

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Wellbeing and Early Years Children: Transitioning back after lockdown

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Wellbeing and early years children

Children's wellbeing will be at the forefront of early year's practitioner's minds, as children transition back into the EYFS following lockdown.

Wellbeing refers to feeling at ease, being spontaneous and free of emotional tensions and is crucial to secure 'mental health'.

Children's perseverance and resilience amidst change over the last few months need to be celebrated and supported further as they return to their setting. Consider the changes they have experienced and managed with support from their parents and practitioners:-

- Being isolated from peer support and friendship to being reliant on immediate family.
- Moving from familiar routines that provide comfort of the known and expected, to a less structured family timetable.
- Key people in their lives having a change of role, with different expectations to those of practitioners, for example parents taking on the role of educators.
- Managing and understanding strong emotions from themselves, those around them and those they hear and see from others i.e. television.
- Possibly experiencing bereavement / loss for the first times in their young lives.
- Socially missing clubs and friendship circles but finding new ways to communicate e.g. Zoom, Skype, and FaceTime etc.
- Collaborative learning to solitary learning, challenging themselves, intrinsic motivation and working out how to achieve their tasks independently.

Recognition of these huge personal achievements can be logged in children's assessments and should be valued. Try to see the positives.

We must remember that retaining learnt information at such a young age is tricky and long-term memory relies on repetition and experience. This will mean that many children will return to our settings needing a ***planned settling in curriculum*** that focusses primarily on '***Personal, social and emotional education***'. Be mindful - starting from where the children left their learning in the 'Spring term' curriculum could lead to raised stress levels and anxiety in children.

A 'Recovery Curriculum' based on 'The Five Losses':-

ssat the schools, students
and teachers network



Keypersons will feel anxious that the children they support will be far behind academically when they return. It will be tempting to launch straight into assessment trackers and try to recover what they

have lost and push the children to expected levels throughout the areas of learning. This approach is incompatible with the process of recovery from loss, trauma, anxiety and grief. Children have rapidly adapted to change and experienced heightened emotions throughout Lockdown.

Consider how you will plan a settling in period that focusses on the fundamental **wellbeing**, and **secure positive development** of the child. If children's anxiety remains high, we know that their learning will not stick and not be successful in the long-term. Barry Carpenter, CBE, Professor of Mental Health in Education, Oxford Brookes University and Matthew Carpenter, Principal, Baxter College, Kidderminster outline in their May blog what they would focus on in their **recovery curriculum, throughout all age phases**. These foci are based on loss during Lockdown: - ***routine, structure, friendship, opportunity and freedom***. They discuss how the loss of these can trigger the emergence emotionally of anxiety, trauma and bereavement in any child.

Consider focussing planning around the following:-

- **Lever 1: Relationships** – We cannot expect our children to return joyfully, and many of the relationships that were thriving, may need to be invested in and restored.
We need to plan for this to happen, not assume that it will. Reach out to greet them, use the relationships we build to cushion the discomfort of returning.
- **Lever 2: Community** – Child-initiated planning and learning is understood to be effective practice in Early Years this needs to be the starting point when we return to our setting too. Practitioners need to listen to what has happened to children in this period of Lockdown, understand their needs and how they have engaged in the local community or not engaged and missed these events (i.e. playing in the park, going to the supermarket etc.). A loss of freedom. They will need support transitioning back into your settings community.
- **Lever 3: Transparent learning** – Parents and some children will feel like they have lost time in learning and will feel anxious about this. We must show them how we are addressing these gaps, consulting and reassuring parents will heal this sense of loss.
- **Lever 4: Metacognition** – Home learning will have happened in many different ways and on many different levels. The children will have developed many new skills and it is the practitioner's role to nurture, acknowledge and value these. By doing this you will rebuild their confidence as learners.
- **Lever 5: Space/ time** – Start your settling in period on the promise that it will be calm and at a pace that is slower than before. This will give children the time to rediscover themselves, and to find their voice that will successful inform our planning. It is only natural that practitioners will want to work at an incredible pace to make sure this group of learners are not disadvantaged against their peer groups that went before, but first provide children with the humane right of space and time before we push towards expected age related learning levels.

What should EYFS practitioners be focussing on initially:-

1. Building relationships - Place a high emphasis on your 'key person' system.

Children learn best when they feel understood, accepted, and loved. This is why the key person system is so widely adopted. A focus on attachment in your youngest children will help them to settle back quickly into healthy, happy learners.

2. Role-modelling – Being calm, organised and reassuring will help.

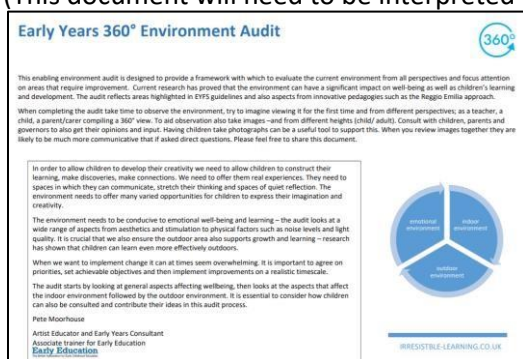
We know that children learn so much from observing those around them. As a trusted adult, it is crucial that you are conscious of the behaviour that you model to the children around you. The transition back from lockdown will be tiring for practitioners and will mean that you are reacting to the unknown and encountering situations that are unprecedented.

Ensure that the pace of the day is slower than and not as much as the usual timetable. This will give you time to model and recap on desirable behaviours.

3. Keep a stress-free environment – Create spaces where children can rest and have quiet times.

Enabling environments means creating a calm, comfortable environment where the child learns best. Children will be tired when they return to your setting and will need opportunities in the day when they can rest. Consider cosy restful areas, den spaces (these could be cardboard boxes that can be thrown away) and times for mindfulness/ yoga / peer massage (within the 'bubbles'). Story-times in smaller key person groups ('bubbles') will encourage conversations that can be linked to their home/ setting experiences.

Audit your environment and look for signs of overstimulation and ways that you can promote wellbeing. Maybe use Peter Moorhouse Early Years 360 degree Audit – that looks at how you can promote well-being. <https://irresistible-learning.co.uk/resource/early-years-360-environment-audit/> (This document will need to be interpreted with new covid-19 safety measure in mind)



When you look after emotional wellbeing first, that's when children will flourish and find a way to battle through their challenges.

4. Support self-regulation – Consider separation anxiety disorder (SAD) when you initially start.

Self-regulation is all about how we regulate our own behaviours. It is everything from how we cope when we might feel angry, to how we behave in a way that keeps us safe.

The ability to regulate our emotions is a key pillar of resilience and perseverance, but in these initial settling in periods after lockdown, children may find it difficult to self-regulate. Their experiences may have been positive at home, but leaving a small network of family members and returning to setting will be a huge emotional event for some. Some children may have experienced trauma or bereavement and so will need your time and attention. Both positive and negative experiences can trigger separation anxiety, some of their behaviours may include:-

- Clinginess to primary carer, e.g. Mum and Dad
- Tears/upset/extreme tantrums
- Sickness
- Withdrawal e.g. not wanting to join in with activities
- Disruptions around sleep/nightmares
- Food refusal
- Inappropriate behaviour
- Regression, for example toilet accidents.

A gentle induction back will help children to focusing on desirable behaviour and give practitioners time to remind children how they can best self-regulate.

5. Acknowledge emotions – Let children know that all emotions are allowed.

When a child is experiencing new or unfamiliar emotions for the first time, it's pretty scary. You can help them to understand those emotions by giving it a name, acknowledging and validating what they are going through. It shows empathy and helps them to reinforce how they are feeling, which can help to develop the self-regulation they need.

Use phrases like 'I know that you're upset' or 'I can see that you're angry', and children will know that it's OK to feel how they feel. You may find that you have children that are upset or crying more than usual.



"Crying is ok. It's a very healthy and necessary way for children to express their feelings, and we don't need to make them stop. By telling them to 'stop crying' we send the message that their feelings are not important, not valid, silly, and annoying. If we want our children to learn how to regulate their emotions, and to trust us with their problems and feelings, then we cannot be dismissive of them when they try to do this!" <https://happinessishereblog.com/10-things-say-instead-stop-crying/>

"The number of social interactions in the education or childcare environment will be reduced as there are fewer children attending, and classroom social distancing is being practised".

