

Healthy Living

Children's Mental Health



“Promoting children and young people’s wellbeing is a key part of keeping them safe, helping them develop and ensuring they have positive outcomes into adulthood (Public Health England, 2021).

Mental health plays a key role in a child’s overall wellbeing and can be affected by various factors, including:

- Environment
- Stress
- Family circumstances
- Abuse and neglect

Negative experiences can adversely affect a child’s mental health, just as positive experiences can help improve it.

Promoting mental health and wellbeing | NSPCC Learning

learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-health-development/promoting-mental-health-wellbeing#heading-top

Building in meaningful resources and time within your curriculum, devoted to supporting children's mental health can open the door to opportunities for children to explore their feelings and emotions in a safe and age-appropriate way.

Is it enough to know that a child is sad, angry, worried? How are we encouraging the child to use their 'voice' and reassure them that they are 'heard'?

How could you engage families in developing further understanding and supporting children's mental health?

Useful links for further research:

- NSPCC Learning - Child mental health: recognising and responding to issues
learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-health-development/child-mental-health
- Childline
www.childline.org.uk/kids
- Rise UK - Wellbeing for Early Years (under 6) Trauma in young children / Dealing with anxiety in kids
www.riseuk.org.uk/resources/wellbeing-for-early-years
- Anna Freud Centre - Common difficulties in early years
www.annafreud.org/early-years/early-years-in-mind/common-difficulties

TASK

- Take some time to create a 'soul soothing super kit' or a 'mindfulness mega box' for your setting.

What could it include?

- Modelling clay- for squeezing, moulding, thumping
- Feelings board- to open discussion or just to allow children to express feelings without the need to justify
- Music – pre recorded calming tunes for listening too, or instruments for exploring
- Paints/Crafts – to allow expressions of feelings in place of words
- Fidget toys – for calming, soothing, aiding restlessness

Leicester Safeguarding Children Partnership Board Training Priority

Children's Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing