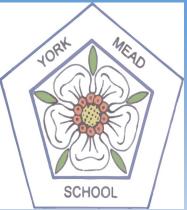
Yorkmead School

Mental Health & Well-being Newsletter — December 2023



Welcome to our fourth mental health and well-being newsletter.

In this issue, we will be looking at feelings and emotions, including some techniques for dealing with strong feelings through emotion coaching.

As we head into winter, the dark mornings and evenings can seem like a magical time, particularly with frost on the ground and twinkling lights in all the shops.

However for some people, winter and the festive season can be a time of sadness, loneliness and loss.

Here are some activities that can promote positive wellbeing in children and adults.

Sometimes the pressures of life can get on top of us all.

If you have any concerns regarding your children or there is a significant life event or change in circumstance, that may affect your child's well-being, then please do let school know so that we can put support in place.



To find out more about any of our initiatives please speak to Mr. Neale-Crane or Miss Wilkinson.

Malachi Family Support

We are working in your child's school



At school, we recognize that children and their families all have struggles in life. We buy into this service who are able to work with parents and children who may be going through difficulties in life.

Malachi offer twelve sessions of family support with a designated support worker who can talk through any problems or issues that you or your child may be going through. The service is confidential, supportive and fully funded by school.

If you would be interested in being referred for this service please contact: Mr. Neale-Crane (Assistant Head Teacher and Wellbeing Lead)

enquiry@yorkmead.bham.sch.uk or Telephone (0121) 4644215

Who are Malachi?

We are a therapeutic family support organisation working in your child's school. Using therapeutic based techniques we aim to support you and your child to see a better future, believe it's attainable and choose to make it happen.

Malachi offers a one-to-one support service for children and their parents/carers. By creating a safe space for them to express themselves and promoting good mental health and well-being, Malachi deliver a solution focused intervention to begin the process of change.

How can we help?

We offer a non-judgmental support service for children, parents/carers with the following challenges:

- Emotional Well-being
- Anxiety & Stress
- Family Breakdown
- Improved Attendance
- Bereavement
- Behaviour



TESCO IN-STORE VOTE!

Yorkmead Primary School Get Children Reading Outdoors



As part of our playground improvement program, we aim to set up an outdoor library and reading area. This will be a safe space where children can relax and unwind with a good book.

Remember you have until mid-January to vote for our project at these stores:

- 2344 Hall Green Stratford Rd Express B28 8AB
- 2624 Hall Green Large Store B90 3LU
- 5498 Kings Heath Birmingham Express B14 6EB
- 5656 Robin Hood Birmingham Express B28 0LG
- 6685 Birmingham Alcester Express B47 5PN

(One token per visit)

You may have spotted some new additions to our playground...





There will be more exciting changes to come in the summer!

At school we have been looking at ways in which we can support children who are upset or angry, through emotion coaching. Here are some tips ...

What is Emotion Coaching?

A technique and approach that can help children to understand and manage their emotions. It focuses on the feelings that underlie behaviours. It can be used by anyone and with anyone.

'Our own stress drops dramatically when we shift from trying to enforce compliance to reducing the causes of challenging behaviours and teaching kids how to do this for themselves' (Dr Stuart Shanker).

Emotional regulation is a skill that develops through guidance, attuned adults and practice.

What next?

It might take adults and children some time to get used to this approach. It might feel strange at first and take some time to see the impact.

 Have a go at writing some scripts so that you feel comfortable and prepared.
Practise with colleagues and friends.

Find out more:

- www.emotioncoachinguk.c om
- https://www.bathspa.ac.u k/schools/education/resea rch/emotion-coaching/
- <u>Q&A with Dr Janet Rose</u>
- Brene Brown on Empathy
- Good relationships are the key to healing trauma

Self-care first

To use the oxygen mask analogy - without first attending to your own needs, you will be unable to care for others effectively.

Responding to a child's distressed behaviours can feel frightening and threatening for adults too. Adults need to feel regulated in order to respond empathically and calmly to the child.

- Take a moment to focus on your breathing, noticing each breath, exhale longer than you inhale, until you feel a greater sense of calm.
- Pay attention to and label any sensations and emotions you are experiencing.
- What kind statements can you say to yourself that give you confidence and reassurance?

Connecting emotionally

When a child is upset, connect first emotionally in order to reduce their stress levels; they may be feeling threatened. How can you convey safety and containment?

Remember that all emotions are natural, normal and not always a matter of choice.

Observe, listen to and learn how the child expresses emotions; watch for changes in facial expressions, body language and tone of voice.

Step 1: empathise, validate, label

(the most important step!)

- Empathise with the child; show that you are trying to imagine how it feels for them.
- Use open body language, kind and soft facial expressions.
- Use words to reflect back the child's emotions, providing a narrative for their experience.

E.g. I wonder if you're feeling worried right now because... It's normal to feel worried when... I'm here with you...

Step 2: limit set

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Once the child feels understood, you may need to state a boundary limit (only if the behaviour is inappropriate). All feelings are ok but not all behaviours are ok.

- Use a calm and neutral tone.
- Unless an immediate risk to safety, you may need to spend a lot of time at Step 1 in order for the child to be receptive at Step 2.

E.g. It's ok to feel annoyed but it's not ok to hurt people.

Until next time, have a lovely holiday, rest and recharge ready for the new year! Mr. A Neale-Crane (Assistant Head Teacher and Senior Mental Health Lead)

Emotion Coaching

Step 3: Problem solve

When the child is calm:

- Explore the feelings that led to the behaviour/problem/incident.
- Scaffold alternative ideas and actions (e.g. practise calming techniques together, discuss what you can do next time to help them prepare).
- Empower the child to believe they can overcome difficulties & manage feelings.
- Be creative in how you do this (e.g. comic strip conversations, role play).

E.g. Next time you're feeling like this, what can I do to help? What can we try?