A photograph of four hands, two adult and two child, cupping a small, glossy pink heart. The hands are positioned in a circle, with the fingers pointing outwards, creating a protective and nurturing gesture. The background is a soft, light blue.

A-Z of Positive Relationships in Fife

(Background Theory,
Ideas for Practice &
Follow Up Links)

Foreword & Further Links

Improving Relationships & Behaviour is a key priority for Fife, to ensure that all staff, children & young people thrive in their roles, learning & achievements.

Within this A-Z Guide, you will find summaries of key themes, including background theory, ideas for practice & further links. It can be used for individual professional learning or as a shared stimulus for staff groups.

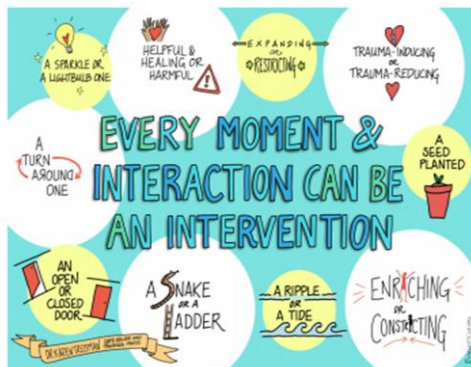
In addition to this resource, there are a number of professional learning opportunities which can support the development & maintenance of positive relationships in Fife. The following links can support all staff to build knowledge & confidence around key topics:

- [Promoting Positive Relationships & Behaviour Intranet Site](#)
- [Core Approaches Networks \(Trauma Informed / De-escalation\) Intranet Site](#)
- Sharing Practice SWAYs – [Trauma Informed Practice](#) [De-escalation](#)
- Self-Led Professional Learning: [6 Principles of Nurture](#) [Staff Wellbeing](#) [Trauma Informed Practice](#) [De-escalation](#)
- Fife Relationships, Health & Wellbeing Network (GLOW Team) - access code p8ikr15
- [Fife Pedagogy Premieres You Tube Playlist \(Positive Relationships\)](#)

For any further information about relationships, wellbeing & behaviour please contact Lynne Tobin (ESO Relationships): Lynne.tobin@fife.gov.uk

Contents

A: ACEs – Attachment - Attunement	N: Nurture for Wellbeing
B: Behaviour Is Communication – Brain Development - Bereavement	O: Optimism
C: Consequences – Classroom Offers A Safe Base	P: P.A.C.E Approach – Parent Participation – Peer Mediation
D: De-escalation	Q: Questioning
E: Emotional Literacy	R: Regulate - Relate - Reason - Restore/Repair - Resilience - Restorative Practice
F: Fight- Flight-Freeze	S: Safe Spaces – Self Regulation
G: Gratitude	T: Trauma - Transitions
H: H.O.P.E	U: Unconditional Positive Regard
I: Inclusion	V: Vision & Values
J: Joy & Happiness	W: Window of Tolerance
K: Keeping Your Cool In School	X
L: Language as Communication – Learning is Understood Developmentally – Learner Participation	Y Yourself: Staff Wellbeing
M: Mindfulness – Mentors In Violence Prevention	Z Zones of Regulation



6 Principles of Nurture

1. Children's learning is understood developmentally
2. The classroom offers a safe base
3. The importance of nurture for the development of wellbeing
4. Language is a vital means of communication
5. All behaviour is communication
6. The importance of transition in children's lives

We need to ensure our children & young people feel safe & nurtured before learning can take place.

MASLOW'S HIERARCHY of NEEDS



Ref: simplypsychology.org

Compared with people with no ACEs, those with 4+ ACEs are:

- 4 times more likely to be a high-risk drinker
- 6 times more likely to have had or caused unintended teenage pregnancy
- 6 times more likely to smoke e-cigarettes or tobacco
- 6 times more likely to have had sex under the age of 16 years
- 11 times more likely to have smoked cannabis
- 14 times more likely to have been a victim of violence over the last 12 months
- 15 times more likely to have committed violence against another person in the last 12 months
- 16 times more likely to have used crack cocaine or heroin
- 20 times more likely to have been incarcerated at any point in their lifetime

Preventing ACEs in future generations could reduce levels of:



