct awareness of 5 Ways to Wellbeing in an age-appropriate way.

By learning about 5 ways to wellbeing young children in the borough will begin to understand the best ways to find joy, to manage difficulties to build resilience.

In young children you can encourage resilience by encouraging them to ‘**have a go**,’ ‘**keep trying**’ and ‘**bounce back**’ when things go wrong. Helping a child know they can turn to someone else for support and to model is also part of developing resilience. By taking part in simple activities alongside parents and carers we can nurture and embed skills in self-care which we hope children will carry through life.

‘Thinking about all young children, it is a priority to build resilience-boosting into everything we do with them. If we focus on resilience we will be contributing to each child’s wellbeing & life-long learning.’ Goldschmied and Jackson

Context

The funding for this project came from The Department of Education Covid Recovery Grant.

The resources were designed in response to the adversity and challenges to resilience many children and families faced both during and since the Coronavirus pandemic.

The borough of Croydon has also welcomed many refugees, and we acknowledge many children and families who arrive from countries in crisis will have experienced trauma and a loss of the pre-existing networks which supported their wellbeing.

Many families in Croydon are struggling in the current cost of living crisis, meaning budgets for entertainment and stimulation are extremely limited.

For all these reasons we strongly recommend that anyone using this pack is encouraged to take those actions which are best suited to their personal and family circumstances – there is no right or wrong way to follow the wellbeing path we are setting out in this pack.

Parents & Carers

The good news is you are already on your wellbeing journey. Each of the 'ways' are things which most people are already doing.

One of the best ways to look after your child's wellbeing is to look after yourself.

Following the types of activities suggested allows you enhance your own wellbeing, through embedding the 5 ways into your own life.

Don't forget - each individual, both child and adult, is unique and has their own starting point. The guide will help you to think about where you and your child/children are on your personal journey of wellbeing.

The suggestions may help you to re-establish old routines or make a new start a little easier to navigate. Wherever you are at, the guide will give you practical, simple ideas of how to take the next steps to continually improve your quality of life as a family.

All activities are designed to be simple and free or low cost, done in homes of any size or out and about in public spaces.

We recognise that children can grow up with various family backgrounds, all of which can provide loving and stable care. Such backgrounds include families where children live with single parents, foster carers, adoptive parents, same-sex families or children who are brought up by relatives.

This document refers to 'parents' but this should be taken to mean parents or carers from any kind of family structure.

Section 1 - Try and Why

Section 1 contains lots of suggested activities to do with your child that link to 5 ways to wellbeing. It also refers to child development theory to explain why these activities are important. Pick a single activity to do which will enhance wellbeing or use the wellbeing tree to make a plan to increase wellbeing across all 5 ways.

Children with additional needs and SEND

Every individual has their own starting point from which to find their next achievable step. When using the storybook with children who have additional needs, parents and professionals should select the activity which most suits where the child is developmentally.

It will also be helpful to think about the child's sensory needs when choosing which activities to do. The further resources page offers more information on where parents can find additional support.

Notice and Name

Throughout the guide we highlight the importance of noticing and naming feelings - it's a powerful and easy way to enhance wellbeing that can be done through focusing on the 5 Ways.



5 A Day on Wellbeing Way Storybook

To accompany the guide we have created a storybook which introduces the 5 ways to Wellbeing, which you can read with your child. Copies of the story, which is called 5 a Day on Wellbeing Way have been sent out to children in schools and early years settings as well as libraries in Croydon.

An online version of this story being read aloud is available by visiting www.wellbeingway.co.uk or on Family Space Croydon website.



Scan this QR code to access the 5 A Day On Wellbeing Way Children's Book

The Wellbeing Tree

You could use the guide in your own time or with the help of a practitioner in an early years setting.

The wellbeing tree has been designed to:

1. Help you to remember the 5 Ways to Wellbeing through a visual aid
2. Help you to create a practical plan to build resilience and increase wellbeing over time for your child and yourself

→ See **The Wellbeing Tree Template** on page 5 to learn how to make a plan to increase wellbeing.

KEEP LEARNING

The branches that continue to increase in number over time remind us of lifelong learning

TAKE NOTICE

The detailed leaf reminds us to take notice

BE ACTIVE

Growing strong like the trunk means being active

CONNECT

Like the root system of a healthy tree deep and broad connections will support wellbeing

GIVE

The flower from the tree reminds us to give



Tree Template

Think about Each of 5 Ways. Build on your strengths to increase your wellbeing. Write an example of what you already do with your child and then choose an extra activity to add to your daily life.

Roots (Connect)

List family, friends, groups

+ add going to new stay and play

Trunk (Be active)

Loves water play in bath

+ add going out to find puddles in winter or paddling pool in summer

Leaf (Take Notice)

Loves staring at clouds

+ add lie down and do together next time in park

Branch (Keep Learning)

Loves hiding in tunnels in playground

+ collect sheets and blankets to make dens at home

Flower (Give)

Loves going to childminder

+ add make a card to say thank you for all the fun to give to him/her

Give 



Keep learning 



Take Notice 



Be Active 



Connect 



Download the
Wellbeing Tree
template



CONNECT with Connie

When our wellbeing is at its peak we have some deep relationships with other people, together with a wider number of more social connections.

So we may have a close family member, a good friend, a neighbour we can call on for help, someone we chat to at stay and play, familiar faces in the community who we say hello to. These relationships are different but all important to help us feel connected. This is why we have two sections of activities to help develop both deep and broad connections for yourself and your child.

It takes time for each of these supportive structures to develop, and they change over time.

Our relationships can also be dependent on our life circumstances – things like where we live, the hours we work, the care commitments we may have.

Small steps to build up relationships and break down isolation can help to develop resilience in both children and adults.

The connection between child and parent/ caregiver is of course hugely significant, although it is also very emotionally challenging at times.

Knowing ways to nurture this relationship will enrich both child and adult wellbeing.



Chat

Be together

Bond

Engage



Deep Connections

Back and Forth

Try: Choose a key care giving moment and use it as a cue to tune in to your baby or child. - Nappy changing, feeding, bathing.

1. Watch your baby's facial expression and listen to sounds they make.
- 2 Copy
- 3 See what they do next
- 4 Copy again

Notice how you respond to each other

Why: This is one way even the youngest child knows they are connected. It is the beginning of communication. It creates feelings of calm and is part of a process called co-regulation.

Bounce Babble Back

Try: Follow their lead. Focus on what your baby looks at, points to or grabs for. Take them closer to what they are interested in. Name it and talk about it. Praise any babble or attempt to say words back e.g. You want teddy? This teddy? Teddy. Lovely teddy. Give teddy a cuddle.

Why: By engaging and responding children learn their feelings and thought are understood, helping them to feel safe and secure.

Boogie Beats

Try: Take turns to make a sound/beat. Use pans and spoons, homemade

shakers. You could do the same activity with clapping or dancing. As your child's skill level develops you can introduce more beats or changes to create a challenge, such as playing quieter or louder, faster or slower. Focus on listening and giving time for response.

Why: Music is a fantastic way for children to communicate without having to find words.

Give It Time

Try: When you ask a question try counting to 10 in your head before expecting a response. If you don't get one, try to answer question yourself and then think of a different one.

Why: A child's brain is learning how to translate information. Their speech muscles are practising the movements for different sounds. They will need longer to reply.

Story Snuggles

Try: Look at books together any time of day, not just bedtime. Snuggle up, take turns turning pages, look closely at illustrations and talk about what you see.

Why: Short sessions of one to one time embed emotional and physical security at any age.

Drip Drop Loving Moments

Try: Have a big cuddle, give tickles, hold a gaze. Do this as often as possible for a few seconds or minutes.

Why: Filling your day with small moments of love is better than using occasional big events to show you care.