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-the-wider-opening-of-early-years-and-childcare-settings-from-1-june/planning-guide-for-early-years-and-childcare-settings>

6. Help to understand change – Take time to talk to children about the transitions and changes they are experiencing.

Lockdown has been very hard for children to understand and was a sudden change in children's lives. If necessary, use activities, puppets or stories that might help them to connect how they're feeling and what they have experienced to their real world.

Making sense of their experiences with the understanding that they are OK and well supported in your setting. This will help them in the future to face difficult situations. The NSPCC have guidance of how to talk to children who are anxious, depressed and are showing signs of mental illness.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/childrens-mental-health/depression-anxietymental-health>

7. Allow children to problem-solve – Practitioners will possibly have to work-hard to reinstate independence skills nurtured before lockdown, they may well have been forgotten.

Problem-solving skills are all too easily left undeveloped when parents step in too quickly to offer their own solution to a problem. The home environment is not always setup to allow for independence skills such as self-selecting from continuous provision and completing a task independently.

Your approach will have to be patient, be prepared to repeat yourself and your instructions, proceed with praise and positivity, and let them know when they've done a good job. Your support will mean a lot to them developing and rebuilding their confidence.

8. Choose your words carefully – Be positive.

During lockdown children will maybe have experienced worrying words, tones of voice and adults concerns for the future projected indirectly on their children. The words practitioners use have a big impact on children allaying and understanding their fears better. Use open-ended questions (i.e. How did that make you feel?) don't be dismissive, and keep positive in the way you speak with children. Understanding is the start to moving on, being happy and ready to learn once again.



Ideas for EYFS practitioners on how to support children's well-being in this transitioning period back into the setting.

- Help children remember what fun it was in your setting by arranging a Skype or Zoom meeting with small groups of the children prior to starting. Ask parents to sit with children, to support children that feel shy or overwhelmed. Help them to build positive images in their minds about being part of the EYFS family once again.
- Build a child's joy and anticipation over returning by posting a pack out to the children prior to starting, send a text/email to parents asking their child to look out for their special letter - 'It will be coming soon'. Include pictures of staff, the environment and an amazing new space you have created for them to explore.

You may include some sunflower seeds that they can plant at home and in the EYFS outdoor space (a visual tangible link between their two main environments and a talking point for staff and children).

- Revisiting the happy times children had in your setting and their unique educational achievements is important. Share children's current learning journals, or send them home with children during their resettling-in period.
- Support 'Personal, Social and Emotional development' by staggering your start dates/times so not all children return on the same day. Having smaller groups will allow time to spend building relationships and supporting high emotions.
- Build a positive attitude to home learning experiences by encouraging families to share lots of photographs from home, display them in your EYFS space for children to look at. You may have some already that you can display through your online assessment systems.

- Create a wellbeing toolbox for each child.







<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/47243693>



- Address early on any worries parents have about their child returning to their setting. Offer parents one to one meetings (i.e. Skype/ phone call) with their child's key person, so any current worries can be discussed and staff can be prepared e.g. do children have particular anxieties or has anything happened that the practitioner needs to be aware of including a death of a close relative, a child recovering after coronavirus and needing restful periods throughout the day or only attending for part of the day etc.?
- Reduce anxiety by displaying visual timetables so children can see what they are doing next and when it will be home time. They need to be reassured that they will see their parents soon. Some over anxious children / parents may benefit from a reassuring text message being sent or a child receiving a text message from their parent.
- The experiences you offer during this transition period should include lots of safe, open ended and sensory activities (these may have to only be shared in the 'bubble' or on an individual basis in small plastic tubs/ trays) as well as lots of stories, songs and down time. Time outdoors will also be really important and the safest place to be regarding lowering the rate of infection.

Having cosy areas, tents (outdoors) and places to help them feel safe and secure will all support them through this transitional time. You may want to limit your smaller / confined spaces to only one or two children in the 'bubble'. Make sure that material drapes and blankets are washed as the groups change.

