

Mental Health Well-being



A booklet for supporting children and yourself with Mental Health and Well-being

'Mental health is about maintaining a good level of personal and social functioning. For children and young people, this means getting on with others, both peers and adults, participating in educative and other social activities and having positive self-esteem.'

Promoting Children's Mental Health within Early Years and School Settings, Department for Education and Skills, 2001.

Introduction

What is resilience?

It is a phenomenon that enables children and young people to survive and function despite disadvantage and risk beyond that of the normal challenges of growing up. Masten describes resilience as 'ordinary magic'.²

Evidence has shown that it is possible to identify the factors that have an impact on children's emotional health. Risks can be specific to the child, their family, their environment (including school) and life events:

- Loss or separation - resulting from death, parental separation, divorce, hospitalisation, loss of friendships especially in adolescence, family breakdown, which results in the child having to live elsewhere;
- Life changes, e.g. birth of a sibling, moving house, changing schools; and
- Traumatic events - abuse, violence, accidents, injuries, war or natural disaster.

Some children, against all the odds, develop into confident, competent and caring adults. A key therefore to the promotion and recovery of children's mental health is an understanding of the protective factors that make children resilient?

Resilience factors

*'Resilience does not constitute an individual trait or characteristic... Resilience involves a range of processes that bring together quite diverse mechanisms'*³

There is a complex interplay between risk factors in children's lives and promoting their resilience. As disadvantage and stressful events accumulate for a child, then more protective or resilient factors are needed as a counterbalance.

Resilience factors in the child:

- Secure early relationships (attachment)
- Being female
- Higher intelligence
- Easy temperament when an infant
- Positive attitude, problem-solving approach
- Good communication skills
- Planner, belief in control
- Humour
- Religious faith

- Capacity to reflect

Resilience factors in the family:

- At least one good parent-child relationship
- Affection
- Clear, firm and consistent discipline
- Support for education
- Supportive long-term relationship/absence of severe discord

Resilience factors in the community:

- Wider supportive networks
- Good housing
- High standard of living
- High morale school with positive policies for behaviour, attitudes and anti-bullying
- Schools with strong academic and non-academic opportunities
- Range of positive sport/leisure activities

Resilient processes might seek to:

- Reduce the likelihood of negative chain reactions arising from the risk
- Promoting self-esteem and self-efficacy through the availability of secure and supportive personal relationships, or success in achieving tasks; and
- Opening up new and positive opportunities and offering turning points, where a risk path maybe rerouted.²

² Ordinary magic: Resilience processes in development. Masten A.S. 2001. *American Psychologist*, 56(3), 227-238.

³ Rutter, 1995. Cited in *Resilient Therapy*, Hart, Blincoe and Thomas, Routledge 2007.

Background Reading and Useful Information

Background Reading and Useful Information

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- Behaviour Advisory Teachers - A description and contact details.
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How do you spot Resilience?

Emotionally resilient children are not identifiable at a glance, a few conclusions can be drawn from physical appearances alone. A small child can have greater emotional resilience than a physically strong adolescent.

It is behaviour and expressed thoughts and feelings that give us the greatest insights.

A resilient child will have or have had experience of a consistent, positive parent or caregiver. (Bonding and attachment will be touched on later). They will present with a reasonable level of self-esteem, confidence and a sense of humour. They will usually have a circle of friends and be regularly attending school.

Schools have a vital role in promoting resilience. A child needs to be having their emotional needs met before they can effectively access learning. Once learning (literacy is a resilience factor in its own right) or doing well on the sports field or at after-school-club, there are opportunities for positive feedback and self-esteem boosting, thereby adding to that child's emotional 'piggy bank'.

A resilient child, when worried or under pressure, will tend towards problem-solving behaviour and be less likely to show extremes of violence or patterns of avoidant behaviour.

Over the following pages, there is a concentration on 'within child' resilience factors. 'Within family' aspects of promoting resilience are not explicit although experience suggests that once a parent or carer has a greater understanding of the promotion of resilience in enabling their child to become a healthy, well-functioning adult (parenting), then their parenting style will become more positive and proactive.

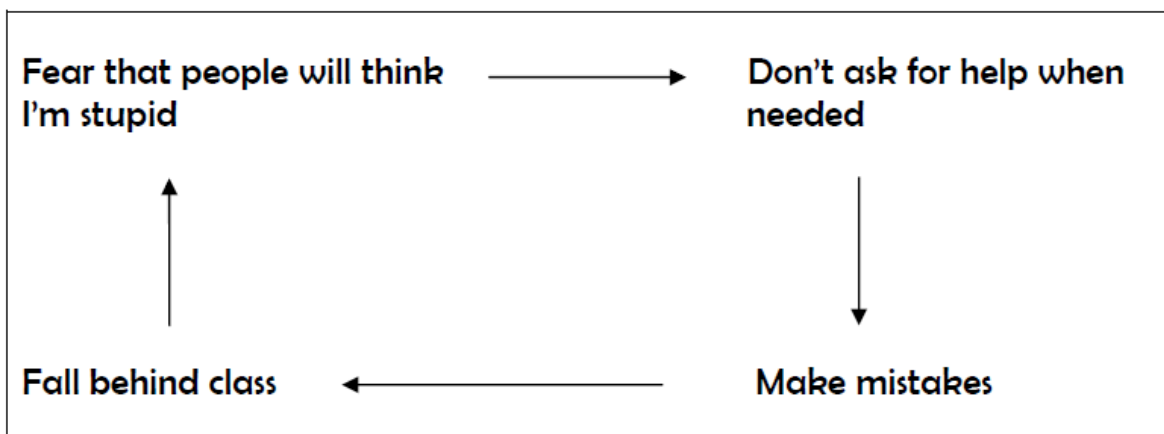
Worry and Anxiety

Worry and anxiety are a part of life and the management of these feelings is a skill to be learnt and developed if we are able to fulfil our potential. Sometimes children and young people need help and support in order to achieve this.

It could be that their parents are indeed anxious themselves and have avoidant, overly protective styles of parenting that discourage age appropriate, 'fear facing' behaviour and contribute to the cycles below:
Anxiety - the effects on children's lives and the cycles created
Social Lives.

Friendships are essential for children to learn and practice what they need to know to form lasting relationships. Friends also provide opportunities for fun, leisure and can motivate each other to try new experiences.

When a child avoids school a vicious cycle can become established because friendship dynamics can have changed, making joining in again more difficult, thereby creating further anxiety.



Mood:

About half of children who experience significant anxiety problems also experience symptoms of low mood or depression, such as loss of interest in usual activities, tearfulness or irritability, feelings of worthlessness, and physical symptoms such as poor appetite and sleep problems.

Do children grow out of it?

Once established, there is little evidence to suggest that children will grow out of their anxiety. There is however a strong probability of success through recognising and dealing with the problem appropriately.

Adapted from: 'Overcoming your Child's Fears and Worries. A self-help guide using Cognitive Behavioural Techniques' 2007 Cresswell, C & Willetts L.