Pitch Positivity

Try: When your child's behaviour is challenging use phrases such as 'That's not like you...' 'You are better than that...' 'I see you as...'

Why: This approach will help them to keep a positive self-image in difficult times. It is vital for a child's self-esteem to 'feel lovely and lovable' and 'capable of bringing joy to another'.

Tree Hugging

Try: Find a tree explore its textures. With your child/children try to wrap your arms around it hold hands and squeeze!!!

Why: It is proven being around trees can improve health issues such as depression, ADHD and headaches.

Magical Memories

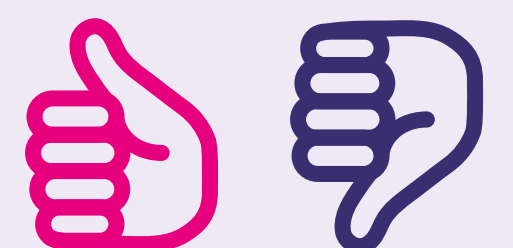
Try: At special moments write what your child did, said, where you went on a piece of paper and keep it in a container to look back on. OR Create an album of pictures on your phone/device. It might be something significant- first giggle, step or word or something your child enjoyed.

Why: As children get older they love to hear about what they were like as a younger person, how they have changed. Sharing simple happy memories fills a child with self-worth.

Notes:

Choose an activity from the list to focus on with your child. Make notes here, add your own ideas, keep a record of what your child enjoys and celebrate what goes well.

How did it go?



Broad connections

The strength of our support network can directly impact our ability to cope in difficult times. It is easy for any parent to feel isolated and that you are the only one feeling overwhelmed or drained. Take steps to reach out and you will find you are definitely not alone!

Be in it to Win it

Join prenatal, baby groups, stay and play sessions, rhyme times, faith group sessions, coffee mornings. See resources page for local suggestions. If you feel unsure, you are not the only one, lots of people feel nervous in new situations. Contact your local Children Centre, they are there to support you to make connections. See resources page for contact details and other suggestions.

Taking the next step

Try: Say hello, wave or ask how are you to someone at a group or in a playground.

Why: Building a network of support takes time. Friendships for young and old begin with a first smile or word.

Follow in your footsteps

Try: At a play group or in the playground model key phrases ‘Hello can i join in?’ ‘Can i have a turn?’

Why: It takes a long time for children to learn how to play collaboratively. They need to practise and repeat experiences over time to learn the rules of interaction.

Branch Out

Try: Choose a different playground, park, woodland or play session to visit sometimes. Build up a range of experiences over time.

Why: Introducing a range of play experiences over time will help children to embed social and physical skills. See local resources page for ideas.

Peek and Seek

Try: Play Peek a boo everyday- hide behind your hands, a cushion for a few seconds. Then pop out and call peek-a boo.

OR

Play hide and seek around the home or outdoors.

Why: It takes a long time for children to learn then when you go (whether for a minute or a long time) you will come back. This understanding is called object permanence.

Touch Base

Try: At play sessions/ in the playground stay in sight but allow your child to wander away to explore for short times.

Why: Young children are constantly balancing a desire to explore with a need for reassurance and safety. When they ‘touch base’ with a caregiver they are ‘emotionally refuelling’, getting ready to be brave and explore again.

Fair Warnings

Try: When getting ready to finish playing try to give simple warnings, say something like ‘We have got time for 1 more game. Then we will go and make lunch.’

Why: Beginnings and endings can be tricky. preparing a child and telling them what is next can help them cope.

People That help Us

Try: Draw or paint an picture of people that help your child. Help your child to understand that there is a range of people around us that help us in different ways. for example.... as text

Why: This will support a child to feel seen, protected and connected to a wider society.

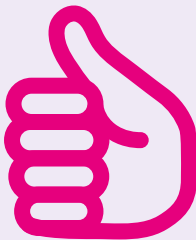
“The more you are with other people the more important it becomes to have your own safe people to engage with.”

Margot Sunderland

Notes:

Choose an activity from the list to focus on with your child. Make notes here, add your own ideas, keep a record of what your child enjoys and celebrate what goes well.

How did it go?



Connie Connect's Game

What is missing?

A simple game, to develop turn taking, paying attention, vocabulary, memory and the understanding that things go and come back. Play outdoors or indoors.

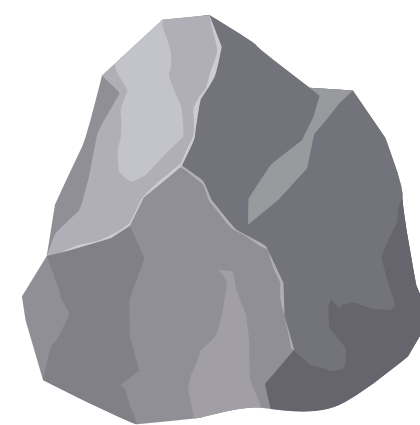
1. Select some natural objects or any household items/toys and lay them on table, floor or tray.
2. Help your child to memorise what they can see.
3. Cover the items with a blanket/tea towel.
4. Remove one object without the child seeing.
5. Take away the blanket and then ask the child to see if they can tell what is missing.

Simplify by using less objects.

Try and find these items to play with:



A green leaf



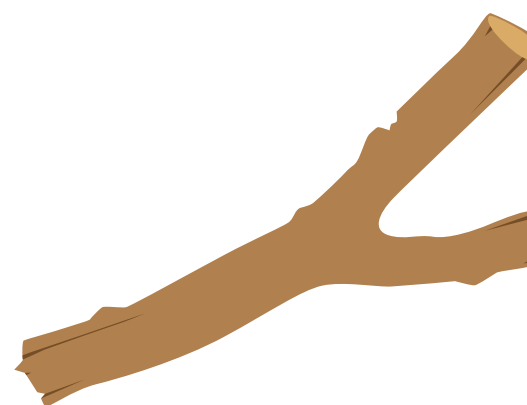
A small stone/rock



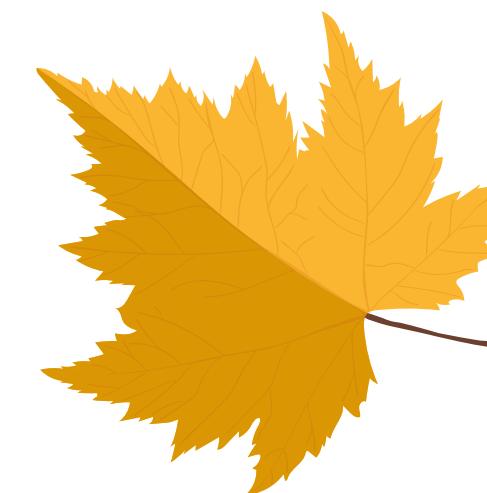
A flower



A coin



A stick



A yellow or brown leaf



A small fruit



A pen



An acorn, pod or nut

This is my favourite game!



BE ACTIVE

with Akhim

When we use our bodies for physical activity our emotional wellbeing improves. For young children movement is key to learning. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional wellbeing.

Offering lots of opportunities to be active, explore space, through tummy time to exploring increasingly complicated climbing frames, will develop strength and coordination.

Fine motor skills develop through learning to grasp, hold and then manipulate objects and tools. This takes time and practise over many years.

Mastering these skills involves the development of perseverance and confidence.

By persevering in physically appropriate challenges, we strengthen our ability to face and overcome difficulties of all types.

Every individual has their own strengths, unique starting point and pace of development. Nurture your child's blossoming interests whilst encouraging a wide range of sensory experience.



Akhir's Activities

Squidge and Squeeze

Try: At home or at play sessions. Explore wet and dry sand, playdough, mud, paint with your child.