<p>Breathing Teddies</p>  <p>Ask each child to lay down and place a teddy on their chest. Ask them to take deep breaths in and exhale slowly. They can take teddy on a gentle up and down ride taking care he doesn't fall off.</p> 	<p>Mindfulness cards available from 'Promoting children's wellbeing' booklet. Contact :- earlyyearscentre@lancashire.gov.uk</p>
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	<p>Yoga</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uUIGKhG_Vq8</p>
	<p>Mindfulness</p> <p>https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=you+tube+peace+out&view=detail&mid=064E859CB6501799DAB9064E859CB6501799DAB9&FORM=VIRE</p> <p>https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=you+tube+peace+out&&FORM=VDVVXX</p>
	<p>Display this peaceful music and images as children enter your EYFS space.</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ZYbU82GVz4</p>
	<p>Sensory play, is often described as therapeutic for children. Risk assess these replenished sensory resources. Be mindful of cross contamination. Consider offering sand, water, malleable etc. activities in miniature, so that the items can be refreshed often. You may choose to give individual named tubs to children that only they play with i.e. for their own playdough.</p> <p>https://www.learning4kids.net/list-of-sensory-play-ideas/ https://childhood101.com/sensory-play-ideas/</p>
	<p>Have fun dancing and singing.</p> <p>https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/watch</p>
	<p>Outdoor Mindfulness For Children – Walk on a Rainbow</p> <p>This is a simple activity that will teach the children to be mindful their surroundings. Before you begin, have a quick discussion to remind him of the colours of a rainbow (red, orange, yellow, green, and blue, indigo, violet). Then, step outside.</p> <p>Throughout the walk, ask the children to find something to represent each colour of the rainbow. They could bring a small notebook to jot down his answers, or he can simply take note of them in his mind.</p> <p>Depending on the surroundings, some colours will be more difficult to locate than others; this is part of the fun!</p> <p>https://blissfulkids.com/playful-mindfulness-for-children-walk-on-a-rainbow/</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OP3Deuv8tbc</p>

Useful Websites:-

Assessing children's wellbeing: - The Leuven Scales for Wellbeing and Involvement.

<https://family.co/blog/management/leuven-scales/>

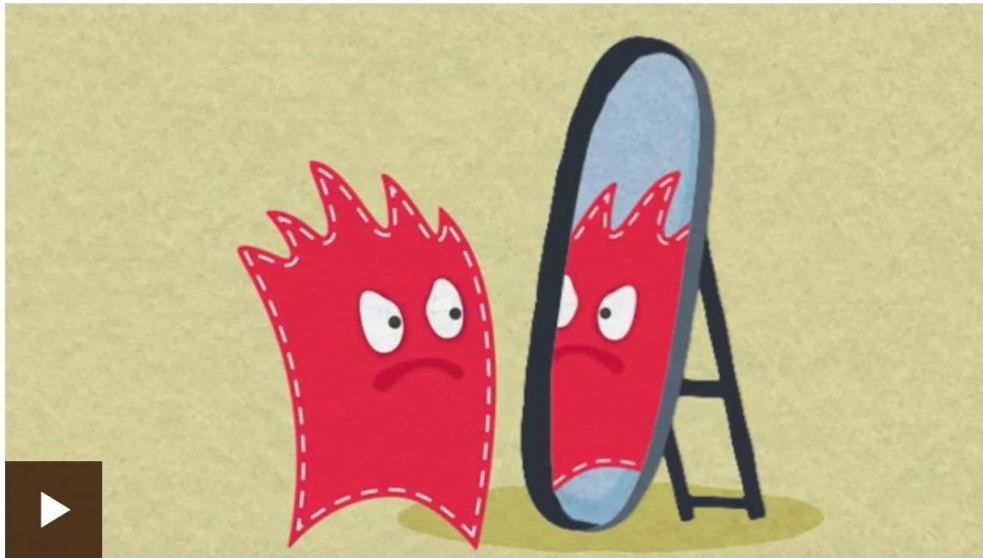


Child line Calm Zone - Many activity ideas for quiet times in your setting, i.e. yoga videos, mindfulness activities, self-regulation ideas etc.