Information leaflets

The following pages can be copied and stapled together to form leaflets on:

- **Worry - What is it and how to beat it**
- **Relaxation - What is it and how to do it**

These leaflets are particularly useful for primary age children and their parents/carers but can also be of use to adults.

There have also been two leaflets developed by young people for young people on:

- **Stress**
- **Are You Worried About a Friend?**

Worry



What is worry?

Worrying is something that all of us do, every day - children, young people and adults. It is a normal part of life.

Worry tends to be a whole lot of thoughts that come one after another, about events in the future or in the past. Quite often worry thoughts start with things like "if only I had..." or "I must remember to..." or "what if..." an example might be the thought "What if I have left the front door unlocked? A burglar might break in! then all my things might be stolen... and then I'd have to go to the police... it would be terrible!..." Sometimes worrying can help us, by making us do things like checking that we have locked the front door. But sometimes worrying can become a real problem. If you answer "yes" to the following questions, then worrying might be a problem for you.

- Do you spend a lot of your time worrying?
- Does worrying get you really upset and anxious?
- Does worrying stop you getting a good sleep at night?
- Does worrying stop you enjoying yourself and getting on with things during the day, at school or at work?
- Do you feel that your worrying is "out of control" or that once you start you just can't stop?
- Do you feel worrying has affected your health (for example given you stomach aches, headaches, or diarrhoea)?

'What It Is'

and 'How to Help Beat It'

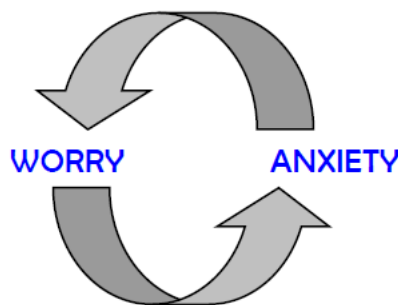
What too much worrying does.

Worrying about things can make you anxious. Anxiety is easy to notice if you are on the look-out for it, although many people suffer from anxiety without realizing what it is. When you are anxious you may notice things like:-

- Heart rate speeding up, sweaty skin or going pale
- Feeling upset, on edge, angry, or irritable
- Feeling that something terrible is about to happen
- Throat or mouth dry
- Muscle aches or headaches
- Feeling tired, having little energy
- Poor digestion - stomach aches, bowel problems
- Concentration problems, mind racing, can't sleep.

Anxiety can make it more difficult to concentrate on work, to remember things, to get on with enjoying life. If you have a physical health condition or illness, it can also make this more difficult to cope with and even directly affect your health.

The more anxious you get, the more you worry and the more you worry, the more anxious you become! It can be a vicious circle



But there are ways of helping to beat worry, reduce anxiety and feel more relaxed!

How to beat worry.

Here are some helpful tips on how to make worry less of a problem and how to make anxiety less. Some worrying and anxiety are a normal part of life, so they won't go away altogether - but they shouldn't have to take over your life.

Tip 1 - Notice

Notice when you are worrying or feeling anxious! This is the first step in making things better. If you feel the signs of anxiety mentioned earlier, or you notice you are thinking thoughts like those listed earlier, then take note of these.

Tip 2 - "Stop"!

When you notice you are worrying, say to yourself "stop"! and see if you can get your brain into doing something else. Try thinking of something else (especially something nice, relaxing, or enjoyable). Try doing something to keep your brain occupied (like reading, watching TV, doing a hobby, or playing a sport).



Tip 3 - Worry Time

Think about your day and find a time in it when it would be okay to worry - no more than five or ten minutes is needed. This is your special "worry time".

When you find yourself worrying at a time when you have other things to do (like at bedtime, or while you are trying to concentrate on something else), tell yourself to stop and put off the worries for later, at your worry time.



Tip 4 - Self-talk

If you find yourself worrying about the same thing over and over (for example, "I'll start my new school and no one will like me") then write down for yourself the opposite, "positive" thought (for example, "People will like me. I'm a nice person"). Then every time you notice yourself worrying the first thought, tell yourself the positive thought. You can even write it down on a small card and carry it with you, in your pocket, to remind yourself of it.

Tip 5 - Problem Solving

This is something you can try by yourself, or with another person. Remember - a problem shared is a problem halved! If you can tell someone else that you trust what your problem is, they can often help you with solving it or coping with it.



Step 1

If you find yourself worrying about a problem you are facing, write down what that problem is. Be specific - write down exactly what the problem is, so "I'm worried I won't cope" isn't specific, while "I'm worried that I will forget people's names when I go to my new school" is specific.



Step 2

Then, brainstorm all the possible ways you can think of to sort this problem out - even the most silly-sounding ones! Write them all down as you think of them.



Step 3

Once you have a list of possible solutions, go through them one at a time. Write down the pros (what is good about that solution) and the cons (what is bad about that solution). Think about the consequences of each solution ("what will happen if I do that?").

Step 4

When you have all the pros and cons, decide which solution you will choose. If you can, check with someone else you trust whether they think this is a good solution. Then go and do it!

Step 5

Once you have done what you have decided, take a new look at the problem. Is it sorted out? Has it changed? Is it still there? Go back to step 1 and problem-solve again if you need to.

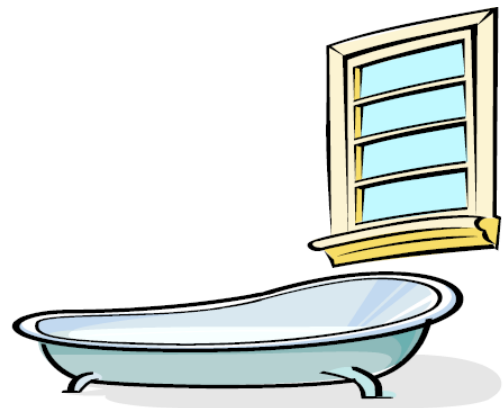
Tip 6 - Relaxation

Relaxation can be a really helpful way of making worrying less of a problem, and reducing anxiety.



1. Take time out

Get away from the things that are worrying or upsetting you - even if it's just for a minute. Go somewhere quiet (even the bathroom!), or just look out of the window for a bit.



2. Breathing. Spend a minute thinking about breathing. Breathe in and out regularly and not too deeply or too little. Sometimes it can help to count in your head while you breathe (for example, breathe in for three and then out for three).

3. Relax your muscles. Stretch out your muscles and then let them go floppy and relaxed. This is easier if you have somewhere comfortable to sit. Make sure you include all your muscles, even your face, forehead, back and stomach.

Relaxation



'What It Is'
and
'How To Do It'

What is Relaxation?

Being relaxed is the opposite of being anxious. It's easy to know what the difference is if you notice what is going on inside your body and your mind at different times. Look at the two lists below. One shows what it can feel like to be anxious, while the other shows what it can feel like to be relaxed.

