



**Ormiston
RIVERS
Academy**

WELLBEING

Self-care guide for parents





During this pandemic your children may have experienced a mix of emotions, some of which are positive and some of which are negative.

Managing their feelings in a healthy way is an important skill to learn. We have put together a self-care pack to help you, as parents, support your children.

This pack is filled with useful ideas and contacts should you need more professional support.

Mindfulness calendar: daily five-minute activities

This is a **two-week calendar** with **daily mindfulness** activity suggestions. You can run these activities whenever you like, for example at the **start of lessons**, or **after playtime**, to help ground and relax the children.

The activities within the calendar will take approximately **five minutes** and can be done **at home or in school**, with **individuals, small groups or whole classes**. You can display this poster in your classroom or staff room, and use the accompany guidance for instructions on how to deliver the activities.

MINDFULNESS CALENDAR

MON

COUNTING
BREATHS

1-2-3

TUES



ATTITUDE OF
GRATITUDE

WED

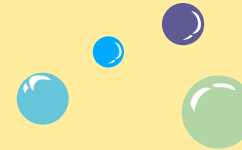


USING
THE
SENSES



THURS

COLOUR
BREATHING



FRI



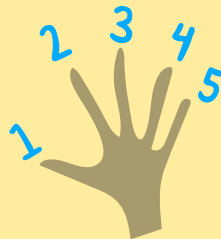
BIRTHDAY
CAKE
BREATHING

MON

FEATHER
BREATHING



TUES



FINGER
COUNTING

WED

SLIMY
HANDS



THURS

RISE
AND
FALL



FRI

RELAXING
MUSCLES



Counting breaths

1-2-3

- Encourage the children to focus on their breathing by counting the number of 'in' breaths and 'out' breaths.
- "I am breathing in 1, I am breathing out 1, I am breathing in 2, I am breathing out 2...". Encourage them to continue do this until they reach number 10.

Attitude of gratitude



- Ask the children to focus on their breathing. If they want to, they can close their eyes.
- Encourage them to think of one thing that they are grateful for and encourage them to keep this image in their mind.
- Ask them to notice any feelings or sensations that arise.
- Continue this for a few minutes.
- You could also run this as a writing activity, using the following sentence starters:
 - Something I am grateful for today is...
 - The best thing that happened today was...
 - Something I did well today was...
 - I'll make the rest of the day great by...

Using the senses

- Remind the children of the five senses (seeing, hearing, smelling, touching and tasting).
- In this order, ask children to focus on one sense at a time, noticing:
 - Five things they see
 - Four things they hear
 - Three things they smell
 - Two things they can touch
 - One thing they can taste

5 x



3 x



1 x



4 x



2 x



- By focusing on one sense at a time, children will be able to reduce their anxiety.

Colour breathing

- Ask the children to sit or stand in a comfortable position. They can close their eyes if they wish.

Ask the children to imagine their favourite colour, or a colour which helps them to feel calm.

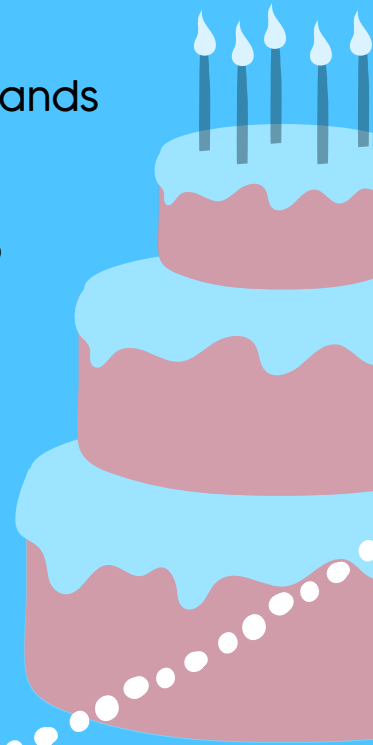
- They are now going to take a breath in and imagine that they are breathing in this colour.

- As they breathe out, they are going to imagine blowing a bubble made of this colour.

You can repeat this process for a few minutes and encourage the children to see if they can take longer, slower, deeper breaths (both in and out) and blow larger imaginary bubbles.

Birthday cake breathing

- Ask the children to sit in a chair and place their hands on their bellies.
- Ask them to make their left hand into a fist and to imagine that this is a cake.
- Ask them to inhale, pretending to smell the cake.
- Ask them to exhale, pretending to blow out the candle.
- Continue this for a few minutes.



Feather breathing



- If you can provide real feathers or cotton wool for this activity, that would be great. Otherwise, children can use their imagination.
- Ask the children to sit comfortably on a chair and imagine that there is a feather or ball of cotton wool in front of them. If they have a feather or cotton wool they can place this in one of their hands and hold their hand out in front of them.
- Then ask them to breathe in through their nose and breathe out slowly through their mouth, in order to make the object float.
- Repeat this a few times.