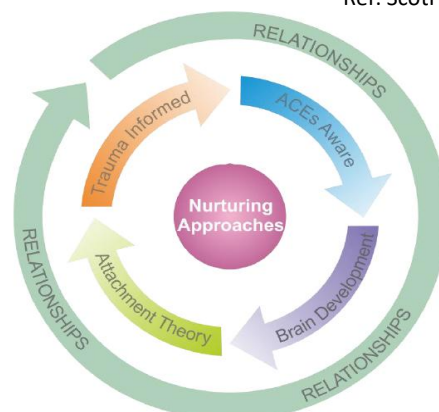
Ref: ScotPHN

Read-Watch-Do

[Nurture, ACEs & Trauma Informed Practice: Making the links between these approaches](#)

[Dr Tina Rae - YouTube](#)

[Ed Scot Applying Nurture as a Whole School Approach](#)



There are 10 officially recognised Adverse Childhood Experiences. However, this list is not exhaustive & there can be other examples of these e.g bereavement.

ABUSE



Physical



Emotional



Sexual

NEGLECT



Physical



Emotional

HOUSEHOLD DYSFUNCTION



Mental Illness



Mother treated violently



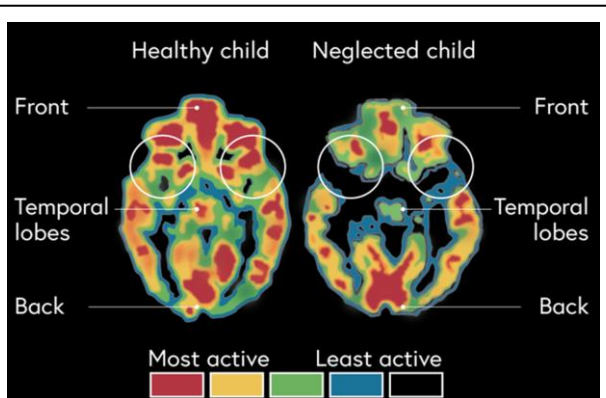
Substance Abuse



Divorce



Incarcerated Relative



Ref: evergreenpsychotherapycenter.com

Our early experiences have physiological impact on our brain – look at the difference between these 2 brain scans. The most active part of the neglected child's brain is the brain stem (responsible for fight/flight/freeze – always on the look out for danger)

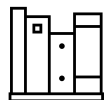
Our early experiences & relationships play a significant role in shaping our brains, how we view the world and the people in it. Babies are born ready to connect with an adult caregiver and the success of this first relationship impacts on the child and their behaviours. Early experiences shape our **internal working model** of the world. **For children and young people who do not have a 'significant adult/caregiver' at home, a member of school staff may be the secure base for that child.**



"Even the most sensitive, consistent & proactive teacher can be met with resistance because their thoughtfulness feels dysregulated to the child".

Maria Williamson

Read-Watch-Do



www.developingchild.harvard.edu



[Suzanne Zeedyk - Connection](#)



www.beaconhouse.org.uk

	Establish	Maintain	Restore (R ³)
Definition	Intentional practices to cultivate a positive relationship with each student (i.e. build trust, connection & understanding)	Proactive efforts to prevent relationship quality from diminishing over time (i.e. ongoing positive interactions)	Intentionally repairing harm to the relationship after a negative interaction (i.e. reconnecting with student)
Practical strategies	Set aside window of time to spend with student Inquire about student's interests Communicate positively: Open ended questions Affirmations Reflexive listening Validation Reference student info Deliver constructive feedback wisely	5-to-1 ratio of positive to negative interactions Positive notes home Greet students at the door Relationship check-in Random, special activities	R ³ = Reconnect, Repair, Restore Take responsibility for negative interaction Deliver an empathy statement Let go of the previous incident & start fresh Communicate your care for having the student Engaging in mutual problem solving Ref: EEF

Establish, Maintain & Restore

The Education Endowment Foundation recommend a range of practical strategies to *Establish, Maintain & Restore* Positive Relationships.

Attunement

Attunement is the quality of being in tune with something, particularly a person. Both verbal & non-verbal communication are key.

Some experts believe attunement involves activating the brain's mirror neurons, which are thought to be networks in the brain that respond to other people's emotions and actions as if they were our own, helping people bond with one another.

"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did but people will never forget how you made them feel".