<u>Anxious</u>	<u>Relaxed</u>
Cross, jumpy	Happy, calm
Heart beating fast	Heart beating slowly
Breathing fast	Breathing slow and easy
Skin pale or sweaty	Skin pink, not sweaty
Muscles trembling	Muscles relaxed
Stomach or head aches	No stomach or head aches
Thoughts racing	Thoughts normal
Can't concentrate	Can concentrate
Mind full of worries	Mind able to do what you want it to

Everyone feels anxious some of the time and relaxed at other times. If you were just about to take an exam, you'd probably feel anxious. If you were getting ready to fall asleep, you'd probably feel relaxed. No one is relaxed all the time! Usually, there is a balance between the two. Sometimes that balance is wrong and you can find that you spend a lot of time feeling anxious and not enough time feeling relaxed.

What happens if the balance is wrong?

If a person spends too much time being anxious and not enough time being relaxed, this can make them quite unhappy. It may make them feel tired, cross, sad, or like they can't concentrate properly during the day.



Anxiety can give a person bad dreams or make it difficult for them to

get to sleep. Sometimes it can give them headaches, stomach aches, or bowel problems. Often other people around them notice because the person may not seem their normal self (for example, they may argue a lot, get into fights, or just seem unhappy).



If the balance is wrong in your life, this booklet can help you change it for the better, by learning some simple ways to relax and to enjoy relaxing! Just try out some of the relaxation exercises and relaxation tips here.



The exercises will help you relax by using your breathing, your muscles and your imagination to get rid of stress and feel relaxed. Different people like different ways of relaxing, so try out different exercises until you find your favourites.

Relaxation Tip 1 - Set thing upright



It's very difficult to relax if there are lots of things going on around you. Relaxing somewhere like a busy hospital waiting room is difficult while relaxing while lying on your own private beach would probably be easy!

So, to make relaxing easier, try the following:

- Choose a quiet room that is comfortably warm
 - Wear comfortable clothes that aren't too tight. Taking your shoes off can be nice but keep socks on to keep your feet warm
 - Make enough time to relax. If you know you have to rush off somewhere any minute, you will find it more difficult to relax.
- You only need 15 minutes or so for the exercises in this booklet
- Choose somewhere private if you can so that you won't be disturbed by other people

Relaxation Tip 2 - Practice

Practice! Relaxation is a skill, just like playing football or a musical instrument. The more you practice, the better you will get. Don't get discouraged if you find it difficult at first.

Relaxation Tip 3 - Use a helper

A good way of trying out some of the exercises in this booklet is to get a helper (like your mum or dad). The helper can be in charge of the booklet and help you remember what to do. Some of the exercises are easiest if there is someone to read out things that are written there. If you don't have a helper, you might be able to record what you need onto a tape and play it back for yourself.



Relaxation Exercise 1 - Warming Up

When our minds are tense, our bodies are tense too. Relaxing your body will help relax your mind as well. Warmed up muscles relax more easily, so it's a good idea to warm up a little before a relaxation session. You can do this in lots of ways - stretching, walking about, or by shaking. Try to see if you can shake every part of your body about. Work the shaking right up through your legs, into your body, through your shoulders, down into your arms and right into your hands. Can you feel the relaxation tingling through your body?



Relaxation Exercise 2 - Tense-Stretch-Relax

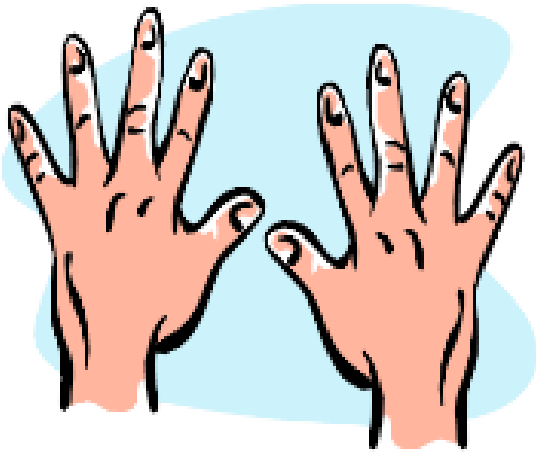
You can do these exercises standing, sitting, or lying down. It may help to have a helper to read out the exercise to you. There is a second version of this exercise later on - see which you prefer.

Close your eyes tightly. Rest your head, flop out your arms and let your legs go limp.



Hands

Now, stretch your hands open. Spread your fingers. Try to make your fingers grow and grow - stretch them right out. Pretend you are holding a lemon in each hand. Squeeze that lemon hard. Try and make every drop of juice come out of it and drip from your fingers. Squeeze it so hard that all the pips come shooting out and you can smell the lemony smell in your nose.



Now, stretch your hands open. Spread your fingers. Try to make your fingers grow and grow -stretch them right out.

Now, drop your hands. Let them go. Feel how heavy they are. They are so heavy they could almost fall through the floor.





Now try to do this with a picture in your mind. Imagine your tight fist is a flower bud, opening slowly in the sunshine. Feel the petals stretch out in the warm sun. Now the flower closes up again.

Whole Body



Imagine you are a tree
Shoulders Back and Neck
These are all places where you can get tense.

Imagine you are a monkey!

Move your shoulders as high as you can. Hunch them up, right up to your ears and breathe in. Now breathe out and as you breathe, drop your shoulders and dangle your arms by your sides, just like a monkey. Do this 4 or 5 times.





Bend your knees, reach out your arms down low as far as you can and imagine they are branches. Take a deep breath in and move your branches in a big circle, up and round, right up above your head and straighten your legs. Stretch as high as you can reach - stand on tiptoes if you can. Now breathe out and let your branches fall down to your side. Do this 2 or 3 times.

Face

Do you have a favourite animal? Imagine you are that animal. Make the animal lick its lips, swallow, hum and clench its teeth tight. Now yawn a big yawn - stretch its mouth open as wide as it goes. Make the animal screw its eyes tightly shut. Now make a happy face, with a big smile.



Now make a surprised face and raise your eyebrows as high as they will go. Really make your animal's mouth move and say "eee...ooo...eee...ooo". Stretch your lips for "eeee".



Then make them round for
"oooo", just like you were
blowing out a candle.

Now let your animal relax
and all its muscles go floppy.
Imagine someone is stroking
its head very gently.





Relaxation Exercise 3 - Breathing


Breathing is an important part of relaxation. When we breathe in, we get oxygen from the air which our bodies need for energy. When we breathe out, we get rid of the carbon dioxide that we don't need. Air helps give us the energy to run, talk, sleep and do all the other things we want to do.

Most of the time, we breathe without thinking about it. When we are tense or anxious, we may not breathe properly. This can stop the body from working as well, so it is important to practise slow, even breathing. Make sure you are sitting comfortably, with your back straight and all your muscles relaxed. Keep your eyes closed if you can. If you prefer, you can do this exercise lying down.