Finger counting




- Ask the children to sit or stand in a comfortable position and to hold one of their hands out.
- Explain that as they breathe in for five counts, they will place each finger into the palm of their hand, until their hand makes a fist.
- As they breathe out for five counts, they will uncurl each of their fingers.
- Keep counting aloud for the children and repeat this activity for a few minutes.

slimy hands

- Ask the children to imagine that they have a ball of slime in the palm of each hand.
- They are going to squeeze the slime as hard as they can as they breathe in.
- They then breathe out and open their hands, imagining that the slime has spread across their hands.
- Repeat this a few times.

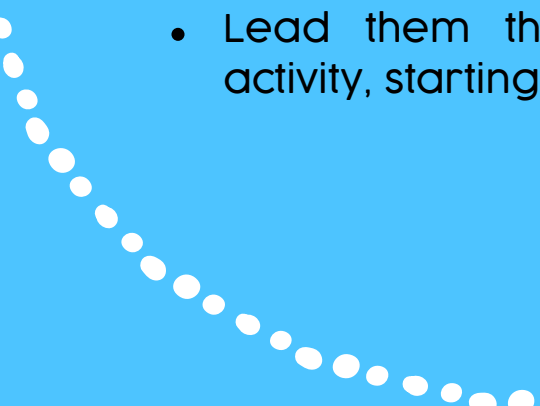


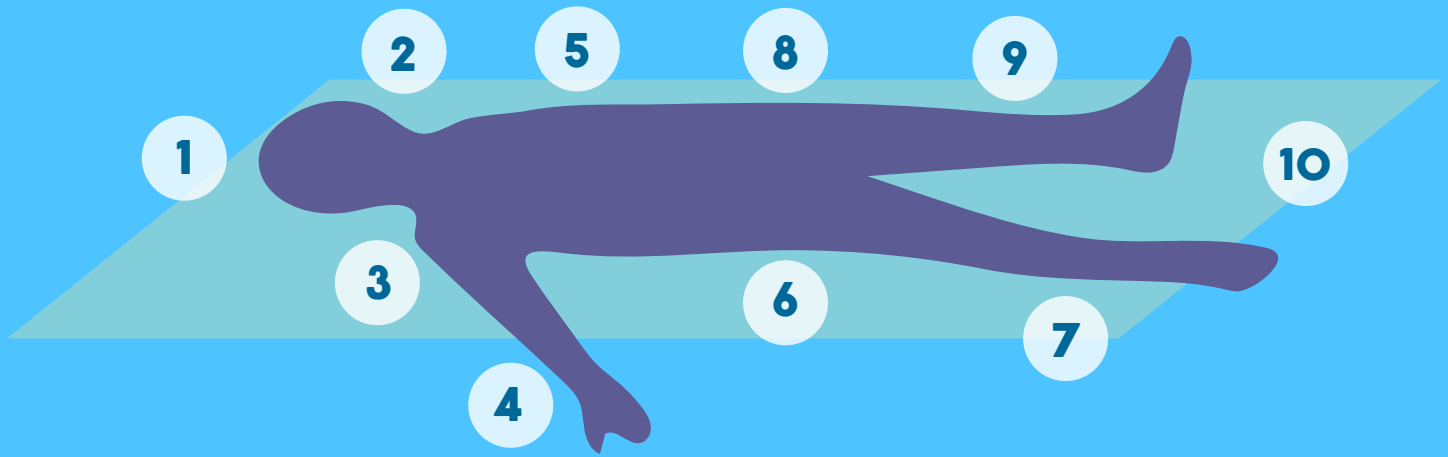
Rise and fall

- Ask the children to sit in a comfortable position, preferably with their backs straight.
 - Ask them to imagine that they are rising and falling with their breath.
 - As they breathe in for four counts, they are slowly going to come to a standing position and stretch their arms into the sky.
 - As they breathe out for four counts, they are slowly going to come to a seated position with their arms relaxed by their side.
 - Remind them to coordinate their breathing with their rise and fall and continue this for a few minutes
- 



Relaxing muscles

- Ask the children to lie down if they feel comfortable to do so. If not, they can sit in a comfortable position. If they want to, they can close their eyes.
 - Lead them through the following muscle relaxation activity, starting with one through to 10.
- 



- 1** Tense face muscles including forehead, cheeks, mouth, upper neck. Release.
- 2** Gently roll head from side to side, with awareness of the tightening muscles. Release.
- 3** Tighten shoulders. Release.
- 4** Tense right arm, from shoulders to fingers without making a fist or lifting arm off of floor. Tense left arm. Release.
- 5** Gently tense chest muscles and abdomen, without holding the breath. Release.
- 6** Tense right hip and buttock. Release.
- 7** Tense right leg down through feet and toes. Release.
- 8** Tense left hip and buttock. Release.
- 9** Tense left leg down through feet and toes. Release.
- 10** While no longer tensing any muscles, allow attention to drift back up through legs, abdomen, chest, arms and back to the face.

Preparing Your Child For the First Day Back in School

As schools begin to open to more children, parents and children may well be feeling anxious. Here's some ideas of how best to prepare.

Be Calm.

Your child will take their lead from you and be reassured if you are steady and matter of fact.



Be Curious.