<https://www.childline.org.uk/toolbox/calm-zone/>



BBC Bitesize Dealing with feelings <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zms6jnv/articles/zkgdcqt>



Mental health advice for young children

<https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/mental-health-advice-for-children-and-young-people/theadvice-resource-vault/advice-for-children-age-0-5>

We have lots of advice for mental and emotional health problems that may be affecting children, age 0-5



Advice: Younger child (0-5)

Living with a mental health problem, or supporting someone who is, can be difficult and quite isolating. If you want advice about a specific mental or emotional health issue that may be worrying you, then you are in the right place.

Find advice and information on the specific issues that may be affecting you or someone you know below:

- [Abuse](#)
- [ADHD \(attention deficit hyperactivity disorder\)](#)
- [Anger](#)
- [Anxiety](#)
- [Attachment](#)
- [Autism and autism spectrum conditions \(ASC\)](#)
- [Domestic violence](#)
- [Eating disorders](#)
- [Family problems](#)
- [Learning difficulties](#)
- [Learning disabilities](#)
- [Loss and grief](#)
- [Phobia](#)
- [Pregnancy and depression](#)
- [Self-esteem](#)
- [Sleep](#)
- [Soiling](#)
- [Tics and twitches](#)
- [Trauma](#)
- [Wetting](#)

The Mentally Healthy Schools toolkit includes resources for practitioners, parents and carers and children to help manage anxiety and improve wellbeing during the coronavirus crisis. You will find practical activities such as mindful crafts, breathing exercises and other self-care ideas, informative videos, emotional expression worksheets and helpful strategies to address anxiety. Suitable for: **Early Years**, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 children, school/ setting staff, parents and carers.

<https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/resources/coronavirus-anxiety-toolkit-4/>

Coronavirus: resources for managing anxiety and improving wellbeing

30/04/20

At this time of uncertainty, disrupted routine and restricted freedom, it's understandable to be feeling anxious. This toolkit includes resources for education staff, parents and carers and children to help manage anxiety and improve wellbeing during the coronavirus crisis.

You will find practical activities such as mindful crafts, breathing exercises and other self-care ideas, informative videos, emotional expression worksheets and helpful strategies to address anxiety.

Resources for children

Relaxation activities for children - Save the Children

Six simple activities for relaxation at home.

[Go to resource](#)

Emotion wheel - Mentally Healthy Schools

The emotion wheel can be used with children of all ages who are struggling to express their current feelings. By identifying an image, they can convey their current feelings. Using the wheel regularly throughout the day will help children and young people see the changing nature of their feelings and can help reduce anxiety around feeling a certain way.

[Go to resource](#)

Relax like a cat relaxation exercise - Moodcafé

A guided relaxation, using the analogy of a cat, to ease any anxiety and create a sense of calm for children.

[Go to resource](#)

Helping your child with anxiety - YoungMinds

An article and video with tips for parents on supporting their children with anxiety.

[Go to resource](#)

Resource for APs

Running an Alternative Provision (AP) during lockdown: a practical guide - Pears Family School

This practical guide for APs offers an example of how to assess which students can be safely cared for at home; how to support vulnerable children and families, and how to work with families and deliver a balanced curriculum, structure and routine at home.

Helplines

SHOUT - text 'Shout' to 85258 for 24/7 crisis text support

Childline - under 19s can call 0800 1111 for free support

Education Support - school staff can call 08000 562 561 or text 07909 341229 for 24/7 help and advice

YoungMinds Parents Helpline - Call 0808 802 5544 for free Mon-Fri from 9.30am to 4pm

Sign up for Mentally Healthy Schools coronavirus toolkits.

[Go to the Mentally Healthy Schools coronavirus page for more toolkits.](#)

MENTALLY HEALTHY SCHOOLS

Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families

Personal development and mutual understanding. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/subjects/zvryt39>

Feelings and emotions

>

What are feelings?

