



#CHILDRENSMENTALHEALTHWEEK

My Voice Matters

Bounce Forward
Supporting Schools



What's included?

- Top tips for teachers
- Activities for students



**We are proud to
support Children's
Mental Health Week
5 - 11 February 2024**

TOP TIPS FOR TEACHERS



**When it comes to mental health,
prevention is better than cure.**

Number One

Learn about and consider your own psychological fitness. How do you look after and nurture your mental resilience and emotional wellbeing?

Mental resilience is **NOT** about keeping going no matter what. Resilience is more fluid than that. It's about knowing when to stop doing something, understanding what is 'normal' for you, being equipped to problem solve, knowing when to seek help when needed. It means taking action each and every day.

Start with you!

Number Two

Aim for **flexible** and **realistic** thinking.

Model being open and curious to different **perspectives**.

Look for evidence in your thinking to help you to **problem solve** and as much as possible be wedded to reality.



Number Three

Seek **human connection** wherever possible.

Model to those around you that you are willing to reach out, and that you have **empathy** and care for others.

Show others that this will increase personal **happiness**.



Number Four

Find practical ways to **'fail well'**.

Failure is a **learning opportunity** but also essential for building mental resilience.

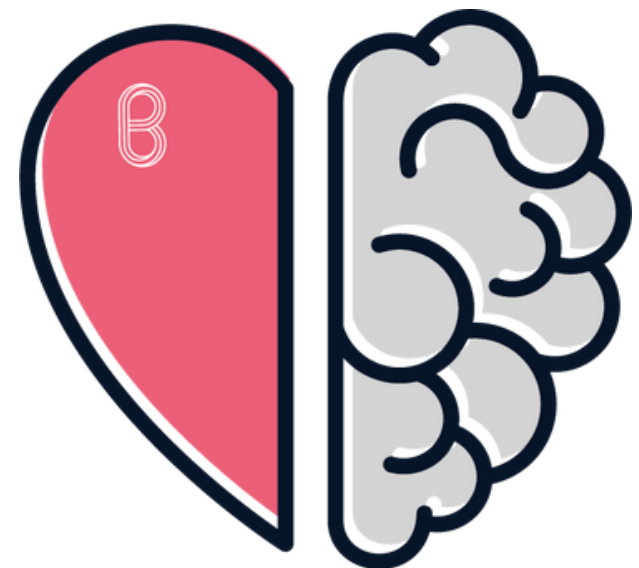
Unless we show children that we face challenges, but that we are able to work out how to get through them by failing and trying different approaches, we are missing the opportunity to teach them about **mental strength and self-efficacy**. Both of which are essential in the 21st century.

Number Five

Encourage understanding about the role of **positive emotions**.

Notice when you experience positive emotions. What are the things that **help you to feel calm, relaxed, at ease**.

Positive emotions are a tool to get through difficult times but also allow you to be at your **best** when you need to be.



Number Six

Choose **optimism**.

Optimism is a choice. Optimism, is wedded reality. It is not ignoring the difficulty, but choosing to notice what is good in a situation, or the things that you have some control of.

Choosing the optimistic version of events is more likely to help you to move **forward**. Nurture the optimistic muscle, but seeking it more often.



ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

An orange, irregular, cloud-like shape is positioned on the right side of the slide. Inside this shape, a white arrow starts from a small circle at the top right and points towards the left, ending near the word 'ACTIVITIES'.

Strengthen the optimistic muscle

Either in pairs, or in a circle in your class

Think of three good things

What can I be grateful for?

Who am I grateful for?

What is one benefit of a recent failure?

Share answers to celebrate gratitude.

Positive emotions

When we experience positive emotion, we increase our:

- Intellectual resources
- Social resources
- Physical resources
- Psychological resources

So doing things that make us experience positive emotion is not just a **'nice to have'** it is a strategy for dealing with setbacks and being the 'best' we can be.

Try some of these strategies for harnessing positive emotion

Activity to experience, calm

3-7 breathing

Sit on a chair with both feet flat on the floor, get comfortable, feel grounded in the seat, avoid slouching. Close your eyes or lower your gaze and find a focus point on the floor directly in front of you.

Breathe in through your nose and count to 3 and breathe out through your mouth and count to 3 - calm and steady 1, 2, 3. Do this 2 or 3 times.

Next, slow your breathing down further, this time to count of 4. Breathe in through your nose (1,2,3,4) and exhale out through your mouth (1,2,3,4).

Next, go even slower, breathe in then out to a count of 5, then to a count of 6, and finally a count of 7. Calm and steady as you go.

Activity to experience, at ease

Use your imagination to create a 'safe space' that you can go to in your mind whenever you need to

Where is it?

What does it look like?

Who else is there with you?

What can you hear?

What can you smell?

What are you doing there?

Write, draw or share your safe space

Activity to experience, distraction

With your class - play the alphabet game

Think of a place, or famous person for every letter of the alphabet.

Person one starts with the letter 'A'

The next person 'B' then 'C' and so on...

The rules are as soon as there is a pause, or an 'umm', the group stop and stand up.

How far through the alphabet did they get? Who got the furthest?
Which group stood up first? Celebrate both!

Activity to experience, joy

In pairs share something 'I am proud about'

It can be something small or big, it can be about themselves or something they have been involved in with others.

The person listening, should pay full attention, giving good eye contact, asking questions such as:

- What are you most proud about it?
- What is the most important part of it for you?
- What do you always want to remember about it?

Strengths

Each of us has unique strengths. Knowing what they are helps to; increase happiness and well-being; find meaning and purpose; boost relationships; help reach goals.

What we are good at often aligns with the things we enjoy the most

Think of 5 things you love to do

Reflect on the common parts (e.g. all have a creative part, all require discipline, bravery, humour), these are likely to be your strengths

Create and share an image to represent your strengths.

Be proud of who you are as individuals and collectively.

Place2Be's

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