Explore dry cornflour then add water, notice how it changes, leave it to dry out, explore again, crack, add water again. Use words to describe the textures like 'smooth, slippery, squashy, wet, gooey...'

Why: The development of both wide vocabulary and willingness to try new foods for a balanced diet has been linked to confidence to try messy play.

Softly, Softly

Try: Some children are unsure of different textures or not keen on messy play. Try touching the material yourself while putting their hand on top of yours. Notice and name how it feels. Alternatively use cling film or plastic to cover the object and press it. reduce the cover over time to encourage direct touch.

Spoon, Fork, Knife

Try: When weaning allow little ones to try to use a spoon to feed themselves. As children develop fine motor skills and co-ordination begin to introduce control a child's fork and then a knife to cut food.

Why: This will develop independence and confidence to cope with eating with less adult support.

Sq-well-ch water play

The easiest and often most popular sensory play is water play. Use a pot or pan and some water. Explore ideas of hot, warm, cold. Put a towel or mat on floor first. Use a pot or pan or just a small cup of water. Use hands, clothes or tools to make gentle ripples, trickles, drips and splashes. If your child loves water find local free paddling pool in summer OR layer up clothes and waterproofs and go puddle jumping on a rainy day.

Scavenger Hunt

Try: When you are at home or out and about set small challenges

- Find a stone that is NOT round
- Find a leaf that is NOT green
- 5 items of the same colour

Make up your own or ask your child to challenge you!

Game on

Try: Play games such as throwing rolled up socks in a basket, doing obstacle courses in the park or at home - try going over/around pillows and cushions. Play snap, pairs or board games.

Why: All of these games will refine fine and gross motor skills. These types of activities help develop the ability to control impulse, take turns and increase concentration.

This is called Executive Function which an important part of healthy child development. (EYFS)

Don't be a Fuddy Duddy- Get Muddy!

Try: Encourage play in mud kitchens, digging, scraping at mud, moulding with mud, mud pictures. Model being comfortable with a bit of mud and get stuck in yourself!

Why: Exposing young children to natural materials such as soil boosts their immune system. Encountering 'friendly bacteria' in soil increases our serotonin hormone levels, improving mood.

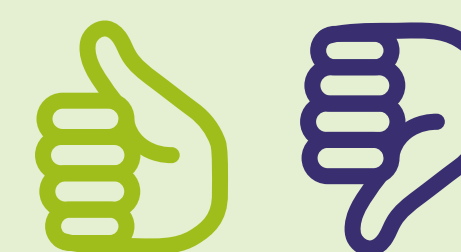
"To move, to run, to find things out by new movement, to feel one's life in every limb, that is the life of early childhood."

Margaret MacMillan

Notes:

Choose an activity from the list to focus on with your child. Make notes here, add your own ideas, keep a record of what your child enjoys and celebrate what goes well.

How did it go?



What Akhim loves to do to keep active

What Am I?

1. Take turns pretending to be any animal or choose a theme:
Animals you might find near a tree, by the water, in the jungle, in the rainforest...
2. Use your body to become that creature for 20 seconds or however long it takes to get the answer!
Tailor this to your own child's physical ability, age or stage.



Some suggestions to get you started...



Lion



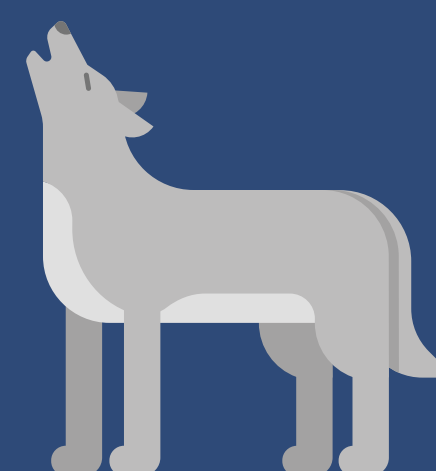
Dinosaur



Butterfly



Squirrel



Wolf



Parrot

Now why don't you try some yoga poses?



Dog Pose



Flamingo Pose



Frog Pose



Cat Pose



Turtle Pose



Giraffe Pose

TAKE NOTICE with Nina



When events in the outside world or our personal circumstances feel overwhelming, returning to your body to notice what physical sensations are happening allows you to regain some control.

Being in a state of mindfulness is to be 'attentive to and aware of what is taking place in the present' (NEF).

Tuning in to sensations and feelings has been shown to enhance wellbeing.

When a person is more in touch with their true emotional state they are more able to find ways to feel better.

Helping a child to name feelings and have tactics to manage difficult emotions is the process of self-regulation, a key part of child development. (EYFS)

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Tune in

Name Feelings

Be curious

Enjoy the moment

Nina's Activities

Take a Leaf Out of Their Book

Try: Follow your child's interest. Tune into the shape of the clouds, the shape, colour, texture of a leaf or flower. This is mindfulness and children can be the experts guiding you, feel the benefits together.

Why: Children are drawn to parts of nature that we as adults often ignore. Everything is new to a child and they carry a sense of awe and wonder. Try to celebrate this!

5 Senses Safari

Try: At home or out and about notice:

- 5 things you can see
- 4 things you can touch
- 3 things you can hear
- 2 things you can smell
- 1 thing you can taste

Mindful Moments of self Care

Try: Help your child to 'tune in' to their senses as you daily activities, to be 'in the moment'. For example, as you brush your teeth focus on how the brush feels on each tooth, the sound of the brushing, the taste and smell of the paste. Try washing hands or face in a mindful way.

Taste-ful

Try: Really concentrate on the feel and taste of food in mouth - For example the bumps on a strawberry, the smoothness of milk.

Why: This is a simple mindful activity and also supports children to enjoy eating without distraction.

Stress Less

Try: Use the sense of touch to relax and bring yourself and your child back into the present moment. Create sensory objects- fill a balloon with lentils/rice. Squeeze, mould, stretch. Massaging feet, hands and backs can encourage relaxation, connection and calm.

Name it, Don't Shame it

Try: read books about feelings or look at pictures of people and children in magazines. Ask 'How do you thin they are feeling?' 'Do you remember a time you felt that way?'

Why: Research shows that when a child can name feelings it changes their brain development and allows them to cope with their emotions and 'self-regulate.'

Down to Earth

Try: Find a spot outdoors and take off your footwear. Stand still or walk around. Take some time to feel the grass, earth beneath your feet and tune in to the sensations.

You could also sit or lie down and simply feel your body sink into the ground.

Why: Reconnecting or grounding like this can enable a child to refocus and move on from heightened emotional states. (AF)

And Breathe

Try: Our breath is an important resource we have for refocusing and calming, if used correctly. After all, breath is something we carry with us everywhere! Use these techniques for children to understand what their breath is, how to notice it and how to use it to help themselves.

Step 1 - breath in through the nose

Step 2 - Pause

Step 3 - Breath out (through nose or mouth)

Make sure that you breath out slower than you breath in - as this encourages release of calming hormones.



Teddy bear breathing
Lie down, place teddy/soft toy on the child's tummy. Encourage child to notice teddy rise and fall as we breathe.

Notes:

Choose an activity from the list to focus on with your child. Make notes here, add your own ideas, keep a record of what your child enjoys and celebrate what goes well.

How did it go?



Nina's breathing exercises

Give Yourself 5 breathing

Place your palm and your child's together. Run your finger up and down your child's fingers.

From thumb edge to little finger edge. Breathe in on up, down on over and down. Allow the child to do the same to your hand.

In moments of distress or calm use your hands and your breath to tune in to your body. This is a technique that be used anywhere, anytime to refocus, tune in or just for fun!



GIVE 5
YOURSELF

Breathe in ←
Breathe out →

KEEP LEARNING

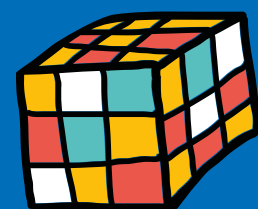


with Lenny

For children 'learning' is essential to brain and social development. (NEF) Gaining pleasure from learning new things, making progress and achieving goals enhances self-esteem.

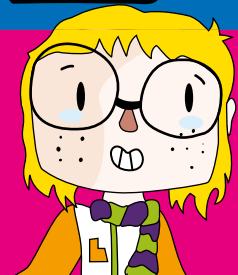
Celebrating milestones in an individual child's development, whether that is smiling, rolling, taking first steps, learning to read a new word or tie their own shoelaces will build self-worth and determination.

Experiencing difficulty achieving something and how it feels to fail is an important part of learning.



Lenny's
Activity Ideas

18



Lenny's
Favourite Activity

19

Lenny's Activities

A Risk Worth Taking

Try: For gross motor skill development it might be allowing freedom in how they move, climb, balance. For fine motor skill development allow time for practising how they control tools such as chinks, pencils, brushes, blocks and scissors.

Why: To build attributes such as confidence, perseverance and resilience, children need freedom and time to explore and repeat actions.

This can mean standing back and allowing them to 'have a go' and take a risk and having patience whilst a child keeps trying.

From Tiny Acorns...

Try: If a child refuses or struggles to do something, break it down into small steps and praise each snippet of progress. In a meltdown allow for the release of big feelings in a safe way. Together, when they are calmer and able to focus, talk together about talk about 'what went wrong? What is the hard part? What can I try next time?'

Why: Developing a 'growth mindset' involves helping a child to understand that failure is part of learning and success. Introduce language that encourages self-belief: 'I can't do that yet, I will.' 'I made a mistake, I can learn from that.'

New Tricks

Try: Model taking pleasure in learning new skills and share your skills with your child. Cook together or learn to cook together! Sew together or learn to sew together!

Find affordable ways to keep learning and ways to have new experiences through accessing local newspapers, social media and libraries.

Look out for open days such as the local fire station or when the second-hand bike sales are coming to your area.

Why: Learning new skills is a lifelong process, in the workplace, becoming a parent or just for fun!

Loosening up

Try: Gather blankets, sheets, scarves for den building. Collect boxes and tubes for model making. Add pots, pans and sieves to water/sand play.

Why: Open ended or 'loose part' play such as sand/water play, junk modelling, and construction allows children to be independent learners.

By experimenting and problem-solving children learn to cope with differing outcomes. This kind of play encourages flexible thinking.

Goal orientated

Try: Choose a time of day, perhaps after lunch or dinner, play a board game or do a puzzle.

Why: Structured games with a goal allow a child the experience of winning and losing. Card games and board games give the opportunity to manage emotions of disappointment, frustration, pride and excitement in a safe way.

'I never lose, I either win or I learn.'

Nelson Mandela

Notes:

Choose an activity from the list to focus on with your child. Make notes here, add your own ideas, keep a record of what your child enjoys and celebrate what goes well.

How did it go?

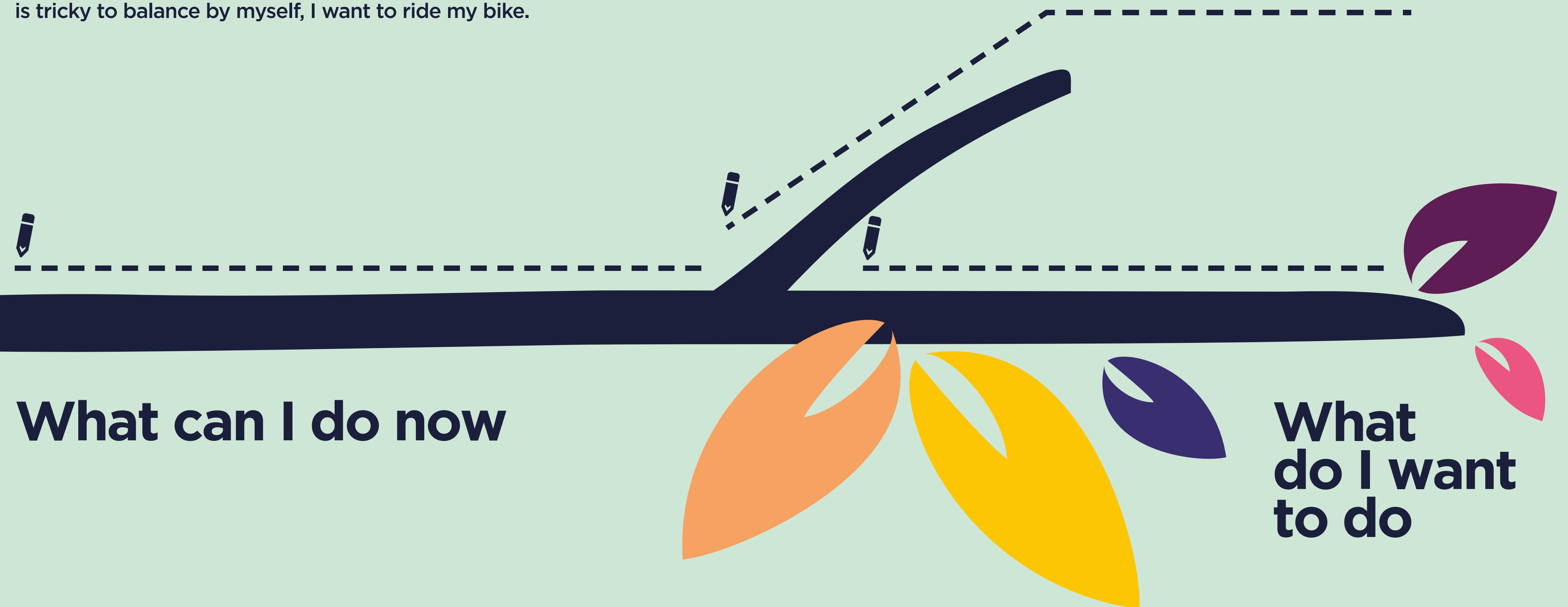


Lenny's favourite activity

The Not Yet branch

Use the template or draw your own branch. Ask your child to think of something they really want to learn to do. Break it down to help to think about what they need to practise to achieve their goal. For example: I can ride with stabilisers, it is tricky to balance by myself, I want to ride my bike.

What are the tricky parts



What can I do now

What do I want to do

GIVE

with
Gilbert

Having a sense of purpose and feeling we are visible in society has been shown to have a positive impact on wellbeing.

Connecting with a wide variety of people allows for the development of empathy and compassion.

Seeing adults demonstrate care for others teaches children how to be caring themselves.

Being thankful for what we have encourages a 'mindful' attitude of being in the moment.

Helping children to understand that gaining lots of material possessions doesn't breed happiness will encourage a balanced perspective and self-control.

Try to help your child notice the feelings they have when doing something they enjoy, rather than focusing on how good it feels to get a reward (sticker or new toy). This is called intrinsic motivation.



Gilbert's Activities

Great to be Grateful

Try: choose a time of day, for example on walk to school or at bedtime, list 5 things you are grateful for eg; my teddy, the sunshine today, my kind teacher...

Why: Saying thanks feels good and is good for us.

Give thanks

Try: Make a card/postcard/picture for a friend, relative, neighbour- maybe someone that touches your life in a positive way without even realising it!

The Power is in Your Hands

Try: Involve your child in decision making, when appropriate. Ask them to decide the route to walk to the park, offer simple choices of what to eat for breakfast or what to wear today.

Why: Children enjoy having some power in a world where very often decisions are made for them. Allow them to feel valued and heard to boost self-esteem.

Helping Hands

Try: Look for information on local projects such as community gardening and litter picks. Ask your child to help sort recycling, talk about where our rubbish goes, spot the refuse collectors and street cleaners when out and about- say thanks!

Why: Knowing that your choices have the power to make a difference, to your own life and wider world gives a sense of hope, self-worth and responsibility.

Animal Magic

Children often find great comfort and fascination in caring for animals. This interest allows children to develop compassion for other beings.

Caring for a pet at home or in a setting allows children to experience taking responsibility for another.

Visiting local petting farms allows children to see that people invest time and energy for the good of other creatures.

Stroking and cuddling pets provides a sensory and calming experience. When it is mutually beneficial for child and animal it provides an opportunity to feel bonded to something beyond close family or friends.

Share and Share Alike

Try: Encourage children to choose toys or clothes they don't make use of anymore. Donate to a charity shop or baby bank. Try to involve them in the whole process.

Select something from a charity shop and explain this was given by another child, to embed the idea of 'passing on' being mutually beneficial.

Sharing is Caring

Try: Encourage play with others such as digging in sandpit together, sharing space on a roundabout and taking turns on the swing.

Why: These are simple opportunities to encourage empathy and shared understanding.

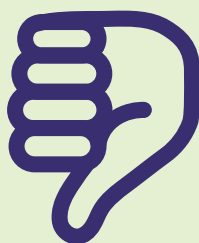
'If you see someone without a smile, give them one of yours.'

Dolly Parton

Notes:

Choose an activity from the list to focus on with your child. Make notes here, add your own ideas, keep a record of what your child enjoys and celebrate what goes well.

How did it go?

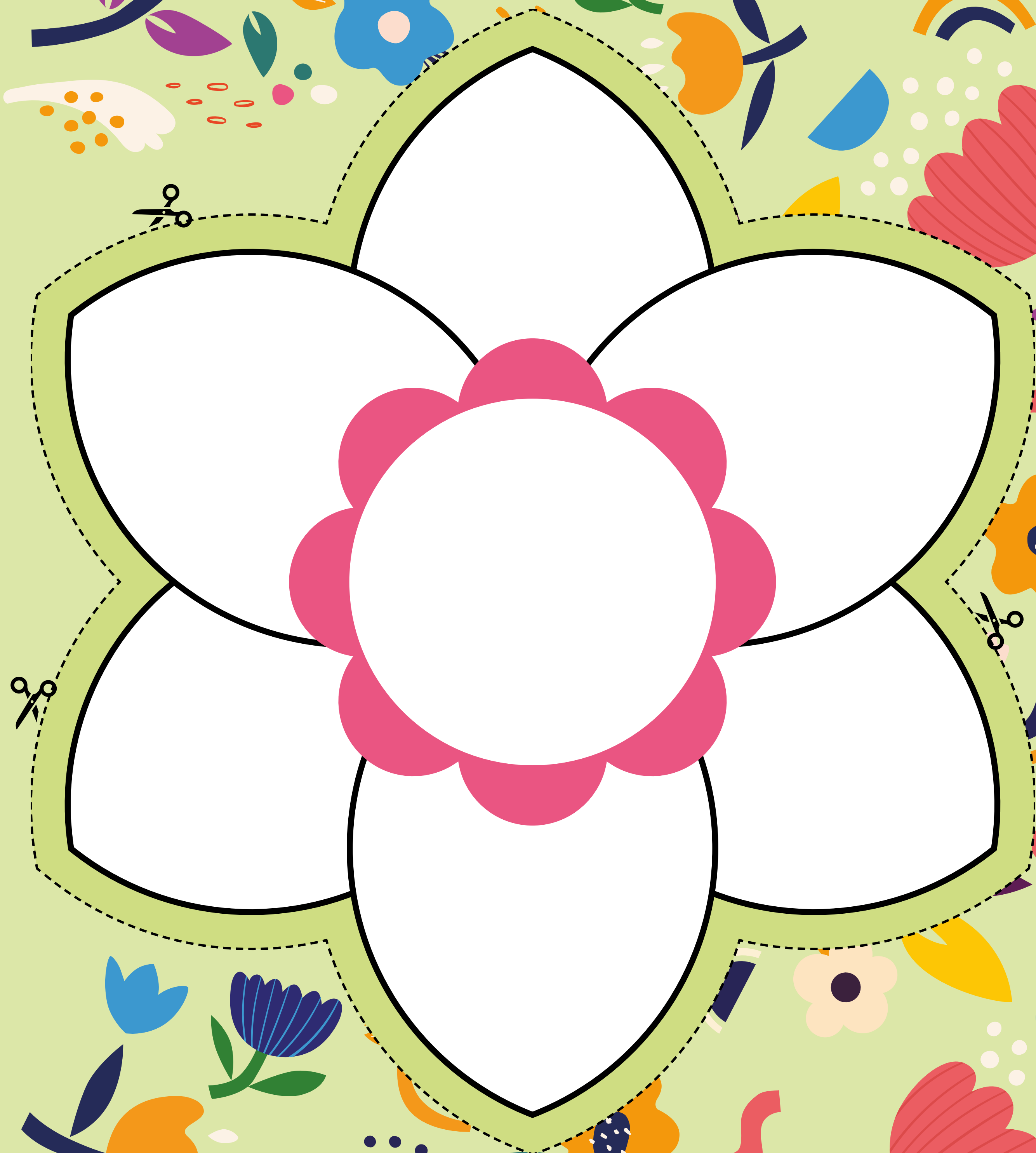


Gilbert's favourite activity

Flower Power

Use the template or create your own petals with paper or card. In the middle section write 'Things I am grateful for' OR 'Things I like about you.' On each petal write something I am grateful for OR think of someone close to you and write something you like about them.

Keep for yourself to remind you things that you are grateful for or give to your loved one to bring them joy.





5 Ways to Tech

Engaging in real life experiences is the best way for all young children to learn.

There is no denying technology is part of all our lives. Think about how you and your child use technology in a positive way.

Find ways to use music/stories/games that support 5 Ways to Wellbeing.

5 Ways to Wellbeing is a research backed initiative to improve mental health and wellbeing.

CONNECT

Disconnect To Reconnect

Try to put away earbuds, screens, phones at key points of day such as when you greet your child at pick up time, at meal times and at bedtime. Be completely present to bond.

Respond and Engage
Ask your child a question about their day.

‘What was the best thing you did today?’

Don't worry if they don't tell you much. The important thing is they feel valued, this increases their self-esteem.

BE ACTIVE

Turn It Up Then Off

All young children learn best from real world interaction with people around them.

Use technology to learn nursery rhymes, action songs and to dance together.

Play music to find rhythm and beat in music and songs. Search for short children's exercise videos and do them together!

Then turn off before bedtime or naptimes. Screen light and movement prevents relaxation into sleepy state. Use a song, story, stroke or cuddle.

TAKE NOTICE

Tune In

Try to watch cartoons or stories with your child. Talk to them about what characters are feeling and doing to support language development.

Search for online yoga and mindfulness activities to try together. Name and notice what you are feeling in your body and your emotions.

STOP when you are in a queue, on the bus in the car have a moment of mindfulness. Play eye spy, use one sense to tune in to what is happening around you.

KEEP LEARNING

Get Switched On

Use technology to find information about your child's interests- animals, vehicles, how to care for the planet.

Draw or paint programmes and cause and effect games can support development.