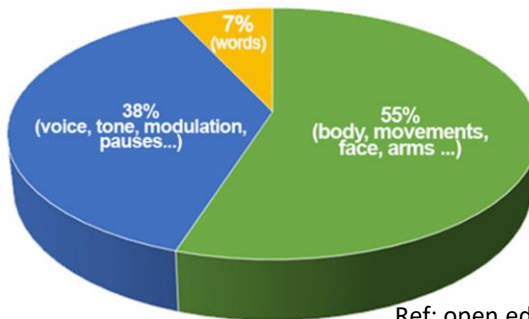
Maya Angelou

Read-Watch-Do

[What is Attunement? - Momentous Institute](#)

[Amy Cuddy – Body Language](#)

[Attunement Profile \(Appendix 2\)](#)



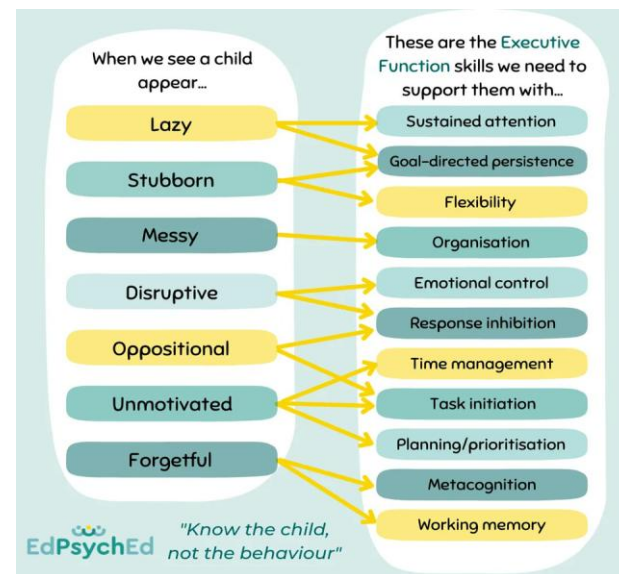
Ref: open.edu

Ask "what's happened to you" instead of "what's wrong with you"?

Education Scotland's Attunement Profile features a simple audit against key principles - here is an exemplar

Key Attuned Principles	
Encouraging and receiving initiatives	Waiting and watching before speaking
	Listening actively
	Using friendly and/or playful intonation as appropriate
	Naming what the child/young person is doing, might be thinking or feeling
	Naming what you are doing, thinking or feeling
	Showing you have heard, noticed the other's initiative
	Showing that you are receiving with body language (for example, nodding, acknowledging what has been said)
	Being friendly and/or playful as appropriate

Know the child, not the behaviour



Some helpful phrases

- "I've heard what you said".
- "Let's stop and think for a moment".
- "You are upset at the moment. That's fine. I am here to help you. We can sort this out."
- "When we feel angry we can...That helps us to feel calm again. Then we can re-join the group"
- "Everyone feels angry sometimes. Let's look at what you can do when you are angry."

Behaviour is Communication - Nurture Principles 5

People communicate through behaviour. It is the adult's role to help children and young people to understand their feelings, express their needs appropriately, and use non-threatening and supportive language to resolve situations. Our first responsibility in dealing with difficult or challenging behaviour, after safety, is to try to understand what the child is trying to tell us. The outward behaviour is often the 'tip of the iceberg', and so it is important to consider the immediate environment and what occurred just before the incident happened. School events, the time of year, and home circumstances can also give us clues. Adults need to be calm and consistent and understand that children may communicate their feelings in different ways. Children and young people need to be encouraged to reflect on their behaviour and understand how to express their emotions appropriately. Given what we know about this child and their development, what are they trying to tell us? It helps staff to respond in a firm but non-punitive way by not being discouraged or provoked. Having a quiet area to help students to become calm and giving them time before a discussion can often help, as well as recognising potential triggers and anxieties that could be avoided or reduced.

(Nurture UK)

All behaviour is communication

- Help children & young people to understand their feelings & express their needs appropriately
- understand what the child is trying to tell us.
- 'Tip of the iceberg' - consider the immediate environment & what occurred just before the incident happened.
- Adults need to be calm and consistent
- Children and young people need to be encouraged to reflect on their behaviour & understand how to express their emotions appropriately.
- Does not excuse the behaviour, but helps us to ask why
- Staff respond in a firm but non-punitive way
- A quiet area promotes calm & gives time before a discussion
- Recognising potential triggers and anxieties



Read-Watch-Do

[Behaviour as Communication](#)

[Interpreting Behaviours](#)

[Beyond Behaviour Blog](#)



3Rs Approach (Beacon House)



Changing Our Language

(Mark Finnis)

Don't Say.....	Instead Say.....
Why did you do it?	Can you share with me what happened?
Can you tell me the truth?	What is your view of what happened?
Who is to blame for what happened?	Who has been affected by what happened? What was the impact on you and on others?
You need to think about your behaviour!	What would you like to see happen? What does that look like for you?
You need to	What ideas do you have that would meet both our needs?
Who else is to blame?	Have you tried to look at what happened from another perspective?

The Principle in Practice

Source: Fife EP Service

De-escalation Strategies used

Adults attuned to learner's non-verbal communication

Adult awareness of own non-verbal signals

Expected behaviours named & modelled

Calmness & containment offered

Learners enabled to explain points of view

Adult scaffolding use of calm time

Teaching social & emotional skills

When a parent, sibling, grandparent or friend has died, children and young people grieve just as deeply as adults, but they can show it in different ways. They learn how to grieve by copying the responses of the adults around them and rely on them to support them in their grief. How a child or young person responds to someone dying will be influenced by their age and understanding, the relationship they had with the person who died, and how the person died. A range of reactions and emotions are common, and are likely to settle over time with reassurance, acknowledging what has happened and their feelings, giving them clear and age-appropriate information, and keeping to normal routines.

(Child Bereavement UK)

How children & young people understand death:

- Children younger than 2 years old do not understand the concept of death. When someone dies, they are likely to show behaviours associated with separation anxiety, e.g. looking for the person and crying.
- Between around 2 and 4 years old, death is often seen as temporary, and they may believe that people who die can come to life again.
- Between around 5 and 9 years old, children start to understand that death is permanent, but some may still think it is reversible.
- By around 10 years old, children and young people are likely to have a full understanding of death but may not be able to express their grief.

Source: NHS Fife

Common responses to bereavement:

- Difficulty concentrating
- Increased anxiety
- Feelings of anger or angry behaviours
- Physical complaints (headaches, stomach complaints, tiredness)
- Heightened sensitivity to comments
- Changes in peer relationships or fall outs
- Emotionality (crying, guilt, frustration)
- Regressing to younger behaviour i.e. clinging, bedwetting, using babyish language
- Taking on a more adult role within the class and at home
- Increased question asking
- Separation anxiety
- Showing little emotion and continuing as if 'nothing happened'
- Memories of any traumatic events appearing in children's work (e.g. in drawings, notes, etc)

Source: Fife EP Bereavement & Loss Guidance

5 Stages of Grief (www.cruse.org.uk)				
Denial	Anger	Bargaining	Depression	Acceptance
Feeling numb is common in the early days after a bereavement. Some people at first carry on as if nothing has happened. Even if we know with our heads that someone has died it can be hard to believe that someone important is not coming back. It's also very common to feel the presence of someone who has died, hear their voice or even see them.	Anger is a completely natural emotion, and very natural after someone dies. Death can seem cruel and unfair, especially when you feel someone has died before their time or you had plans for the future together. It's also common to feel angry towards the person who has died, or angry at ourselves for things we did or didn't do before their death.	When we are in pain, it's sometimes hard to accept that there's nothing we can do to change things. Bargaining is when we start to make deals with ourselves, or perhaps with God if we're religious. We want to believe that if we act in particular ways, we will feel better. It's also common to find ourselves going over and over things that happened in the past and asking a lot of 'what if' questions, wishing we could go back and change things in the hope things could have turned out differently.	Sadness and longing are what we think of most often when we think about grief. This pain can be very intense and come in waves over many months or years. Life can feel like it no longer holds any meaning which can be very scary.	Grief comes in waves and it can feel like nothing will ever be right again. But gradually most people find that the pain eases, and it is possible to accept what has happened. We may never 'get over' the death of someone precious, but we can learn to live again, while keeping the memories of those we have lost close to

Other helpful links:

- <https://childbereavementuk.org/>
- <http://www.winstonswish.org.uk/>
- <http://www.crusescotland.org.uk/>
- <http://seasonsforgrowth.org.uk/>
- <https://www.chas.org.uk/>

What do I need?

- I need to know that I will be cared for and feel safe.
- I need to know that it wasn't my fault and to know the facts.
- I need clear information.
- I need to feel important and involved.
- I need routine and stability.
- I need someone to listen to me.