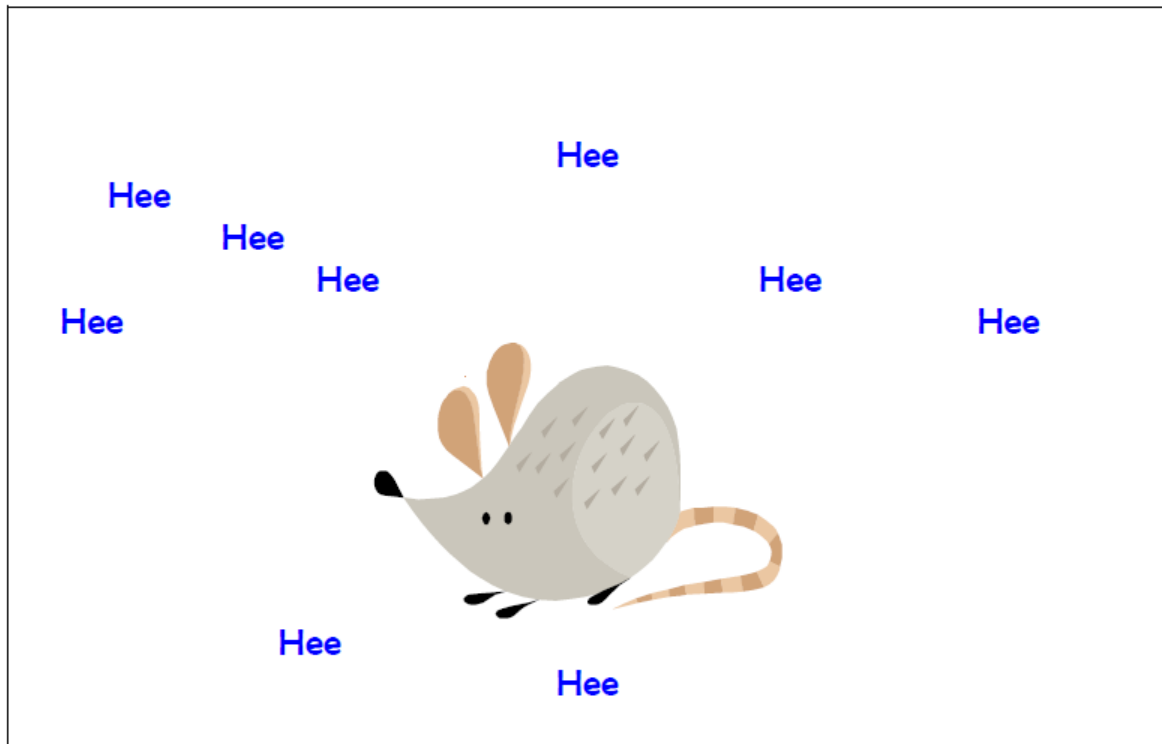
Put your hands on your chest just above your tummy. Breathe in slowly through your nose and then let the breath out slowly through your mouth, just like you are blowing at a feather or a candle. Notice how your ribs and tummy move out when you breathe in and move in when you breathe out.

	<p>Imagine you have a big, yellow balloon inside your chest. As you breathe in, imagine the balloon slowly filling up.</p>
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<p>As you breathe slowly out, let the yellow balloon become smaller and smaller. Keep noticing how your tummy and your chest move in and out as you breathe.</p>	
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<p>Ha ha ha H A A A H</p>		<p>Now breathe as if you were a dog. Imagine you are all puffed out. Take a deep breath and as you breathe out make three short panting sounds: "ha,ha, ha". Then a long, tired, "HAAAAH". Try this several times.</p>
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Now breathe like a small, laughing mouse. Breathe in and as you breathe out, in short, bursts say "hee, hee, hee, hee" Make your tummy move with each "hee".



Now breathe as if you were the wind. Breathe out and blow the sea onto the land. Breathe in and suck the sea back out again. Now, blow it onto the land again. Keep the sea moving as you breathe in and out. Breathe in some lovely big breaths. As you breathe out, get rid of all the bad pictures and thoughts you have in your mind. Breathe out all your worries and all the things you don't like about yourself. Watch them all drift away.

Relaxation Exercise 4 - Relaxing the mind with daydreaming

An important part of relaxing is to learn to "switch off" our thoughts. Often our thoughts race around our heads all day, and it is especially important to slow them down and switch them off if these thoughts are worrying or upsetting us. Daydreaming is a lovely thing to do and can be very useful in helping us relax.

First of all, make sure your body is relaxed and your breathing is even. Think of something which really makes you happy, or of someone you really like. It could be imagining running through long grass, or cuddling a soft furry rabbit. It might be hearing the sound of the sea and birds singing. Or it might be imagining a big red rose in your hand and what it smells like. It could be a good time you had with friends or your family. Imagine anything you like - whatever makes you feel good!

Relaxation Exercise 5 - Mind journeys



In this exercise, you will visit some special places, inside your own mind. Different people like to visit different places. The visits written down here are just some of the places you can go: if you have your favourite, you can write down your own mind journey. If you do write your own journey, make it as detailed as you can and describe what you will see, hear, smell and feel on every step of the journey.

Just like with some of the other exercises, it can be useful to have a helper to read things out or to record things on tape beforehand. If you have a tape, you can play it whenever you want. When you read each journey, do it slowly and allow plenty of pauses to think in. Before you start, get yourself comfortable. Lean back in a big chair or lie on a bed. Make sure your body is relaxed and your breathing is calm before you start.

Journey 1 - the Island of Peace



In front of you is a sunny beach, with golden sand. The calm sea is a blue-green colour and little waves lap the shore. Along the beach, there are tall palm trees and big, colourful tropical flowers. The palm trees are whispering gently in the warm breeze. The sea looks warm, too. You can feel the grains of sand under your toes, all warm. This is your own special place.

You lie down on the sand, with your eyes closed. The sand is warm underneath your body. You can feel the warm sun on your face and the little breeze as well. In the distance you can hear the palm trees, still whispering. You can smell the scent of the tropical flowers and hear the waves lapping at the shore. You feel relaxed and at peace and your

mind is at rest.

Breathe lightly and say the word "Calm" in your head each time you breathe out. Listen to the waves and the palm trees. Now the warm water is further up the beach and you can feel it around your body. It is gently lifting you up and you can feel it around your body. It is gently lifting you up and making you lighter, taking your weight off the sand. You gently float in the warm water. Your breathing is calm and relaxed.

Now the water is slowly flowing away and it lets you softly down, down and back onto the warm sand. You can feel the sandy grains underneath your body again and the warm sun on your front. As the water ebbs away, it takes with it the last of your worries. You are at peace and the stress and anxiety has floated away on the sea. You feel warm, content and safe.

Spend a few moments enjoying these feelings. Now slowly bring yourself back from the island of peace. Open your eyes gradually and when you are ready, sit up.

Journey 2 - The Country House

You are in a large, old house, in a downstairs room. The room is light and airy. You are sitting on a big, comfortable sofa. Outside it is a hot summer's day. The sunlight is streaming through the windows. There are some doors in the room that lead out into the garden. Imagine yourself getting up and walking across the carpet to the doors. The carpet is thick and warm and you can feel it under your feet. You reach the open doors and you can feel the heat of the day. Outside there is a stone pathway and a big green lawn. You step onto the stone pathway and as you do, you feel the warmth of the stones beneath you. You walk forward towards the grass and step onto it.



