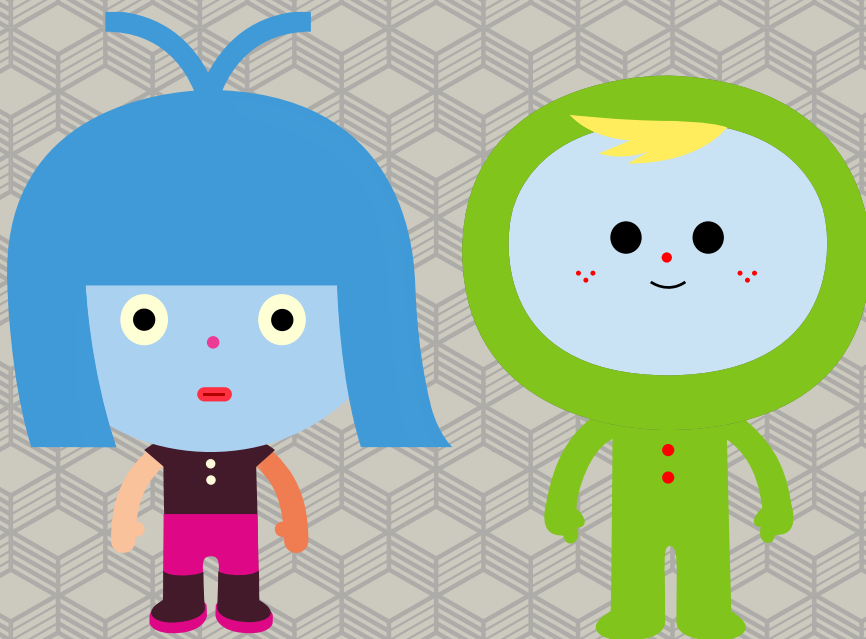


# PROMOTING YOUR CHILD'S WELLBEING AND HAPPINESS

SUGGESTIONS  
FOR PARENTS







# Self-Confidence

Help your child to put mistakes into perspective by asking them what they've learnt, what would they do differently next time?

Help your child to laugh at mistakes, by telling stories in a funny way about them.

Instead of diving in to help, ask your child a question which encourages them to problem solve. For example: 'What could you do, if you haven't got anything to write with?'

Help your child to become more independent in their decision making. Start off when they are young by giving them two options. As they get older, ask them to explain their thinking when making a decision. Challenge any wonky, unhelpful or irrational thinking.

Encourage your child to be curious and ask questions. Show patience when these questions are asked, no matter how many times you've heard them before.

Develop your child's vocabulary by using words associated with self-confidence, e.g. optimism, inner-belief, courage, determination.

Explain that F.E.A.R. is False Expectations Appearing Real. If they think that something is going to go badly, it probably will. Ask them what they can do to get a better result, e.g. 'If you are giving a talk to the class, would it help to practise in front of the family first?'

Talk about the news/ current affairs and people who've overcome difficulties to do well.

Encourage your child to push past their comfort zone by praising the effort that they have put in, rather than just the result.

Encourage your child to talk to you if they feel uncomfortable from peer pressure. Support them to say no firmly and politely, e.g. 'Thank you, but that doesn't seem like the kind of thing that I want to do at the moment.'



# Achievement and Success

Help your child to set themselves small, achievable targets. Remember, in order to be successful, they might benefit from some visual prompts. For example, 'So that we get out of the house and to school on time, these are the 3 things I'm going to do on my own: brush my teeth, put my uniform on, make sure I have my book bag.'

Help your child to transfer successful strategies from one area of life to another, e.g. 'You've got better at taking free kicks in football because you've practised a lot. If you practise your handwriting half as much, it'll soon improve.'

Help them to be more motivated in areas that they find tricky by setting up a small rewards system, e.g. 'For every 10 minutes that you spend practising your handwriting, I will spend 2 minutes in goal, letting you shoot penalties at me.'

Set up games and activities which help your child learn how to lose and fail. Also help them to win and succeed graciously. Model this yourself.

React well to any mistakes that your child makes and let them know that it's good to make mistakes, as that's how we learn.

If you make a mistake, model being calm and controlled about it. Deliberately make mistakes yourself, and then talk through them with your child.

Encourage your child to have a growth mindset and 'can do' attitude (search 'Carol Dweck' to find out more). Think about the messages you're giving and stop yourself from saying things like: 'Don't worry darling, I'm rubbish at maths too.' Instead say: 'I find maths tricky, but I know that if I keep trying and ask for help, it'll get easier.'