Communication should:

Be clear	Be honest
Be direct & open	Allow children to ask questions
Allow the right not to talk – don't force a discussion	Be in your own personal style – be yourself

- Read-Watch-Do
- [Bereavement & Change One Note](#)
 - [Child Bereavement UK Support Videos](#)
 - [Child Bereavement UK Resources for Schools](#)



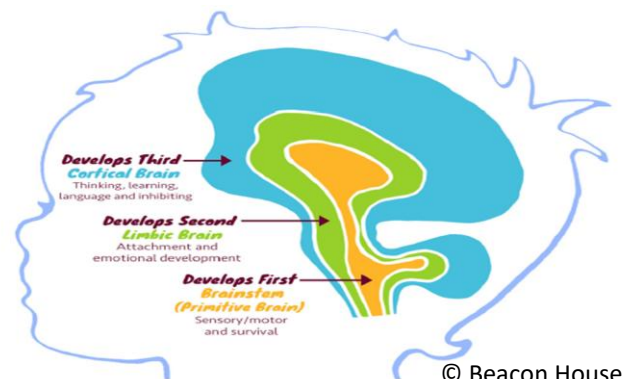
Kitbag can support discussions about bereavement, change or loss. You can access the online resource [here](#) – enter your Fife.gov.uk email address to access the full version.

What not to do:

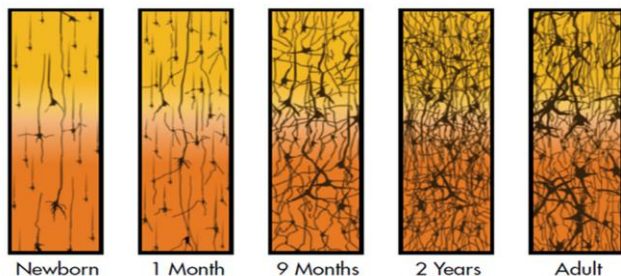
- Don't avoid talking about the death, even though this might be your natural reaction.
- Don't worry that you might make things worse by talking about the death, you won't.
- Don't use ambiguous language that may confuse them e.g. "granddad has gone to sleep".
- Don't lead them to suppress their emotions by telling them to be "strong" or "brave".
- Don't put pressure on them by saying they are now "in charge" or that they should "take care of their family".
- Don't react negatively to them if they behave in a way that you find inappropriate.

Source: NHS Fife

Brain Development



© Beacon House



Our brains continue to grow & develop until our mid 20s, making new connections between neurons, based on the experiences we have.

Read-Watch-Do

<http://www.suzannezeedyk.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Suzanne-Zeedyk-Human-brains-v3.pdf>

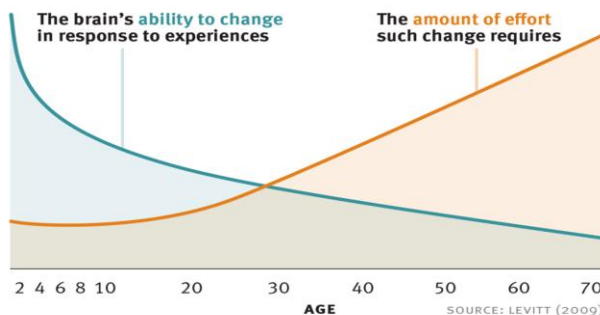
[How Brains are Built: The Core Story of Brain Development](http://www.epinsight.com)

www.epinsight.com

THE STRESS RESPONSE IN KIDS

FIGHT	FLIGHT	FREEZE
Yelling, Screaming, Using Mean Words	Wanting to Escape, Running Away	Shutting Down, Mind Goes Blank
Hitting, Kicking, Biting, Throwing, Punching	Unfocused, Hard to Pay Attention	Urge to Hide, Isolates Self
Blaming, Deflecting Responsibility, Defensive	Fidgeting, Restlessness, Hyperactive	Verbally Unresponsive, Says, "I don't know" a lot
Demanding, Controlling	Preoccupied, Busy with Everything But the Thing	Difficulty with Completing Tasks
"Oppositional", "Defiant", "Noncompliant"	Procrastinating, Avoidant, Ignores the Situation	Zoned Out, Daydreaming
Moving Towards What Feels Threatening	Moving Away From What Feels Threatening	Unable to Move, Feeling Stuck
Irritable, Angry, Furious, Offended, Aggressive	Anxious, Panicked, Scared, Worried, Overwhelmed	Depressed, Numb, Bored/Apathetic, Helpless

WholeHearted School Counseling



Center on the Developing Child HARVARD UNIVERSITY

www.developingchild.harvard.edu

The Survival Loop

ACES/trauma create disruptions within typical brain development.