These are strange times and their imagination may run away with them. Listen, and try not to dismiss or minimise their fears but validate how they are feeling – “it’s completely fine to feel like that at the moment” or ‘I can really understand why you would feel like that’



Be Positive.

Remind them of all the ways they have learnt to keep themselves safe: washing their hands regularly, sneezing and coughing into their elbow, not hugging others and staying in their own space.



Be Thankful.

Help your child think of things they are looking forward to: being with their friends, seeing their teacher, favourite activities but be mindful some of these may not be available for them



Be Supportive

Younger children particularly may struggle with separation anxiety and may become tearful, clingy or act out. Reassure them that you will miss them too and think of them through out the day. It might be helpful to draw a little heart on their wrist and one on yours too. You can call it the hug button and when they find they are missing you they can press the heart and know that you will be doing the same at home. Sometimes having a little object to remind them of you through the day helps but please check this out with your school first.



Be Prepared.

Support your child to be aware of changes that may have happened to their classroom environment since they were there last and rehearse any new routines that school may have shared. Rehearse and practice your ‘goodbye’ routine and create a ‘hello’ greeting for the end of the day for them to look forward to.





You will need:



Children may have lots of different feelings about going back to school after lockdown. Help your child fill in the boxes below to explore these feelings, and anything they're worried about.

Find ways they can cope with their worries by using the Golden Rules for Choosing a Good Solution.

I am looking forward to ...

Seeing my friends

My favourite lesson

I am worried about ...

Catching the virus

Not being able to play my favourite game in the playground

Being away from Mum/Dad

What I can do to feel better ...

Find out how the teachers are making my school safe

Think of a different game

Tell my friend/teacher how I feel

Remember: Sometimes we can change the situation by doing something, e.g. playing a different game. But if we can't change the situation, such as having to be away from our family, then we have to accept it and find a way to feel better.

Golden Rules for
Choosing a Good Solution

It makes
me feel better



It doesn't hurt me
or anyone else



Mental Health & Wellbeing



Useful Contacts for outside
agencies/websites

Action for Children

actionforchildren.org.uk

Charity supporting children, young people and their families across England.

Anxiety UK

03444 775 774 (helpline) or 07537 416 905 (text)

anxietyuk.org.uk

Advice and support for people living with anxiety.

Beat

0808 801 0711 (youthline) or 0808 801 0811 (studentline)

beateatingdisorders.co.uk

Under 18s helpline, webchat and online support groups for people with eating disorders, such as anorexia and bulimia.

Childline

0800 1111

Childline.org.uk

Support for children and young people in the UK, including a free 24-hour helpline.

EWMHS - Emotional Wellbeing & Mental Health Service

0300 300 1600. Call NELFT out of hours: 0300 555 1201

EWMHS provides advice and support to children, young people and families who are in need of support with their emotional wellbeing or mental health difficulties.

FRANK

0300 123 6600

talktofrank.com

Confidential advice and information about drugs, their effects and the law.

Hope Again

0808 808 1677

hopeagain.org.uk

Support for young people when someone dies.

Hub of Hope

hubofhope.co.uk

A national database of mental health charities and organisations from across Britain who offer mental health advice and support.

Kooth

kooth.com

Counsellors available until 10pm every day. Free, safe and anonymous online counselling for young people. Check whether this is offered in your area.

Me and My Mind

meandmymind.nhs.uk

Advice and support for young people struggling with unusual experiences, such as hearing voices.

Mencap

0808 808 1111

mencap.org.uk

Information and advice for people with a learning disability, families and carers.

National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC)

0800 800 5000 or 0800 1111 (18 or under)

nspcc.org.uk

Support for children and anyone worried about a child.

No Panic

0330 606 1174

nopanice.org.uk/no-panic-youth-hub

Charity offering support for sufferers of panic attacks and obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD).

OCD Youth

ocdyouth.org

Youth Support for young people with obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD).

On My Mind

annafreud.org/on-my-mind

Information for young people to make informed choices about their mental health and wellbeing.

Rethink Mental Illness

0300 5000 927

rethink.org

Provides support and information for anyone affected by mental health problems, including local support groups.

Safeline

0808 800 5007 safeline.org.uk

Young people's helpline, helping survivors of sexual abuse and rape.

Samaritans

116 123 (freephone)

Samaritans.org

Open 24/7 for anyone who needs to talk. You can visit some branches in person. They also have a Welsh Language Line on 0300 123 3011 (7pm–11pm every day).

The Mix

0808 808 4994 or 85258 (crisis messenger service, text THEMIX)

themix.org.uk

Support and advice for under 25s, including a helpline, crisis messenger service and webchat.

YoungMinds

0808 802 5544 (parents helpline) or 85258 (crisis messenger service, text YM)

youngminds.org.uk

Committed to improving the mental health of babies, children and young people, including support for parents and carers. [Provides information on medication for young people.](#)

Young Stonewall

0800 050 2020

youngstonewall.org.uk

Information and support for all young lesbian, gay, bi and trans people.

Youth Access

youthaccess.org.uk

Advice and counselling network for young people, including details of free local services