Now you can feel the cool, soft grass under your feet and between your toes. Walk slowly through the garden, feeling the warm sun on your body. You can smell the warm sweet smells of the gardens: flowers and cut grass. It is quiet, except for a gentle rustling of the breeze in the top of the trees and some birds and crickets. In the distance, you can hear some water trickling.



You start walking towards the sound, slowly enjoying the warmth, the sounds and smells of the hot summer's day. You come around a corner in the garden and see a fountain. It looks cool and inviting, so you walk to it. You sit on the edge of the fountain. Feel the coolness of the stones as you sit down. Run your hands gently through the water and feel yourself cooling down. Now you slowly get up and begin to walk away from the fountain. The sun is hot and the garden is quiet. You stop

under the shade of a big tree and lie down on the grass. You can feel the softness of the grass under your body and the warmth of the air. Off in the distance, you can hear the breeze rustling the tops of the trees and birds singing.

After a while, you slowly sit up and then start walking back to the house. Walk slowly back to the path that leads back to the doors that led you into the garden. As you step onto the path you can feel the warmth of the stones, very different to the coolness of the grass. Walk up the path slowly. As you step from the path into the room, it feels cool and refreshing. Go back to the sofa and sink down into it. Now bring yourself slowly back into this room. Gradually open your eyes and begin to think about the movements you will make to sit up. When you are ready, slowly sit up and make yourself comfortable.

Journey 3 - The Cosy Room



Here is the beginning of a mind journey, which you can add to yourself. Imagine you are curled up in a big, comfy armchair. You are near a blazing log fire, while the rain beats steadily against the window. You feel very safe and relaxed.

Think about how the chair feels. How does the warmth of the fire feel on your skin? What noises does it make? What about the rain? How does it sound on the window? What else is there in the room? Build up the picture any way you want... maybe with the help of someone else.

Relaxation Tip 4 - Quickie Relaxation

Sometimes you may feel stressed and anxious and want to relax but you just don't have a quiet place or enough time to do the relaxation exercises in this booklet. If this is the case, try:

- Walking outside for a minute and taking a few deep breaths to clear your head and stretch your body.
- Sitting down, closing your eyes and breathing slowly and calmly. Each time you breathe out, say in your head "Calm".
- Look out of a window to something far away. Empty your mind just for a few seconds of all your worries and anxiety and just concentrate on what you are looking at.
- Get a piece of blu-tack or plasticine. Pull it about and press it in your hands. Concentrate on what it feels like and forget everything else, if only just for a few moments.

More Relaxation - Tense-and Relax - Part 2

If you have a helper, get them to read this detailed script out for you. Once you have practised it a few times, you should be able to tense and relax all your muscles much more quickly, even tensing everything at once and then relaxing everything at once.



Hands and Arms

Make a fist with your left hand. Squeeze it hard. Feel the tightness in your hand and arm as you squeeze. Now let your hand go and relax. See how much better your hand and arm feel when they are relaxed. Once again, make a fist with your left hand and squeeze hard. Good. Now relax and let your hand go. (Repeat the process for the right hand and arm).

Arms & Shoulders

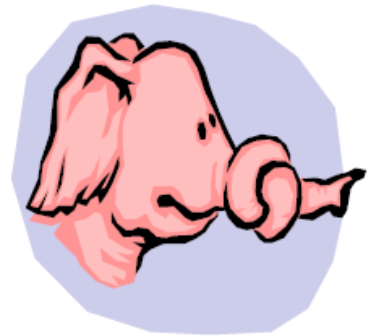
Stretch your arms out in front of you. Raise them high up over your head. Way back. Feel the pull in your shoulders. Stretch higher. Now just let your arms drop back to your side. Okay, let's stretch again. Stretch your arms out in front of you. Raise them over your head. Pull them back, way back. Pull hard. Now let them drop quickly. Good. Notice how your shoulders feel more relaxed. This time let's have a great big stretch. Try to touch the ceiling. Stretch your arms way out in front of you. Raise them way up high over your head. Push them way, way back. Notice the tension and pull in your arms and shoulders. Hold tight, now. Great. Let them drop very quickly and feel how good it is to be relaxed. It feels good and warm and lazy.

Shoulders and Neck

Try to pull your shoulders up to your ears and push your head down into your shoulders. Hold in tight. Okay, now relax and feel the warmth. Again, pull your shoulders up to your ears and push your head down into your shoulders. Do it tightly. Okay, you can relax now. Bring your head out and let your shoulders relax. Notice how much better it feels to be relaxed than to be all tight. One more time now. Push your head down and your shoulders way up to your ears. Hold it. Feel the tenseness in your neck and shoulders. Okay. You can relax now and feel comfortable. You feel good.

Jaw

Put your teeth together really hard. Let your neck muscles help you. Now relax. Just let your jaw hang loose. Notice how good it feels just to let your jaw drop. Okay, bite down again hard. That's good. Now relax again. Just let your jaw drop, it feels so good just to let go. Okay, one more time. Bite down. Hard as you can. Harder. OK, you're really working hard. Good. Now relax. Try to relax your whole body. Let yourself go as loose as you can.



Face and Nose

Wrinkle up your nose. Make as many wrinkles in your nose as you can. Scrunch your nose up really hard. Good. Now you can relax your nose. Now wrinkle up your nose again. Wrinkle it up hard. Hold it just as tight as you can. Okay. You can relax your face. Notice that when you scrunch up your nose that your cheeks and your mouth and your forehead all help you and they get tight, too. So when you relax your nose, your whole face relaxes too and that feels good. Now make lots of wrinkles on your forehead. Hold it tight. Okay, you can let go. Now you can just relax. Let your face go smooth. No wrinkles anywhere. Your face feels nice and smooth and relaxed.

Stomach

Now tighten up your stomach muscles really tight. Make your stomach really hard. Don't move. Hold it. You can relax now. Let your stomach go soft. Let it be as relaxed as you can. That feels so much better. Okay, again. Tighten your stomach really hard. Good. You can relax now. Settle down, get comfortable and relax. Notice the difference between a tight stomach and a relaxed one. That is how we want it to feel. Nice and loose and relaxed. Okay. Once more. Tighten up. Tighten hard. Good. Now you can relax completely. You can feel nice and relaxed. This time, try to pull your stomach in. Try to squeeze it against your backbone. Try to be as skinny as you can. Now relax. You don't have to be skinny now. Just relax and feel your stomach being warm and loose. Okay, squeeze in your stomach again. Make it touch your backbone. Get it really small and tight. Get as skinny as you can. Hold tight now.

You can relax now. Settle back and let your stomach come back out where it belongs. You can feel really good now. You've done fine.

Legs and Feet

Push your toes down really hard. You'll probably need your legs to help you push. Push down and spread your toes apart. Now relax your feet. Let your toes go loose and feel how nice that is. It feels good to be relaxed. Okay. Now push your toes down. Let your leg muscles help you push your feet down. Push your feet. Hard. Okay. Relax your feet, relax your legs, relax your toes. Feel what it's like to be relaxed. No tenseness anywhere. You feel kind of warm and tingly.



Ending

Stay as relaxed as you can. Let your whole body go limp and feel all your muscles relaxed. In a few minutes, I will ask you to open your eyes and that will be the end of the relaxation session. Gently move your arms to loosen them and now gently move your legs. Move your head around. Slowly open your eyes. Very good.



By Dr. James Murray - North Hampshire Hospital - Paediatric Clinical Psychology Service

Building Self Esteem

Self-esteem is something that is learnt- children are not born with negative thoughts about themselves, they are learnt through childhood experiences.

Parents have an important part to play in fostering self-esteem in their children and teachers can also make a big impact on how children and young people view themselves.

Ways to encourage good self-esteem

Use Praise

Not only when children have done well, but also when they have tried hard, and when they need support to try again. Being told that we are good at something, makes us believe that we are, and encourages us to have another go.

Even when something hasn't gone so well, being told that they tried

hard, and finding small points that they did well at can help in developing the resilience to cope with failure. We need a lot of praise before we can take in criticism without damaging our self-esteem.

Give Them Lots of Experiences

Having the chance to do lots of different things means children can learn what they are good at and what they enjoy, which helps to improve their self-esteem and develop an identity. Watching people play music on TV is nothing in comparison to watching a live band- by allowing children to have as many experiences as possible, we are unable to be more informed about the world, which helps to improve self-esteem by creating the confidence to try new things. Schools have an important part to play in this, through after school clubs, school trips and visiting performers and artists.

Find the Child's Strengths

If a child can be helped to find their strengths, it can make a difference in how they view school, friends and themselves. Use the strengths and skills cards (see One-to-One Activities section) to help a young person to consider their strengths and encourage them to write some strengths they have thought of themselves. Get the child to write or type up the list, adding illustrations etc, then put up the list somewhere where the child and other people can see it. Update the list when necessary to add to the list of skills and strengths.

*Adapted from 101 ways To Deal with Bullying,
Michelle Elliot, 1997*

Help Children Achieve

Sit down with children to discuss their plans and goals for the future, for example, set some short term goals and some slightly longer-term goals, and discuss with the child what they will do to try and achieve them, and how they will know when they are successful. Try to make the goals specific, such as "talking to three people I don't know" rather than "being able to talk to new people". Re-visit the list after a few weeks, and discuss with the child how they feel they are doing. Don't be afraid to add or remove things from the list, or to change the goals. We do not want children to feel like they have to succeed or fail in achieving their goals, but rather encourage the idea that they have control over their own lives.

Think About the Language You Use

The language you use can affect how children feel about themselves. Rather than simply saying "You're really good" or "You're clever" be specific, such as "You can draw dogs really well" or "You're really good at riding a bike". Don't use generalisations such as "You never eat all your dinner" or "Your work is always messy" as they are rarely true and don't make children feel empowered to change. Try to be realistic in the expectations you have of children, i.e. "How would you feel if...." as children often don't know how they would feel. Don't use comparisons, such as "All your friends manage to get to school on time, why can't you?" Criticise the behaviour, not the child, i.e. "I didn't like what you did" rather than "You're a naughty boy". Try to put yourself on the child's side- "We've got a problem here. What can we do?" This makes the child feel supported in changing their behaviour.

*Adapted from 101 ways To Deal with Bullying,
Michelle Elliot, 1997*

Helping Children Overcome their Fears and Worries



- Encourage children to face their fears
 - Take a step-by-step approach to overcome the fear gradually
- Reward children for each small step they take
 - Make sure the child feels supported to "have a go".

Praise and Rewards

- Make praise clear and specific
- Include rewards for various steps the child achieves

- Agree on the reward with the child
- Try to give the reward immediately or soon after the achievement
- Link small rewards to small steps and bigger rewards to bigger steps



Adapted from: Overcoming Your Child's Fears and Worries- Cresswell C. and Willetts L. 2000, Robinson

Managing Anger

A resilient person, when worried or under pressure, will tend towards problem-solving behaviour and be less drawn to anxious, avoidant behaviour or anger and aggression.

If, however, a child or young person has a tendency towards avoidant behaviour there may well be times of anger too, and vice versa.

As an introduction to this area of practice, the following three pages are taken from 'A Volcano In My Tummy' (Whitehouse, E & Warwick, P, 1997).

What Can Adults Do When A Child Is Angry?

1. Don't retaliate. (Joining in the child's anger will wind her/him up even more. It will also teach her/him poor ways of resolving conflict).
2. Model the behaviour you want a child to learn. If you hit, she/he learns to hit. If you get out of control, she/he may learn to fear her/his own anger (or teachers, or school, or men).
3. Let her/him know you understand how she/he is feeling. "I can see how angry you are" or "It seems like you're really mad about that".
4. Leave explaining another point of view until the anger has been expressed and acknowledged.

5. Ask what she/he would like to do to improve things.
6. Acknowledge what she/he says. Reaffirm the feelings and then help look at the options, e.g. "What might happen if you did that"?
7. Don't force children into apologizing when they don't feel sorry. You may be forcing them to bury their anger and be teaching them to be hypocritical.

If two children are angry with each other:

1. Reflect what you see happening. "I see two children fighting over a ball".
2. Separate the children if need be for safety's sake. Say, "Someone might get hurt".
3. Give them both a way of venting their anger. "When you've got your anger out, we'll talk about it. You run to the front fence, you run to the back fence and come back to me".
4. Find out what they each need. "It looks like you need something to play with".
5. Find out what they are afraid of. "Are you worried you won't get a turn if you give him the ball"?
6. Ask for some solutions.

You can give a child a sheet of paper and say, "It seems that you're furious. Draw me a picture and show me how angry you are".

Acknowledge the picture. "I can see you're really mad. What do you want to do with this picture? How are you feeling right now? What might you do the next time you feel as angry as that"?

If a child has hurt another. Look the offender in the eye and say firmly, "We don't hit. It hurts". Attend to the victim and reflect their feelings. "You were kicked on the leg. I bet that hurts. Draw me a picture and show me how you feel".

Key Concepts:

- Children learn how to behave from adult models.
- Children learn more from what adults do than what they say.
- Good listening helps to dissipate anger and increase a child's self-esteem.

An Approach For Dealing With Anger

When working with children who regularly get angry, talk to the child in a one-to-one setting asking questions such as:

- Did you feel angry today?
- What did you feel like yesterday when?
- When did you feel angry at home this week?
- How angry did you feel?
- What happened?
- What did you do?
- Was that a good idea?
- Did you stick to the anger rules?
- What did? do? (another person)
- Was that a good idea?
- Did she/he stick to the anger rules?
- What are the anger rules?
- What could you do to handle this better?
- This week I'm going to ...
- Congratulate yourself for doing well.
- Talk about property and what that might include - at home, at school, in the street.
- Talk about how she/he might hurt her/himself.
- Talk about how others might hurt him/her.
- Communication with the family/school is important.

