

PERSONAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING NEWSLETTER

WELCOME BACK TO SCHOOL



KEEP YOUR CHILDREN
HAPPY AND HEALTHY

September 2019

Issue 7

Contents:-

Back to school

Resilience

Reading

Did you know?

Encourage bonding with other children

It is essential that children feel bonded with other children at their school. Support your child and encourage them to foster friendships with their peers. Play games with your child that help them with sharing and taking turns. This also gives them a repertoire of games to suggest when they play with friends.

The personal wellbeing and the social aspects of school are just as important as their academic development. Playdates either at home (making pizza or baking cakes are good activities) or having ice cream or picnics in the park are great ways for children to form friendships, without feeling they are being forced.

Establish a routine

Establishing a routine for waking up, dressing independently and eating breakfast will ensure your child arrives on time at school in a calm and ready to learn manner. Create a calm household routine with early bedtimes and stress-free mornings.

Early bedtimes are essential so children can deal calmly with the morning rush and with the rest of the day.

Make sure you're a few minutes early to pick your child up from school.

Children who are well rested and have had enough sleep will have the internal resources to cope with stress and anxiety and they are more likely to flourish during the school day than children who have not rested or slept well.

Encourage independence

While you provide the comfort and safety of a good routine, also help young children to be more independent and to gradually build on their resilience. Encourage your child to do everyday tasks such as introducing themselves to new people, asking for help, managing their own clothes and shoes, packing school bags and eating independently. Prepare children to learn new skills in case of an unexpected event (e.g. going to school with other people, moving from class to class, having the right books and materials for different lessons, changing into different uniforms, or managing pocket money).



Calm their fears

Don't dismiss any worries or concerns that your child expresses - allow them to ask

RESILIENCE

All children are capable of working through challenges and coping with stress. Resilience is the ability to bounce back from stress, adversity, failure, challenges, or even trauma. It's not something that children either have or don't have, it's a skill that children develop as they grow.

Resilient children are more likely to take healthy risks because they don't fear falling short of expectations. They are curious, brave and trusting of their instincts. They know their limits and they push themselves to step outside of their comfort zones. This helps them reach for their long-term goals and it helps them solve problems independently.

HELP YOUR CHILD TO BUILD RESILIENCE WITH THESE HANDY TIPS:-

Increase their exposure to people who care about them

Social support is associated with higher positive emotions, a sense of personal control and predictability, self-esteem, motivation, optimism and resilience. Anything you can do to build their connection with the people who love them will strengthen them. For example, *'I told Grandma how brave you were. She's so proud of you.'*

Let them know that it's okay to ask for help

Children will often have the idea that being brave is about dealing with things by themselves. Let them know that being brave and strong means knowing when to ask for help. If there is anything they can do themselves, guide them towards that but resist carrying them there.

Exercise

Exercise strengthens and reorganises the brain to make it more resilient to stress. One of the ways it does this is by increasing the neurochemicals that can calm the brain in times of stress. Here are some ideas, but get them thinking and they'll have plenty of their own: throw a frisbee, kick a ball, hula-hoop, dance, walk the dog. The list is endless.

Build feelings of competence and a sense of mastery

Nurture that feeling in them – that one that reminds them they can do hard things. You'll be doing this every time you acknowledge their strengths, the brave things they do, their effort when they do something difficult and when you encourage them to make their own decisions. When they have a sense of mastery, they are less likely to be reactive to future stress and more likely to handle future challenges.

Nurture optimism

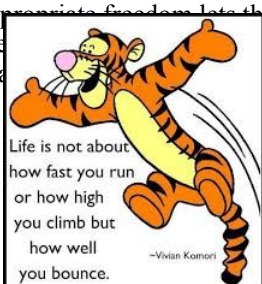
Optimism has been found to be one of the key characteristics of resilient people. The brain can be rewired to be more optimistic through the experiences it is exposed to. If you have a child who tends to look at the glass as being half empty, show them a different view. This doesn't mean invalidating how they feel. Acknowledge their view of the world, and introduce them to a different one.