Dealing with feelings

Recognising others' feelings

Seven Techniques for helping children stay calm. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/joinin/seven-techniques-for-helping-kids-keep-calm>

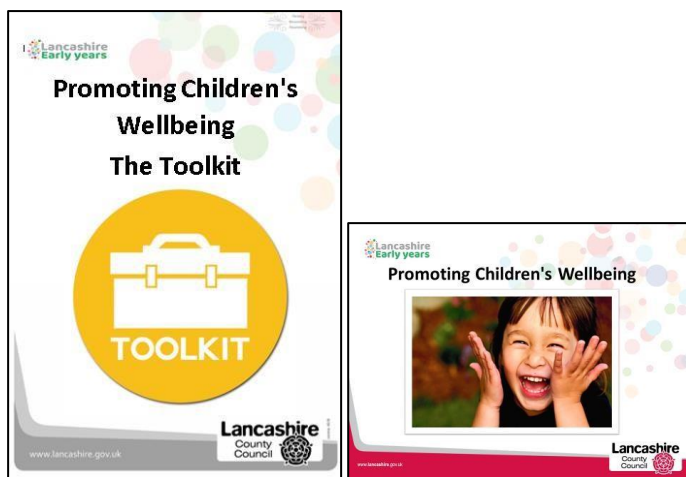


Consider the wellbeing of staff and children with these booklets packed full of useful strategies and practical ideas, both available on request from earlyyearscentre@lancashire.gov.uk.

Includes peer massage cards, mindfulness cards, wellbeing audits, building resilience, wellbeing and involvement assessment grids and much more.



'Promoting Children's Wellbeing' training available for Early Years Practitioners to access in the Autumn / Spring Term 2020 – email to express an interest: - EarlyYearsCentre@lancashire.gov.uk. The training comes with a toolkit that helps practitioners review and improve their wellbeing practices.



An App that the keyperson and/ or parent can used with the child.

<https://www.childline.org.uk/login/?returnPath=%2flocker%2f#journal>

Mood journal - Childline

Children can sign up to Childline's "locker" and track their daily mood in the mood journal. This might be a helpful way for children to balance their mood during a period of uncertainty.

[Go to resource](#)

"There's plenty of reasons to join:

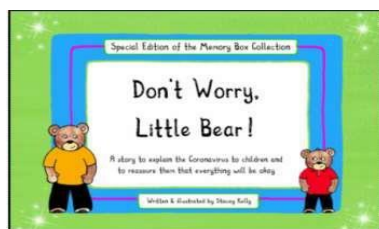
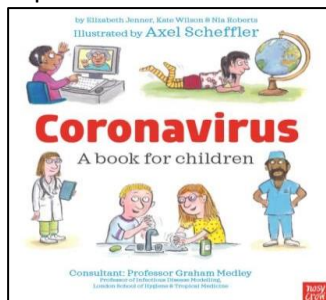
- It's confidential - you don't need to give us your email address or real name
- You'll be able to use our 1-2-1 counsellor chat
- You can join other young people on the message boards
- You'll get your own locker, where you can save pages, create images and change the design to make it yours."

Documents and resources to support EYFS practitioners:-

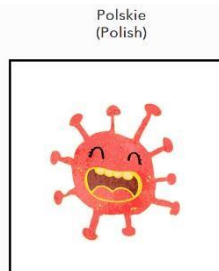
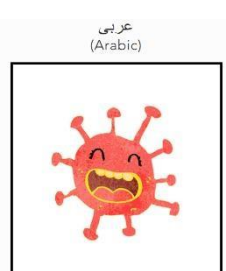
https://nosycrowcoronavirus.s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/Coronavirus_ABookForChildren.pdf

<https://www.earlyyearsstorybox.com/corona/?fbclid=IwAR32EkBvEwXAz4s34qNHxfCJIFD57vxC2n1fQf4ampALfPiZCq2tayRjHVg>

Children's book to help you scaffold conversations about Coronavirus with children. Easy ways to explain what children have experienced during lockdown.



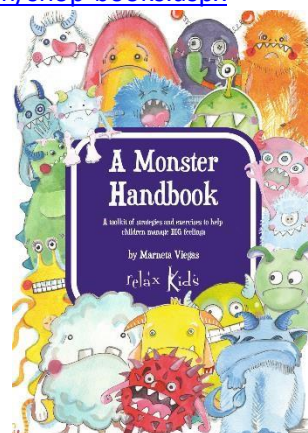
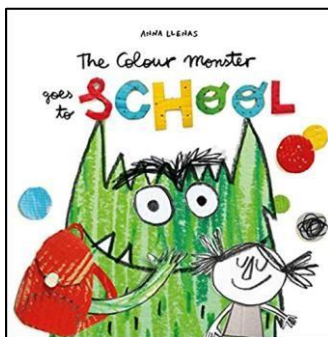
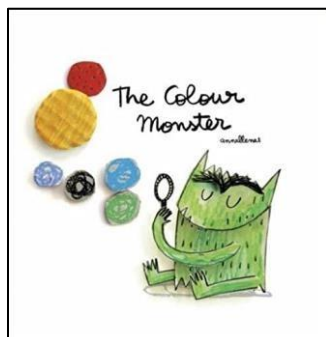
This little book explains the illness in many different languages and can be shared with parents and children who's English is their additional language. <https://www.mindheart.co/descargables>