The Anger Rules

It's OK to feel angry BUT

- Don't hurt others
 - Don't hurt yourself
 - Don't hurt property
- DO talk about it.**

Attachment

A resilient child will have or have had experience of, a consistent, positive parent or carer. They will be securely attached and their behaviour influenced by their feeling worthwhile, safe and capable.

It is accepted that positive parenting and positive role models (responsive, available, meeting the child's needs) can help to promote a person's ability to develop positive attachment behaviour right through to early adulthood.

There are however many children and young people in educational establishments that demonstrate avoidant or ambivalent behaviour to adults. How might we best enable these individuals to access learning and cope with school life?

The following pages are adapted from 'Attachment in the Classroom' (Geddes, H, 2006)

Attachment in the Classroom

Avoidant Attachment

Approach to school and classroom

- Apparent indifference to uncertainty in new situations

Response to teacher

- Denial of the need for support
- Sensitivity to the proximity of the teacher

Response to the task

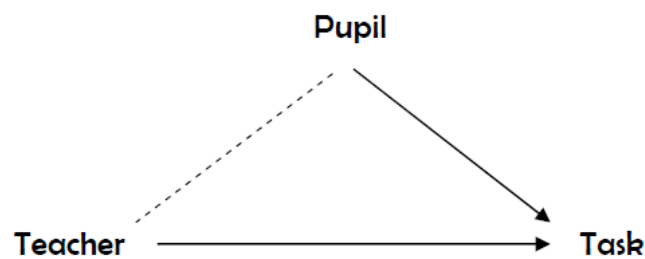
- Needs to be autonomous and independent of the teacher
- Hostility towards the teacher is directed towards the task
- The task operates as an emotional safety barrier between the pupil

and the teacher

Skills and difficulties

- Limited use of creativity
- Likely to be underachieving
- Limited use of language

The relationship dynamic within the profile can also be summarised by the Learning Triangle, in which the child avoids the relationship with the teacher, and directs his or her focus towards the task.



Interventions which may assist practice

- The relationship between the pupil and the teacher is made safe by the presence of the task. Highly structured games with clear rules and outcomes can assist in overcoming this resistance to offers of help.
- The presence of another child can moderate the intensity of the teacher's proximity. Pairs or small groups may help a child to experience closer proximity to the teacher but moderated by the presence of others.
- Using a mentor who can act as an intermediary. This strategy can enable a young person, about whom there is a concern, to contribute more to a discussion as the presence of a mentor and defuse any tensions arising from the teacher/student interaction.
- The learning task is the starting point for a pupil who finds relationships challenging. A plan clearly stated at the beginning of

the lesson with precise well-structured tasks which can be completed independently can reduce the perceived threat of "not knowing" something and feeling unsupported.

- Differentiation of the task, which acknowledges the pupil's need to exercise some choice, demonstrates that the pupil is being thought about held in mind.
- Verbal expression can sometimes be inhibited within this group of children and as such writing can be associated with self-expression. Structure can assist in this area with the option of filling in boxes, completing sentences and writing brief sentences in confined spaces can help calm fears.

Resistant / Ambivalent Attachment Approach to school and classroom

- High level of anxiety and uncertainty

Response to teacher.

- Need to hold onto the attention of the teacher
- Apparent dependence on the teacher in order to engage in Learning.

- Expressed hostility to the teacher when frustrated

Response to the task

- Difficulties attempting the task if unsupported
- Unable to focus on the task for fear of losing the teachers attention

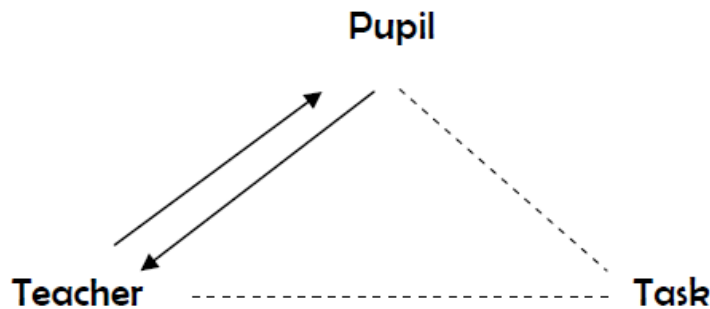
Skills and difficulties

- Likely to be underachieving
- Language may well be developed but not consistent with levels of

achievement

- Numeracy may be weak

The learning triangle for this pattern reflects the pupil and adult at the expense of the task: interpreted in terms of early relationships, it may demonstrate an unresolved conflict, which does not permit "another to intrude into the mother/child dyad. In a learning situation, the child is preoccupied with the relationship with the teacher, at the expense of the task.



Interventions which may assist practice

- Differentiation of the task into small independent steps
- Turn-taking to model the experience of two separate people working alongside each other.
- A timer can help moderate anxiety during short, timed, independent tasks.
- Board games provide separation and can also create opportunities to express hostility towards adults in a safe manner - with structure and rules.
- Holding a special (transitional) object can take the place of the teacher for short periods - "please look after this for me for a while"
- Making explicit comments across the classroom can be reassuring. They demonstrate that the teacher is aware of the pupil and thinking about him or her.

- Children with this attachment style may have a capacity to be tuned into others that will enable them to predict and control others in order to reassure themselves. This can be experienced by others as very bossy and controlling. For some children, this capacity can become an asset in the classroom when appropriately directed into being helpful to the class in ways other than caring for others - giving responsibility for a task rather than people. The children can then experience themselves as involved with others as well as functioning with some degree of independence.
- Small group work, which facilitates peer relationships and provides opportunities to explore experience through stories of imaginary journeys, enables the child to experience anxiety safely, find support from peers and experience having a "mind of their own". (Morton 2000, Waters 2004)
- Planning beginnings, separations and endings at the beginning and the end of the day. E.G, a planned withdrawal of the parent or a brief time in the office before going into class.
- Planning and warnings of changes and class movements can ease separation anxiety being triggered when changes take place.
- Reliable consistent adult support. The presence of someone to go to on arrival in school at the beginning or during the day can assist a child with separation anxiety.

Disorganised / Disorientated Attachment

Approach to school and classroom

- Intense anxiety which may be expressed as controlling and omnipotent
- Response to teacher
- Great difficulty experiencing trust in the authority of the teacher but may submit to the authority of the head of the school
 - May be unable to accept being taught and / or unable to "permit" the teacher to know more than they do
- Response to the task
- The task may seem like a challenge to their fears of incompetence, triggering overwhelming feelings of humiliations and rejection of

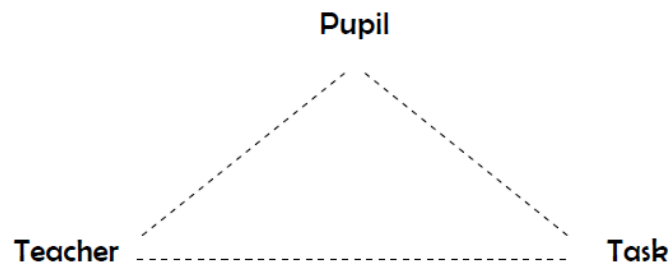
the task

- Difficulty accepting "not knowing"
- May appear to be omnipotent and know everything already

Skills and difficulties

- May seem unimaginative and uncreative, and find conceptual thought difficult
- Likely to be underachieving and possibly at a very immature stage of learning

The triangular model for this pattern demonstrates the difficulties in engaging with the teacher and with the learning task and has long term implications for future adult relationships and access in society. The fear of many who work with these children is that there may be long term implications for mental health and offending.