Model resiliency

Imitation is such a powerful way to learn. Your children will want to be just like you and they'll be watching everything. Without pitching it above what they can cope with, let them see how you deal with disappointment. Bringing them into your emotional world at appropriate times will help them to see that sadness and disappointment are all very normal human experiences. When experiences are normalised, there will be a safety and security that will open the way for them to explore what those experiences mean for them and experiment with ways to respond.

Encourage them to take safe, considered risks

Let them know that the courage they show in doing something brave and difficult is more important than the outcome. Age-appropriate freedom lets them learn where their edges are, encourages them to think about their decisions and teaches them that the things that go wrong. When they take risks they start to open up to the world and realise their capacity to share.



**RESILIENCE ISN'T ABOUT NEVER FALLING DOWN
IT'S ABOUT GETTING BACK UP AGAIN**

THE IMPORTANCE OF READING

Evidence suggests that children who read for enjoyment every day not only perform better in reading tests than those who don't but also develop a broader vocabulary, increased general knowledge and a better understanding of other cultures.

What difference can I make as a parent?

You can make a huge difference! Parents are the most important educators in a child's life and it's never too early to start reading together. Even before they're born, babies learn to recognise their parents' voices. Reading to your baby from birth, even for just a few minutes a day, gives them the comfort of hearing your voice and increases their exposure to language.

Building vocabulary and understanding

Learning to read is about listening and understanding as well as working out what is printed on the page. Through hearing stories, children are exposed to a wide range of words. This helps them build their own vocabulary and improve their understanding when they listen, which is vital as they start to read. It is important for them to understand how stories work too. Even if your child does not understand every word, they will hear new sounds, words and phrases which they can then try out, copying what they hear.

Make books part of your family life – Always have books around so that you and your children are ready to read whenever there's a chance.

Join your local library – Get your child a library card. You'll find the latest videogames, blu-rays and DVDs, plus tons and tons of fantastic books. Allow them to pick their own books, encouraging their own interests. We are very lucky to have our own library too—don't forget to visit and see the vast selection of books.

Match their interests – Help them find the right book - it doesn't matter if it's fiction, poetry, comic books or non-fiction.

All reading is good – Don't discount non-fiction, comics, graphic novels, magazines and leaflets. Reading is reading and it is all good.

Get comfortable! – Snuggle up somewhere warm and cosy with your child, either in bed, on a beanbag or on the sofa, or make sure they have somewhere comfy when reading alone.

Ask questions – To keep them interested in the story, ask your child questions as you read such as, 'What do you think will happen next?' or 'Where did we get to last night? Can you remember what had happened already?'

Read whenever you get the chance – Bring along a book or magazine for any time your child has to wait, such as at a doctor's surgery.

Read again and again – Encourage your child to re-read favourite books and poems. Re-reading helps to build up fluency and confidence.

Bedtime stories – Regularly read with your child or children at bedtime. It's a great way to end the day and to spend valuable time with your child.

Rhyme and repetition –
or children to join

at for encouraging your child



DID YOU KNOW?

Collective names for groups of animals:-

Ants: a colony, army, swarm or nest of ants
Baboons: a troop or flange of baboons
Bats: a colony or cloud of bats
Bears: a sloth or a sleuth of bears
Bees: a swarm of bees
Birds (chicks / baby birds): a brood or clutch of chicks
Butterflies: a kaleidoscope of butterflies
Camels: a caravan of camels
Crocodiles: a bask of crocodiles
Dogs: a pack of dogs
Donkeys: a drove of donkeys
Elephants: a parade of elephants
Fish: a school or a shoal of fish
Fox: a charm of foxes
Frogs: an army of frogs
Geese: a gaggle of geese
Giraffes: a tower of giraffes
Gorillas: a band of gorillas
Jaguars: a shadow of jaguars
Jellyfish: a smack of jellyfish
Kangaroos: a mob of kangaroos
Kittens (cats): a litter or kindle of kittens
Monkeys: a group of monkeys is called a troop
Owls: a parliament of owls
Peacocks: an ostentation of peacocks
Puppies (dogs): a litter of puppies
Rattlesnakes: a rhumba of rattlesnakes
Sharks: a shiver of sharks
Turtles: a bale or a nest of turtles
Whales: a pod, school, or gam of whales
Wolves: a pack of wolves
Woodpeckers: a descent of woodpeckers
Zebras: a zeal of zebras

