



## **Make contact**

Make a list of the people to make contact with every day/every few days. Ask them how they are: Share what you have been learning

- \* Draw them pictures
- \* Send them photos
- \* Ask them how they are

We can still give people our time without being physically close to them. Check on people and make sure they're okay. We can also give people gifts like homemade cards or meals.

## **Compliment slips**

Get some slips of paper and write something nice about a friend and then give it to them. Could you make similar 'compliment slips' for everyone in your family or your class?

## **Keep hydrated**

Drink some water. Keep a record of how much water you are drinking each day.

## **Make a 'fab file'**

Make a 'fab file' to collect work and pictures that you are proud of, certificates that celebrate your achievements and cards from people that you care about. You could then look at it whenever you are feeling low.

## **Celebrate progress**

Make a list of all the things that you have achieved in the past week / month / year. Think of a way to celebrate your amazing progress!

## **Cooking**

Cooking is something you can share – don't forget it uses maths, communication and science skills. Look for links for [healthy meals and snacks you can create together](#). You can check you're all eating healthily with the **Eatwell Guide**.

## **Growing**

Like cooking, getting into the garden is a great way to chill out. January may not be the best time to start a veg patch, but there are seeds you can grow indoors at any time of year, like cress. Watch them grow. Check on them every day. Write notes or take a picture to keep track of how things are doing.

## **On Safari**

Safari exercise is a great way to help kids learn mindfulness. This activity turns an average, everyday walk into an exciting new adventure. Tell your kids that you will be going on a safari: their goal is to notice as many birds, bugs, creepy-crawlies, and any other animals as they can.

Anything that walks, crawls, swims, or flies is of interest, and they'll need to focus all of their senses to find them, especially the little ones.

### **Read**

Read, Read, Read ! Or Listen to a story. Or learn a poem by heart every day. Try some fun activities based on your favourite books.

### **Mindfulness**

Try explaining mindfulness to children like this. Say it's like looking out of the window in the morning to see what the weather's doing, and to help you know what you need that day. If it's raining outside, you know you need an umbrella. If you're feeling stormy inside, you can ask yourself what you need – maybe that's to be on your own for a bit or to ask for a hug or to do some exercise.

### **Mindfulness - Birds**

Now's the time to become a massive bird-nerd. Get to know the ones where you live. **It's easy to make a bird feeder to hang outside your window.** Then, watch, listen & identify!

### **Mindfulness - The Sky**

Take some time each day to watch the sky in the day and at night.

### **Mindful Posing**

One easy way for children to dip their toes into mindfulness is through body poses. To get your kids excited, tell them that doing fun poses can help them feel strong, brave, and happy. Have the kids go somewhere quiet and familiar, a place they feel safe. Next, tell them to try one of the following poses:

1. The Superman: this pose is practiced by standing with the feet just wider than the hips, fists clenched, and arms reached out to the sky, stretching the body as tall as possible.
2. The Wonder Woman: this pose is struck by standing tall with legs wider than hip-width apart and hands or fists placed on the hips (Karen Young, 2017).

Ask the kids how they feel after a few rounds of trying either of these poses. You may be surprised.

### **Coping Toolbox**

Life is upside down right now. Helping your child to find ways to relax and cope is vital to help their mind and body switch off from their worries. Explain that they should fill their coping toolbox with things which remind them of good times or will help them feel better. Examples: Photos, drawings, a gift which someone has given them, a sachet of hot chocolate, a bath bomb, a list of activities they can do to relax: Cuddle a teddy, watch their favourite DVD, take 10 deep breaths etc. If you don't have a box or container your child can find a special place in their room to put the items or simply list/draw on the toolbox activity below.

### **A Feelings Diary**

Feelings diary can help your child to identify feelings and help them understand that feelings change. Try to spend time talking about one or two feelings your child has had each day. If they have difficult feelings (anxious, lonely, sad or frustrated) tell them that it's okay to feel like this and completely normal, especially because of everything that is happening.

Being in lockdown can be stressful, and lots of us are feeling anxious and on edge right now. These activities can help you and your child to relax – try doing them together.

### **Stress toys**

This exercise releases muscle tension and massages your hands. Make your own stress balls by filling balloons with dry rice or pulses. Take the balls in one or both hands and squeeze and

release. Experiment with squeezing the ball. Find a way that is right for you, adjusting the speed, pressure, and timing of your squeezes to whatever way you like.

#### **Bubble Breaths**

Imagine you are blowing the biggest bubble ever! Take in a breath and imagine you have a pot of bubble liquid. Slowly and gently bow bubbles into the room. Do you feel better? (Remember to encourage the children not to get excited by popping the bubbles!)

#### **Push against a wall**

This is perfect for getting rid of stress without having to go outside or even leave the room. Push against the wall for 10 seconds. Imagine you can push the wall over if you try hard enough! Repeat three times. When you do this your muscles contract and then relax, releasing feel-good hormones into the body.

#### **Physical activity**

Exercise is essential for everyone, especially children. There are a lot of benefits gained from exercising, including that it fosters a positive mood and releases the stress of the day. After a day of thinking, children need to be outside in the fresh air either playing sport or simply playing.

#### **Technology time**

There is so much technology available to children nowadays but it is important to limit the time children spend having screen time. It is easy to use technology as a babysitting device but children should be restricted to a maximum of two hours per day, which includes television, computers, iPads et cetera. Setting clear and consistent guidelines from an early age makes it much easier to reinforce these limits. Most technology has timers so it is easy for children to know when their time is up.

#### **Sleep**

Sleep is an important element in maintaining good mental and physical wellbeing. Ensuring your child gets enough sleep each night is one of the most important practices you can develop as a parent. It is never too late to establish a night time routine. This may include a bath, reading a story or listening to quiet music. Make sure the technology gets turned off one or two hours before bedtime to allow your child's brain to unwind and relax.

#### **Build resilience**

Being resilient is one of the most important qualities to develop in children. The ability to learn from mistakes and accept feedback, be persistent and not give up easily will help maintain a positive wellbeing in children. Through modelling these qualities yourself, parents and educators can help children bounce back and move past mistakes and problems. Letting go is one of the best ways to maintain a healthy wellbeing.