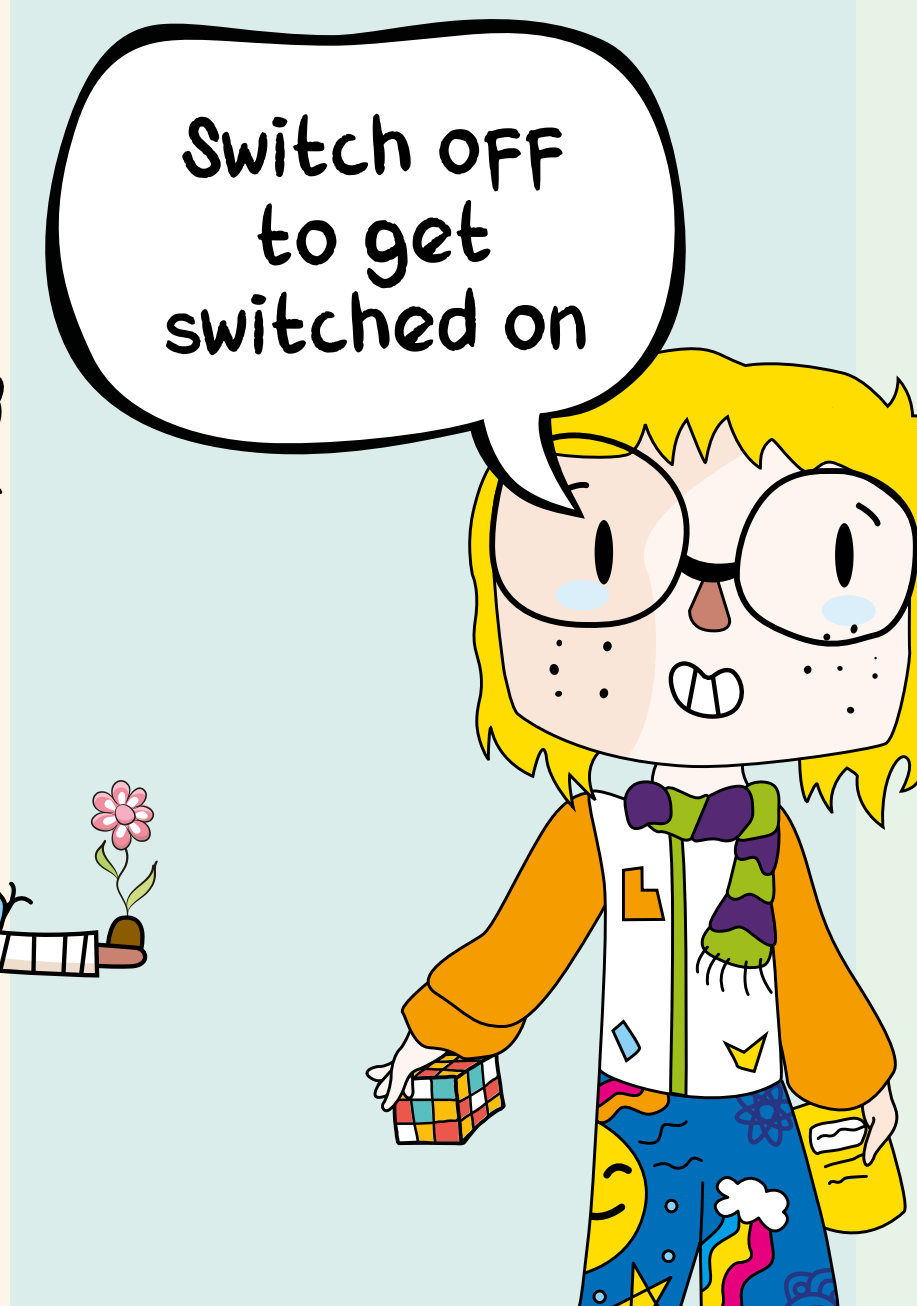
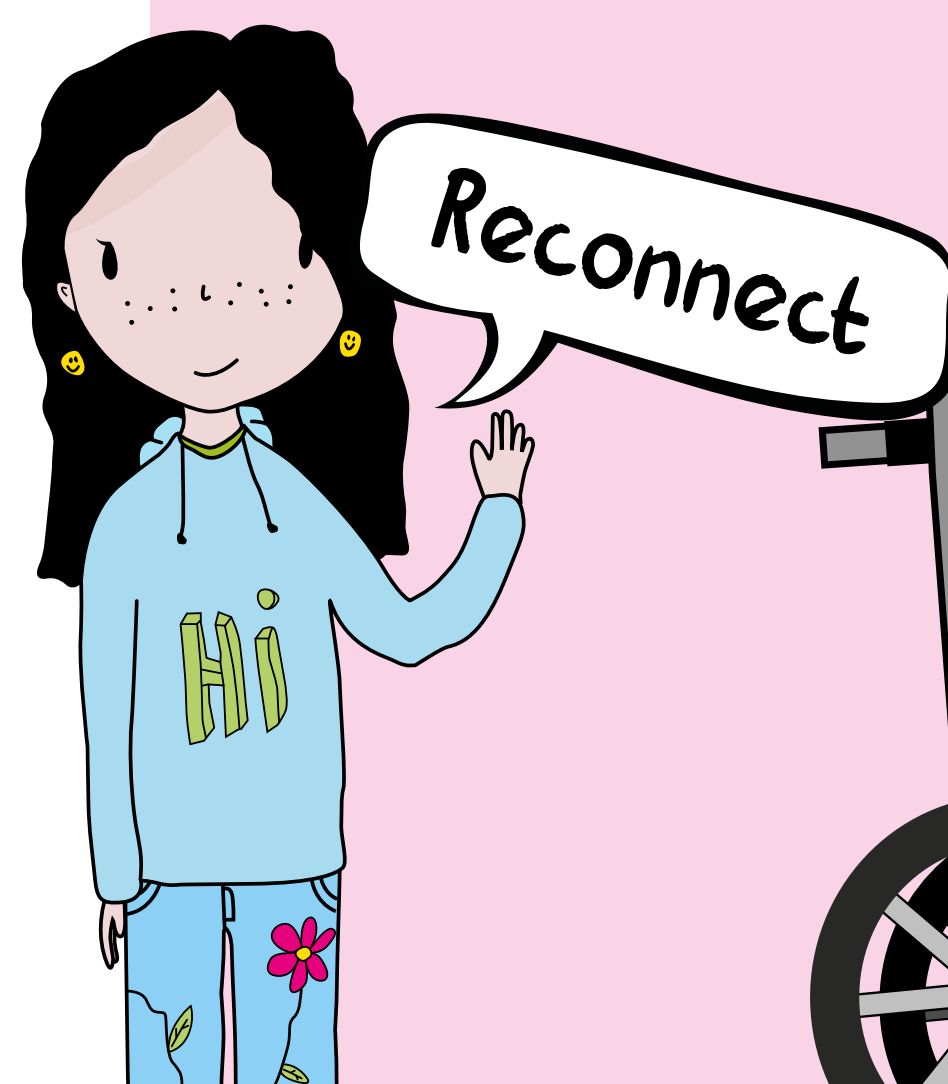
Real life games are the most useful way to support child development. Choose a time of day- after lunch- before bath time- turn all screens off for 15 minutes and play a game/do a puzzle.