For some learners, the primitive brain does not turn off, so the child stays continuously in survival mode. They are stuck in their brain stem – unable to form secure attachments; manage their emotions or behaviour; think, learn or reflect because they are simply trying to stay alive in a world that they feel is highly dangerous.

People like repetition. The brain has pattern receptors that constantly look out for them. It is your routines and relentless repetition of them that makes the students feel safe enough to learn.

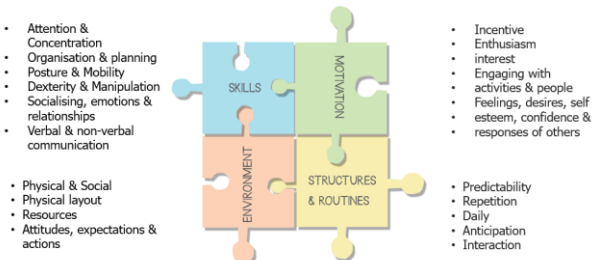
Paul Dix

Classroom Offers a Safe Base – Nurture Principle 2



A classroom environment should be inviting and nurturing for all. The classroom should offer a balance of educational and social, emotional and mental health experiences aimed at supporting the development of children’s relationships with each other and with staff. Adults are reliable and consistent in their approach to children and make the important link between emotional containment and cognitive learning. Where possible, predictable routines are explained and practised, and there are clear expectations and positive models of how all adults in school relate to children and young people, both in and out of the classroom. Consider whether your setting is a safe place – physically and emotionally – for your pupils, staff, parents and carers. How do you promote structure and predictability? It is also important that your classroom or nurture space has quiet zones and reflections of home. (Nurture UK)

The CIRCLE Framework



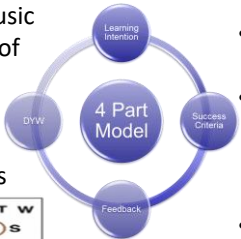
Source: Nurture UK

Use the CIRCLE Framework to audit your setting

Structuring your day/week

- Set days for activities such as assembly, PE & music
- Consistent format for the start, middle & end of each day
- Consistent seating plans reduce anxiety or distraction
- Building in routine times for movement breaks

Su M T W	Su M T W	Su M T W	Su M T W	Su M T W
Th F S	Th F S	Th F S	Th F S	Th F S
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday



Structuring your lessons

- Consistent format for lesson delivery.
- Learning intentions at the start - ensuring that these are understood - referring to them
- Using whole class checklists
- Reviewing and summarising
- Active / multisensory

The Safe Base

- Environment is inviting & nurturing
- Balance of educational, social, emotional & mental health experiences
- Adults are reliable & consistent
- Predictable routines – explained & practised
- Clear expectations
- Positive Role Models

The Principle in Practice

Source: Fife EP Service

Visible Routines

Visible, clear & consistent boundaries

Calm, warm but firm tones of voice are used

Language communicated learners are welcome

Balance of support & challenge in tasks

Successes are built on to support resilience

Feedback is given to achieve success

Structure is provided in playground

Considerations for a Calm Corner/Nurture Nook

- Location – is it semi-private yet easily accessible?
- What furniture do you have within the area? Comfy cushions ,chairs or beanbags, a desk?
- Do you have a range of visuals & tools for learners to engage with?
- Have learners been taught about the calm corner – why it’s there, who can use it and when?

Read-Watch-Do

[Creating A Safe Base](#)

[Nurture Principle2](#)

[Tina Rae – Calm Corners](#)

Consistent Rules & Roles

- Consistent approach - what is & is not acceptable
- Clear and specific class rules - agreed & understood by all
- Display class rules clearly & refer to them regularly
- Learners see themselves as respected, valued & useful members of the class



All consequences should be clearly connected and linked to the behaviour. The consequence is then explained as being a result of a choice the child/young person made, rather than being experienced as a punishment. This will help them to begin to realise they have an impact on the world. During these times it is helpful for the adult to remain empathic with them whilst they experience the consequence; allowing the relationship to remain unharmed. Consequences can also be part of building and strengthening the relationship, if done collaboratively. (Mental Health Foundation)

Illogical Consequences provide no learning experience for the child because the consequence does not directly link to the behaviour e.g. child/young person refuses to do the work in class and the teacher confiscates their mobile phone for the day.

When the child/young person finds it difficult to understand the link between the punishment and incident it can leave them with feelings of shame, which can lead to the situation escalating as the child becomes angry in attempt to reduce the shame.

