

Mindfulness

is simply the process in which you focus on the present moment and clear your mind of problems and worries. Mindfulness techniques are known to help with one's well-being and to improve health in ways such as reducing stress and helping to improve sleep. We know from experiencing the last lockdown and then return to school, that some children will find this transition back to normal school life, a little bit tricky and may display some behaviours you haven't seen before, eg defiance. They are just scared; this is a new unknown for them, again. In their heads they may be feeling unsafe, unsure how to be with friends again or even feeling they are way behind everyone else in their learning. All of these are valid feelings and, as adults, we need to guide our children through this and give them tools to help them cope.

Here's a few things that might help out this week:

- ☺ Give them time to talk about their worries. Let them know it's okay to have worries. Be honest if you don't know the answer or how to fix it, let them know this and you can always email staff at school to find out more details
- ☺ Talk to your child about natural changes that occur all the time. Normal changes eg caterpillar to butterfly, without change we can't progress, try to stick to scenarios of positive change
- 😊 Remind them of school routines, timings and all the ways we can keep them safe.
- ☺ Remind them of sharing, some children will have been home almost on their own, not having to take turns. Social skills will be lacking in some.



Hot Writing:

The basic gist of the activity is that your child will write nouns, verbs, adjectives or brief sentences, for a length of time, about a given theme/topic and they are not allowed to stop writing at all. If they run out of ideas they just keep re-writing the last word they wrote. If your child is reluctant, start on 2 minutes, if not, anywhere between 3-5 mins is a good starting point. The more they play the longer the time that is given.

Theme: Show them a photo of the School, the words they come up with may give you an insight into how they might be feeling about returning to school.

Self-soothing activities:

Mindful breathing (12 minutes)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bk_qU7I-fcU

Blowing bubbles. Focus on taking in a deep, slow breath, and exhaling steadily to fill the bubble. Pay close attention to the bubbles as they form, detach, and pop or float away. As you blow your breath into the bubble try to imagine passing your worries into the bubble and watch them float away.

Guided Visualisation (15minutes)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V1-0JJJw_IQ

Guatemalan Worry Dolls

The indigenous people from the Highlands in Guatemala created Worry Dolls many generations ago as a remedy for worrying. According to the Mayan legend, when worrying keeps a person awake, he or she tells a worry to as many dolls as necessary. Then the worrier places the dolls under his or her pillow. The dolls take over the worrying for the person who then sleeps peacefully through the night. When morning breaks, the person awakens without the worries that the dolls took away during the night.

There are several ways of making worry dolls, wooden pegs, pipe cleaners, tooth picks, twigs, cocktail sticks, use whatever you have to hand. You will also need some form of wool, string or material for the clothing.

Whatever material you are using, you need make a basic stick man shape. Then if using wool; tie a knot around body and start wrapping. If using material; cut out shapes of clothes and glue onto the body. Each one will be individual, just like people.



There are numerous links online to help you if stuck

Try a maze