Interventions which may assist practice

- Safety, reliability and predictability. The first experience of this may be to attend a place, for example, the school or unit, on a regular basis in which safety is assured and actively promoted by rules, which focus on keeping people and things safe. School may be the first experience of a structured day with predictable activities and rituals.
- At the point of crisis when fear is triggered is a vital time for the teacher to hold onto thinking, to be non-reactive and to communicate some understanding. It is at this point that new pathways can begin to form, which provide alternative ways of responding other than fight-and-flight.
- Positive feedback can help to develop and reinforce more positive responses.

- AGREED PROCEDURES AND RESPONSES and COLLEAGUE SUPPORT is imperative in order to protect the teacher as well as controlling reactivity for the child.
- Acknowledging the developmental stage rather than the chronological age is a useful starting point as their learning may be at a primitive stage. Activities which engage left brain function can be soothing to highly charged states. E.G. colouring, sequencing objects/ pictures, copying can be a starting point. Engagement with an appropriately do-able and differentiated task.
- Explore feelings and situations without reference to self via stories / role play
- In unpredictable situations which result in a sudden eruption of violence or distress stepping back and engaging a "safety routine", avoiding confrontation is the first step. For younger children, this could be the removal to a safe, quiet and unstimulating place e.g. the room of a senior teacher who is perceived as powerful/safe and being given a box of routine activities. For older children a permission card to remove themselves to a place of safety without the need for confrontation. Once reactivity has calmed, the incident can be talked through and the child returned to the classroom.

Adapted from "Attachment in the Classroom" by Heather Geddes

A Positive Attitude and a Problem Solving Approach

We know that a positive attitude and a problem-solving approach is an important resilience factor. Protective Behaviours training and the Restorative Justice initiative is two examples of interventions that promote these goals.

Protective Behaviours

Protective Behaviours is a safety awareness process, which explores the difference between feeling safe, fun to feel scared, risking on purpose and feeling unsafe. It suggests that these differences are manifested by what it calls early warning signs: specific bodily responses that signal when we do not feel

safe and by the degree of choice, control and time limit that we feel we have in a situation. The approach also encourages everyone to develop their personal networks of support, to explore how to let people know when we need to talk to them and building problem-solving skills.

The Protective Behaviours (PBs) process starts with the belief that we cannot be scared into feeling safe. It, therefore, avoids a focus on scary scenarios and rigid sets of rules for how to deal with unsafe situations (which tend to induce fear and guilt). Instead, it teaches an ability to recognise when we are not feeling safe and provides skills and tools to enable individuals to take action and get help when they need it. Protective Behaviours also recognises that life is also about taking risks and trying new things and that this is part of our development and an important life skill.

Protective Behaviours is based on two themes, which are used to teach and reinforce the basic concepts on which the process is based:

WE ALL HAVE THE RIGHT TO FEEL SAFE

THERE IS NOTHING SO AWFUL THAT WE CAN'T TALK ABOUT IT
WITH SOMEONE



Restorative Justice

Restorative Justice is a developing initiative in Barnsley. It aims to resolve issues of conflict and harm caused, affecting a pupil's life at school.

- The restorative approach is a tool, which can be incorporated into a school's behavioural policy. The pupil who has done wrong becomes accountable to those he/she has harmed.
 - This can be done via an instant intervention which we call 'in the corridor - in the classroom' or as a conference between the wrongdoer and the harmed.
 - The aim is to facilitate communication and dialogue, which restores and promotes relationships.
- The problems that can be helped by Restorative Justice include:
- Bullying, name-calling, assault, harassment, racist

incidents, truancy, theft, conflict between pupils, between teachers and pupil-teacher conflict.

When is it appropriate to use Restorative Justice?

- Whenever there is conflict or wrongdoing.
- It can be used in place of a fixed-term exclusion or permanent exclusion with clear RJ agreements being made.

How can it be successfully implemented in schools?

- Share the vision
- Commit to the approach
- Identify core staff (could be all staff) to receive initial 'in the corridor - in the classroom' training
- Identify key staff to receive conference facilitator training
- Inform the children and their parents
- Monitor change

Support for Schools around Social & Emotional Issues

Behaviour Advisory Teachers

There are approximately 10 full-time equivalent Behaviour Advisory Teachers across the county. They are part of the Inclusion Support Team (comprising of Advisory Teachers for Learning, Social Communication Difficulties, Ethnic Minority Achievement Team and Traveller Education Service) but are also assigned to the eight ISDA areas.

The Behaviour Advisory Teachers attend Planning And Review Meetings (PARMs) termly in every primary school. Their role is to support advise and sometimes challenge schools on the inclusion of children with social, emotional or behavioural difficulties.

They also offer:

- Observation and assessment
- Direct group or individual work with children
- Meetings with parents
- Action planning/ problem solving
- Contributing to Common Assessments, Team Around the Child meetings and Pastoral Support Programmes
- A comprehensive programme of training centrally or tailored to individual schools needs (to senior management, teachers, higher level teaching assistants, learning mentors, returners to teaching, teaching assistants and lunchtime supervisors)

The Behaviour Advisory Teachers contribute to the delivery and promotion of the Behaviour, Attendance and SEAL national Strategy, Inclusion Development Plan, and Every Child Matters agenda, and have active participation on various county strategy groups including Transfer and Transition, Behaviour Implementation Group, Team Teach (physical intervention and restraint) and SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects or Learning)

SEAL - Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning

Following successful piloting, the SEAL curriculum resource was made available to all primary schools in 2005 and then developed to include a secondary curriculum.

The resource was produced because of the growing body of evidence that suggests that developing children's social, emotional and behavioural skills are an important and effective way of improving their behaviour, attendance and consequently learning. By building these skills and by doing so progressively throughout the school years, lasting improvements to potential life outcomes could be made.

The SEAL resource is an explicit, structured, whole-curriculum framework and resource for teaching social, emotional and behavioural skills to all pupils. It has a whole-school approach and builds on existing good practice.

It can be readily adapted to fit in with individual schools circumstances and ethos.

The resource contains:

- Assembly materials on clear SEAL themes
- A spiral curriculum which revisits each theme (and skills associated with them) each year, offering new ideas and activities
- Flexible lesson ideas at each developmental level
- Explicit links and ideas for the theme to be developed across the curriculum