Examples of Illogical Consequences:

- The pupil talks back to a teacher in class, they sit in isolation for break time.
- They break another child's equipment, so they receive after school detention in silence.
- They are disruptive in their Tuesday maths lesson, and they are not allowed to go on the history field trip on Friday.

Note on removing breaktimes:

A loss of break time or lunch time (unless the behaviour occurring during this time is unsafe), is generally more of an illogical consequence. Many children/young people who have difficulties understanding cause and effect, also have difficulties regulating their nervous system, which often leads to negative behaviours. Break and lunch times are often opportunities for pupils to engage in exercise and other regulating activities, so if this is removed, you may actually be increasing the likelihood of seeing dysregulated and behaviours when back in class. It's worth remembering that for some young people, the unstructured break and lunch times are when there are the most difficulties. For these young people, it may be helpful to create an alternative space where there is a little more structure and supervision, but they still retain the opportunity to engage in a regulating break time.

Logical Consequences should be directly linked to the behaviour. For example, if a pupil is playing with a football in class, after being told to stop and it hits somebody, the child should then start learning cause and effect e.g. If I don't listen when I am doing something unsafe, then I will not be able to play responsibility and have to repair the damage to someone else.

IMPORTANTLY REMEMBER to carry out this consequence with empathy and ensure the child/young person is not hurt by the consequence (**do not shame**).

Examples of Logical Consequences:

- If the pupil is tripping up their peers in the lunch queue, they will have to queue with an adult.
- If the pupil arrives late to lesson without a valid reason, they will stay in for 10 minutes to complete the work missed, alongside the class teacher.
- If a pupil pulls down a wall display or throws objects around the classroom out of anger, they spend time with a key adult to emotionally regulate. Once calm they help fix what's broken or tidies the mess.
- If a pupil says something horrible to a teacher. They should be supported to repair the relationship. The adult must also be genuinely willing to repair the relationship too.
- A pupil waves scissors around, the scissors are removed for the remainder of the art lesson.



When thinking of Logical consequences remember the 3Rs of consequences:

- **Related** – Must be related to the behaviour.
- **Respectful** – Ensure not to blame or shame the child/young person.
- **Reasonable** - The child/young person and the adult must see the consequence as reasonable. Also guarantee you can carry out the consequence. If you can't then they will not believe future consequences.

Natural consequences occur without you having to do anything e.g. when a pupil doesn't complete homework, they have to admit to the teacher that they haven't done it, or if they turn up late to class, they miss the instructions and won't understand the work. This helps pupils to learn cause and effect. It is also a time for education staff to provide nurture. This will help the pupil to learn that they can trust you to help them, and that when they make a mistake, they will still be valued by adults who care about them.

Although natural consequences can help children and young people, there are times where natural consequences are not suitable:

1. When they could be at risk e.g. putting themselves or others in danger
2. When natural consequences have negative impacts on others e.g. damaging others property /hurting other people
3. When the natural consequences don't seem negative to the young person, but the natural consequences could impact their health and wellbeing e.g. consumption of energy drinks may lead to a ban in school and confiscation

How to provide nurture during natural consequences:

1. Avoid lectures e.g. "I told you so."
2. Show empathy and validate their feelings.
3. Provide comfort.

Examples of Natural Consequences:

- Fighting with another pupil, might result in them hurting their hand.
- If a pupil doesn't do their homework, they have to explain to the teacher the next day.
- If a pupil stays up late and is late for school, they will feel tired and have to explain why they are late.
- If a pupil is unkind to someone in the playground, they may not want to be their friend anymore.

Repairing Relationships: Some children may not have experienced relationship repair from caregivers, so it is important to do this in order to model to the child/young person. You will help them to learn that although relationships may experience a rupture (e.g. you implemented a logical consequence), there is always the possibility of repair, and that your relationship is stronger than the incident.

Read-Watch-Do

[That Behaviour Book \(Stephen Baker\)](#)

[A School Without Sanctions](#)

[Education Scotland Professional Learning Unit on Expectations & Consequences](#)

This poster summarises key messages from Mental Health Foundation



We need to time our interventions to ensure maximum impact. Stepping in too quickly may not be of benefit as the child or young person is not ready to listen or discuss the situation.

Dr Bruce Perry recommends we should help to calm the initial response (**regulate**), show connection via both our verbal & non-verbal communication (**relate**), then finally support the child or young person to reflect on the situation (**reason**).