GIVE

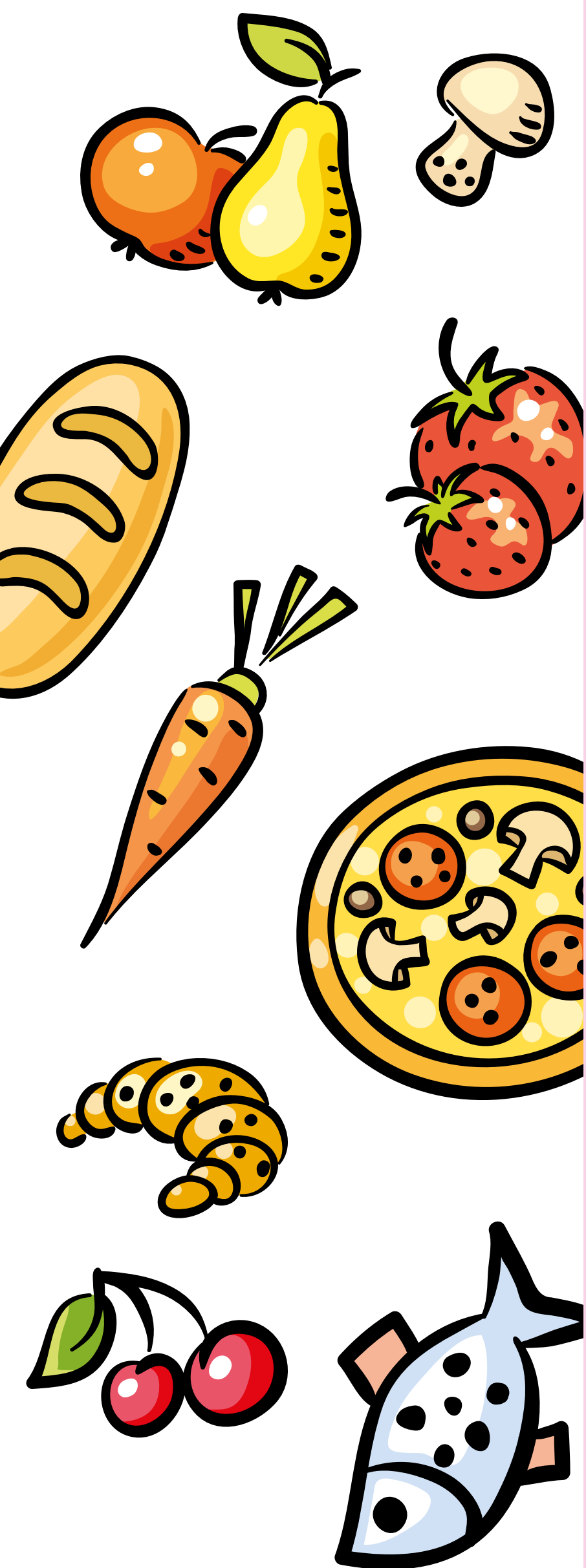
Share

Use technology to capture magical moments - take pictures and create an album to look back at together or send to a friend/family member.

Leave phone in bag/ elsewhere and give child moments of full attention. Your child will feel valued and learn to value others.



5 Ways to meal times



CONNECT

Use mealtimes as a signal to **stop** and work together- So turn off screens.

Put phones to one side.

Sit down together.

Talk about the food instead of being on autopilot.

Use these times to talk about your day.

Children are more likely to eat a fuller portion if concentrating on the meal.

Children like and learn through routine- use mealtimes and snack times to give this to them. Try to snack and eat meals at a similar time each day.

BE ACTIVE

Get children involved in mealtime preparation.

Washing the vegetables, pouring the rice- this will develop control, motor skills and concentration.

With support children can learn to **chop, snap, peel and mash food.**

Washing up - supports children to learn to sequence as well as enjoy some water play!

Cooking or baking is great for physical development, hand eye coordination and developing control.

Stir, crack, whisk, scoop, mould, squeeze, roll and knead.

TAKE NOTICE

Use snacks and mealtimes to be in the moment - they are reminders to **stop** - use your senses to **explore food.**

Tune in to eating, use your senses to notice smell, texture in hand and mouth, sound of crunch.

Use washing and cleaning as **mindful moments** - notice the feel of the water, the bubbles, the difference between wet and dry.

KEEP LEARNING

Use mealtimes as an **opportunity to talk** about what you have done and learnt today.

Laying the table - great for learning about positions and language such as 'next to, above, left and right.'

Using cutlery - Learning to use spoons, forks and knives takes practise and experience.

If you enjoy cooking talk to your child about what you enjoy, explain what you are doing as you cook.

Why not learn to cook a simple recipe together?

GIVE

Give thanks for food you are eating.

Get children involved in recycling and washing up. talk about food waste and caring for the planet.

Talk about how to help people who need extra food and foodbanks. Everybody needs help sometimes.

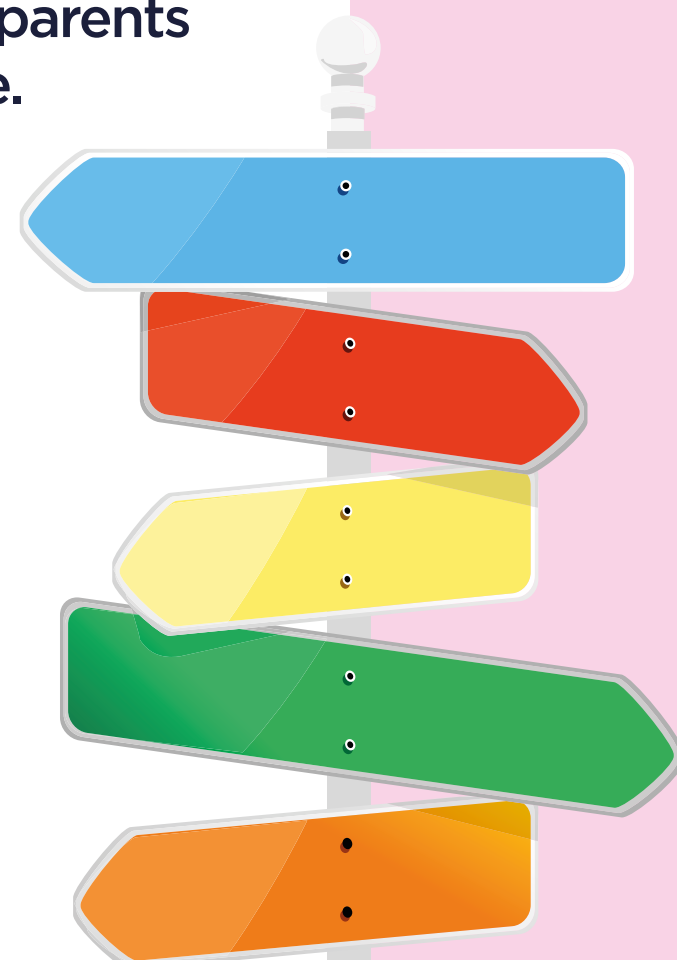
5 Ways in times of change

In times of change we all need ways to help us cope.

Use the 5 Ways to Wellbeing to find simple ways to make it through uncertain times such as starting school or moving classes.

You can use the 5 Ways to Wellbeing to find simple ways to make it through uncertain times.

Here are a few easy ideas to do within school and suggestions for things for parents to do at home.



CONNECT

Arrange stay and play sessions, school picnics or coffee mornings and home visits, to build trust and familiarity.

Home away from home - family photos - make family members visible in environment. Create a display of family photos or place a family photo above child's peg to support home school link.

Allow parents into the classroom to drop off where possible and allow children to engage in free flow on arrival to stimulate curiosity to play.

BE ACTIVE

Map it out - Practise the walk/ scoot to school before starting. Plan the route, draw a map, make it fun, share the map with teachers or other children in the setting.

Create a visual timetable of day and week and talk child through what will happen, this will help them feel secure, know what is coming next and what to look forward to.

Provide video/recipe or simple ingredients or video of making playdough to do at home- encourage children to see the fun they will have in the setting.

TAKE NOTICE

Be present in moment - It is natural to become anxious and worried about new things. Try to manage this by staying in moment.

Mindful safari - tune in by using one sense (sight, sound, touch) to notice what is happening around you. Do this on the way to school.

Breathe - turn into the breath, in through nose, pause, then a longer out breath through mouth or nose. This will help to calm in anxious moments.

Provide a few simple breathing simple breathing exercises for parents to learn alongside children.

KEEP LEARNING

Provide booklist of books about feelings and change- Talk about all kinds of feelings, what they do to your body and mind.

Allow families to learn all you can about the new setting- make a video or photobook of classroom areas, toilets, dinner hall so children can become familiar before starting.

Remember to look at school/setting newsletter and share with your child so they start to learn what kind of fun activities they will be doing.

Share a video of teacher/practitioners reading a story or singing a song to build familiarity.

GIVE

Transition toys or objects can help give comfort and connection - Allow child to take a labelled toy, and keep it on a safe shelf, place or bag, where they can turn to it for cuddles when needed.

Create a new starter guide and provide all information needed for parents in one place on paper or on website.

CONNECT

All About families
Felicity Brookes & Frankie Allen

My Parents Live In Different Houses *Jeffery S. Piper*

So Much
Trisha Cooke

Mixed
Arree Chung

Errol’s Garden
Gilian Hibbs

Owl Babies
Martin Waddle

The Invisible String
Patrice Harst

This is Our House
Michael Rosen

Dogger
Shirley Hughes

The Boy who Build a Wall around Himself *Ali Redford*

The Big Umbrella
Amy June Bates

BE ACTIVE

From Head to Toe
Eric Carle

Titch
Pat Hutchins

Maisy Grows A Garden
Lucy Cousins

Berty
Tony Ross

I don’t want to Wash My Hands
David Roberts

Ready Steady Mo
Mo Farah

The Snowy Day
Ezra Jack Keats

This Moose Belongs to Me
Oliver Jeffers

**Charlie and Lola -
I will Not Ever
Never Eat a Tomato**
Lauren Child

TAKE NOTICE

All About feelings
Felicity Brookes & Frankie Allen

Everybody Feels range
Moira Butterfield

Ruby’s Worry *Tom Percival*

The Huge Bag of Worries
Virginia Ironside

The Colour Monster *Anna Llenas*

I like It When... *Mary Murphy*

Grandpa’s Gift *Fiona Lumbers*

**Things that Make You feel
Good, Things That’s make You
feel bad** *Todd Parr*

Sometimes I feel Sunny
Gillian Shields

Penguin *Polly Dunbar*

Tough Guys Have feelings Too
Keith Negley

**The Boy, The Mole, The Fox
and The Horse** *Charlie Mackesy*

KEEP LEARNING

**How to Say I Love You
in 5 Languages**
Kenard Pak

**Children of The World
Barefoot Books**
Tessa Strickland / Kate DePalma

The Lion Inside
Rachel Bright and Jim Field

The Koala Who Could
Rachel Bright

Beautiful Oops
Barney Salzberg

**The Girl who never Makes
Mistakes**
Mark Pett

Super Duper You...
Sophy Henn

The Dot
Peter H. Reynolds

Rain Before Rainbows
Smriti Halls

GIVE

**Have you filled Your
Bucket Today**
Carol McCloud

Pass it On
Sophy Henn

The Selfish Crocodile
Faustin Charles

The Smartest Giant in Town
Julia Donaldson

Alan’s Big Scary Teeth
Jarvis

One Drop of Kindness
Jeff Kubiak

The Giving Tree
Shel Silverstein

Tidy
Emily Gravett

**Thank You For the Little
Things**
Caryl Hart

Local and online resources

The links selected here have great ideas - use them as a starting point and explore the rest of the website

Connect

A range of activity sessions for 0-5 year olds available and support from Early Years professionals
www.croydon.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-families/find-support/support-directory/

Activities and tips to build the bond with your child
www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people

Suggestions for communicating with young children about feelings
www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/how-to-talk-to-your-child-about-mental-health/#Conversationstarters

Short videos with tips to help manage parenting challenges such as managing anxiety and meltdowns
www.familiesunderpressure.org

Series of 20 minute podcasts on parenting topics such as bonding with baby. Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families offers wide ranging support for families.
www.annafreud.org/parents-and-carers/child-in-mind

Lists groups and support across Croydon
www.croydon.simplyconnect.uk/about-us

Support for 11-25 year olds in Croydon to talk through outreach and mobile talkbus
www.croydondropin.org.uk/outreach

Self referrals available for mental health support
www.croydontalkingtherapies.nhs.uk

Be Active

www.croydon.gov.uk/libraries-leisure-and-culture/parks-and-open-spaces/parks-and-playgrounds

www.better.org.uk/leisure-centre/london/croydon

Free drop in play sessions for 0-4 year olds and families run at Legacy Youth Zone babyzone.org.uk

List of free water play areas across London
bablands.com/2022/07/18/a-list-of-london-play-fountains-and-splash-pads-by-area

How and why to make swimming with tiny children fun
www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/grownups/presenters-big-splash?collection=support-for-parents

Find out if a venue will be accessible to those with additional needs www.accessable.co.uk

Follow the story to explore Sanderstead Recreation Ground
www.theinstituteofwellbeing.com/story-trail/

Fun activities to get moving to improve mood
www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/curations/moodboosters

How to support all areas of baby/toddler development www.nhs.uk/start4life

Croydon commissioned programme to support parent confidence to provide a healthy start in life for their child. Self referral available www.henry.org.uk

Take Notice

Yoga, mindfulness, emotional awareness activities
www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/curations/mindfulness-for-children

Free mindfulness for children and adults
www.smilingmind.com

Free breathing and yoga exercises and games
www.childline.org.uk/toolbox/calm-zone

Ideas and support around mental health for young people
www.mindedforfamilies.org.uk/young-people

Advice, courses on wellbeing and booklets to download such as managing emotions in difficult times
www.theinstituteofwellbeing.com/wellbeing-kits/

Tips on to support your child and your own mental health and where to find support
www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/supporting-others/childrens-mental-health

Lots of support including a Health and Wellbeing Space in the Whitgift Centre Mon-Sat
www.mindincroydon.org.uk/how-we-can-help/support/croydon-health-wellbeing-space

Local and online resources

Keep Learning

www.croydon.gov.uk/libraries-leisure-and-culture/libraries

Free app to guide through pregnancy and early parenthood, accredited by NHS

www.bestbeginnings.org.uk/baby-buddy

Activities to develop language and literacy through fun simple activities with your child at every stage

wordsforlife.org.uk/activities

Activities to support development across the curriculum and areas of development.

www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/watch/cbeebies-go-explore-app

Guide to child development 0-2 with activities.

www.unicef.org/parenting/child-development/baby-tips

Learn how to communicate through sign language

www.makaton.org

Resilience Building Kit: 7 Days Many Ways – Free to download toolkit for SEND children and families

www.nasen.org.uk/

Lots of tips and videos on child development and parenting

www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/curations/support-for-parents

Lots of tips and videos on managing parenting challenges

www.parentingsmart.place2be.org.uk

Give

Baby banks and food banks provide support when you reach a time of need. They can also be a way to give back, build connections and confidence by donating or volunteering.

Baby Bank by referral from a professional to provide items from 0-5 year olds and further support

www.littlevillagehq.org

Baby Bank, foodbank and support based on Croydon Road

www.croydon.cog7.org.uk

Local Food banks in Croydon | Reedham Children's Trust

www.reedhamchildrenstrust.org.uk/local-food-banks

Support, social groups, play area and donations for refugees and asylum seekers

www.croydonrefugeedaycentre.co.uk

Teaching kids to care for animals

www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/grownups/all-creatures-great-and-small

Look out for activities to get involved such as open days or second hand bikes/scooters sales. Use local social media to find out how and when you can volunteer with kids such as planting or litter picks.

www.yourlocalguardian.co.uk/news/croydonnews

Some really great links



For more information on this project
contact Education Services or Public Health
Croydon or scan this QR Code



CROYDON
www.croydon.gov.uk

www.croydon.gov.uk/schools-and-education

Templates

Bookmark Puppets



Follow the dotted line guide and cut your own bookmark puppet out and use as a bookmark or to simply play with.