Emotional Literacy

The two books below may help with promoting emotional literacy skills in young children. The story explains emotions through the colours. 'The Colour Monster Goes to School' maybe particularly helpful as children return to your setting following lockdown. Explore the 'Relax Kids' website for downloadable resources to support children's well-being.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ih0iu80u04Y> <http://www.relaxkids.com/shop-books.aspx>



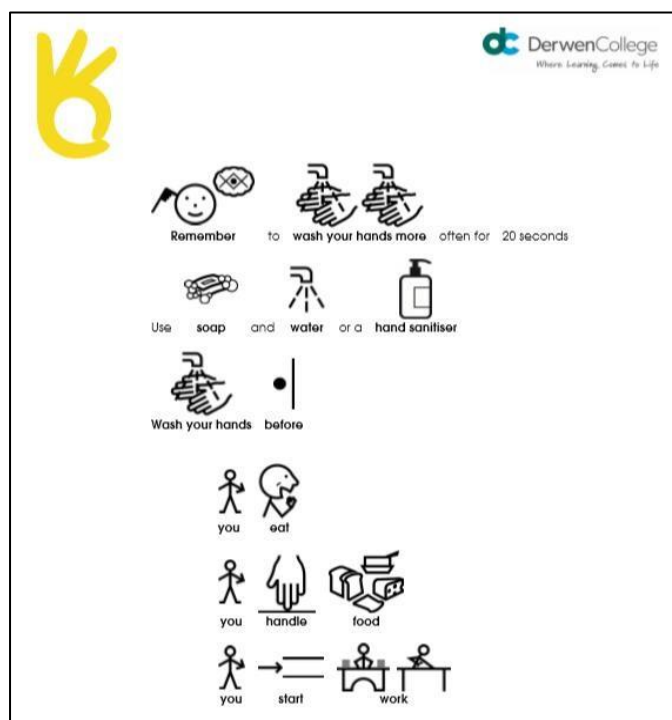
A poster for you to display in your parents area and low down at child height, so that you can use it when chatting with children and parents.



<https://www.priorygroup.com/media/594863/understanding-childhood-anxiety-v1.jpg>

Explaining in Makaton about how to keep safe when they are back in your setting.

<https://www.makaton.org/Assets/Store/FreeResources/CoronavirusInfo.pdf>



Articles for EYFS staff to support and build knowledge:-

What Comes Next? Key Issues for the EYFS and Key Stage One after Lockdown

"... Close collaboration between EYFS and Key Stage One staff is always important but will be particularly crucial this year to develop balanced, developmentally appropriate practice. A key starting point will be to reflect on the learning environment. Does your Year One classroom offer some continuity with its EYFS counterpart or will it be like starting again for the young learners that use it? Within any Year One classroom there should be some resources and materials that the children are already familiar with. This familiarity will provide an element of security and self-confidence which will be so important when children return to school after such an anxious time. A meeting between EYFS and KS1 staff should identify which resources from Reception will offer more learning possibilities if continued into Year 1. The more open-ended resources such as wooden blocks or workshop materials are a good starting point for this..." Click on the link to read the whole article:-

<https://earlyexcellence.com/latest-news/press-articles/what-comes-next-key-issues-for-the-eyfsand-key-stage-one-after-lockdown/>

<https://www.annafreud.org/coronavirus-support/support-for-early-years/>



<https://www.annafreud.org/early-years/early-years-in-mind/resources/>



<https://www.annafreud.org/early-years/early-years-in-mind/common-difficulties>

- Limit background conversations and news that the child can hear.