Talk through 'famous failures' and what these people did as a result of their mistakes.

If your child is trying to improve at a task, don't always let them settle for their first attempt. Ask if they can do even better.

Help your child to understand that life isn't just about extrinsic rewards such as stickers, presents and (when they grow up) pay rises. Talk to them about intrinsic happiness, such as being proud of themselves.



# Support

Help your child to understand who they can go to when they would like support – their family support network. It might be that grandma is the go-to person to help with maths homework, or uncle gives great advice about friendships.

Help them to understand where else they can gain support – from people at school, friends, Google.

Encourage a family environment whereby everyone supports each other. Help your child to understand that yes, they may be the one who's giving all the help at the moment, but there will be other times when they need support.

Help them to understand that, when they support others, they also help themselves. There are lots of ways that they might benefit socially, mentally and emotionally. Also, there is the physical boost, when their body releases happy chemicals to say 'Well done you!'

Help your child to understand when a relationship is supportive and positive and any that aren't. If they have a friendship which is not supportive, help them to problem solve around this – could they make a wider circle of friends, do they need to be more assertive?

Encourage your child to ask questions of others, so that they can better understand and offer support, if they would like to. For older children, encourage them to 'walk a mile in the other person's shoes' to develop their empathy.

As a family, get involved in local community events. This might be taking part in a park run, donating to a food bank or taking part in collective litter picking.

Help your child to understand the signs that they are struggling and might need help. If they are clenching their fists or their teeth it might be that they are frustrated with something?

If they are frustrated with something, they might like to ask for help? However, if they are keen to resolve the situation themselves, chat through some self-help strategies, e.g. taking some time out and doing something else; breaking the task down into smaller chunks; looking for an instructional YouTube clip.

Promoting Your Child's Wellbeing and Happiness – Suggestions For Parents



# Positive Relationships

Decide on the things that are important to you as a family, your values. Share these with younger children and ask older ones to contribute. Remind them of the family values, if and when they deviate from them.

Encourage your child to listen to other people's thoughts and opinions, without judgement. If they aren't sure, encourage them to ask questions.

Help your child to understand that it is okay to have different opinions, particularly when these are expressed in an appropriate manner. Also, that we can agree to disagree with people, but that we can still show respect and empathy for their opinion.

Model acceptance of other people's backgrounds, cultures and differences. Encourage your child to ask questions which help them gain a better understanding of the diverse world they live in.

Help your child understand that all families are different and that there isn't a 'right or wrong' type of family.

Model great whole body listening when your child is talking. This includes switching your mobile phone off!

Encourage your child to chat about their online relationships with you. Keep these conversations small and regular as they get older. Help them to understand internet safety rules and don't assume that, just because you have precautionary measures in place such as parental controls, that they can't get around them.

Encourage your child to have good personal hygiene. Help them to understand the impact that looking and feeling clean has on both themselves and their friendships.



# Coping

Help your child to understand that problems don't need to be personal, permanent or pervasive. Challenge comments such as: 'I never get chosen.' 'I always get it wrong.' 'The whole day has been rubbish.' 'It only ever happens to me.'

Help your child to understand that, if something goes wrong before school, they can choose how this affects them for the rest of the day. Suggest that they distract themselves by thinking of or doing something fun, as this will help them think differently and more positively.

Explain to them that everyone has times when they find things tricky. Say things like: 'So, you're struggling with that at the moment eh?'

Help your child understand when they're finding it difficult to cope. Talk through possible signs, e.g. ongoing butterflies in the tummy, responding out of character, feeling upset more than usual.

Talk to your child about the size of a problem and the size of their response. For younger children, you could draw circles on a page to show a small, medium and large problem. For older children, ask if the problem is easily manageable, manageable or manageable with help. It might help to make things more positive by talking about challenges rather than problems.

Help them to put things into perspective, by realising that a small trigger should only need a small reaction before moving on, e.g. You've lost something so you're feeling cross, but that won't help find it. What could you do?

Help your child to develop emotional vocabulary appropriate to their age. Instead of just using angry, encourage your child to explain their feelings more accurately – do they feel frustrated, or lonely or embarrassed?

Create a toolkit of coping strategies with your child and then help them choose the most appropriate one for a given situation, e.g. going to a safe space, counting to 100, blowing bubbles, drawing and talking about the problem, doing a mindfulness exercise, using breathing techniques.

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**LAUGH**LOGY

A colorful graphic element consisting of a curved line with segments in green, yellow, orange, and red, resembling a stylized smile or a drop.