TALKING TO CHILDREN DEVELOPMENTALLY AGED 4–7

When talking to children aged 4–7 it is important to understand:

- Children are focused on their immediate environment – what is going on around them, what is happening next and soon, and how they feel right now.
- They will struggle to understand concepts that they cannot picture in their mind.
- Complicated things like illnesses they can't see may be difficult to understand.
- They will understand illness in terms of simple symptoms, like a cough or runny nose.
- They will struggle to separate out that symptoms of illness may be different – such as the idea that some coughs are OK, and others are more serious.
- They will be starting to understand that you can catch some illnesses but they may get confused about this and think you can catch all illnesses.
- They will know that some behaviours can help keep you healthy, like washing your hands, however they might get confused and think it will definitely stop you getting ill.

WHAT THEY MAY DO OR SAY

- Children may increase behaviours they think will keep them healthy that they have heard adults talking about before e.g. saying they want to eat healthily or exercise to be healthy and fit.
- Children are exposed to stories and fairy tales at this age and you might hear them playing out illness-related stories with their toys – some of the things they do may be confusing or not accurate.
- Children may 'fill in the blanks' with their imagination or seemingly illogical or inaccurate explanations – you may wonder, 'where did they get that from?'
- Children may blame themselves or think something was their fault (e.g. grandma is ill because I did not wash my hands).
- Carry on with playing even when things around them may be difficult (e.g. if a loved one is unwell).
- They may ask a lot of questions repeatedly as they try to make sense of information they have heard with their limited understanding of illness.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- Use play and stories to shape a child's understanding, where necessary and appropriate. Characters in the story can be used to correct misunderstandings.
- Make sure that the child understands cause and effect (e.g. washing hands will **help stop** germs spreading rather than **will stop**).
- Answers do not need to be increasingly complex – if you have said enough to your child, repeat the information you have given consistently. If you are not sure or don't know, say so instead of making something up!
- Help your child label and name their emotions by labelling and naming yours.

The British Psychological Society – Talking to children about illness

<https://www.bps.org.uk/news-and-policy/advice-talking-children-about-illness>

Children are not little adults, and their understanding depends on their developmental stage.

This leaflet is designed to help parents, carers and education providers to talk about ill health in a way that is developmentally suitable for them.





The advice broken down into four distinct age categories, ranging from the youngest children to teenagers, and also discusses the developmental characteristics that define each age group.


In addition it also covers what children may do or say in reaction to illness at each age, and offers tips on how to help them process their understanding of events.



The five ways to wellbeing – Evidence suggests that a small improvement in wellbeing can help to decrease some mental health problems and also help people to flourish. The New Economics Foundation (NEF) on behalf of Foresight, sets out five actions to improve personal wellbeing, these can apply to all ages:

Try to plan for and create opportunities for children to experience the following five elements throughout your settings day.

	Connect	<p>Keyperson system in place. Parents are involved in their child's learning. Talk about feelings and teach the language of feelings during keyperson times. Ask the children to give you a 'weather report' on how they are feeling, "I'm dark and cloudy with some raindrop tears coming out." Ask them to use colour and music to express how they are feeling. Think of each other and think of things that you all have in common.</p>
	Be active	<p>Daily access to the outdoors. Physical activities and planned opportunities for children to move i.e. from slow and controlled movements such as yoga, to fast dodging games that get children's heart rate up. Reduce the amount of time children are asked to sit.</p>
	Take notice	<p>Give children opportunities to explore their natural world and be amazed at what they find. Provide multi-sensory experiences. Explore outdoors all season round, allowing the children to feel the differing weathers on their skin. Plan environments that inspire and promote awe and wonder. Use a happy moment to 'soak in the good' by pausing with children to observe the pleasant physical and emotional feelings present.</p>
	Keep learning	<p>Plan novel experiences that link with children's interests and next steps for learning. Place objects of provocation in the environment to stimulate conversation and new learning. Introduce mindfulness sessions and / or quiet reflective periods in the day.</p>

	<p>Give</p>	<p>Reward and promote kindness in children. Encourage children to work in teams to instil a feeling of fairness. Nurture children's empathetic responses to each other. Involve children in charity and funding raising. Practice kind thoughts by prompting children to think of people they'd like to send kind wishes to.</p>
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<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/five-ways-to-mental-wellbeing>