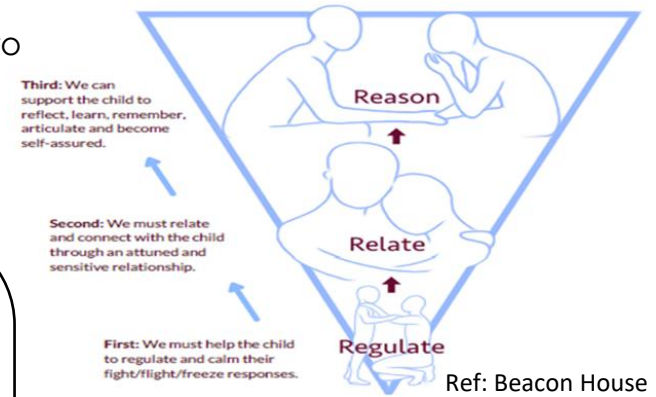
when little people
are overwhelmed by
big emotions, it's our job
to share our calm,
not to join their chaos.
-L.R. Knost

Ref: Treasures in
Teaching (Pinterest)

Read-Watch-Do

"If school procedures and systems are functioning well, there is high quality learning and teaching, and communications and organisational planning are effective, it is much more likely that school staff and learners will experience a positive school ethos. A positive school culture will in turn, facilitate positive staff relationships with learners, and nurturing approaches towards them, enhancing learning."

Fife De-escalation Pack (2022)

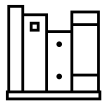


Principles of De-escalation

- Communication
- Knowing individuals
- Modelling appropriate behaviour
- Early intervention
- Supportive/positive language
- Exit Strategies
- Planning
- Review and reflection

Response Styles

Hostile	Individuals demonstrate unfriendly responses and interact with learners in a negative manner
Non-assertive	Indecisive, helpless type behaviour and an avoidance of potentially difficult situations. This can result in decreased self-confidence and a loss of teacher authority and control.
Assertive	The teacher is appropriately directive without being inappropriately demanding. Rules and acceptable boundaries are fair and set in advance without being overbearing or didactic. The confidence of both parties is preserved.



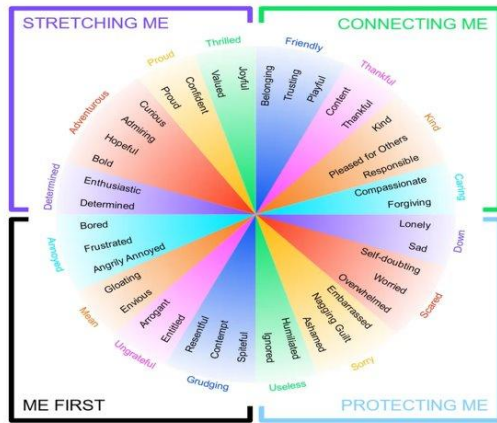
[Fife De-escalation Pack](#)



[Dan Siegel –
Hand Brain Model](#)



[Fife School Audit Tool](#)



Alan McLean's 'Emotional Granulation'

Stretching me: asserting ourselves, grasping opportunities, pushing ourselves & facing the unknown.

Connecting Me: Appreciating each other, contributing to shared responsibilities & achievements

Protecting Me: Coming to terms with loss, hurt or vulnerability, inflating the importance of others & withdrawing or relinquishing power or seeking assurance.

Me First: Prioritising ourselves, we respond with antagonism to being wronged or blocked We inflate our own importance & justify our hostility.

Read-Watch-Do

Improving Social & Emotional Learning (EEF)

Bridge The Gap Video Playlist

EEF Social & Emotional Learning Audit Tool

	How I feel	What I can do
5	 I need some help!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask to go visit Mrs. Holland Ask to take a break/leave the assembly Hold on to Luke Skywalker (if he is here) Take 4 or 5 deep breaths
4	 I'm really upset.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask to go visit Mrs. Holland Ask to take a break/leave the assembly Hold on to Luke Skywalker (if he is here) Take 4 or 5 deep breaths
3	 I've got a problem.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Let a teacher know that you have a problem and need some help Play with your squishy thing Take 4 or 5 deep breaths
2	 Things are pretty good.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Play with my squishy thing Think of my favorite things Say "I'm going to be O.K." to yourself Take 3 or 4 deep breaths
1	 Feeling Great!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enjoy the feeling! Have fun!

Alan McLean's Insights into Emotions

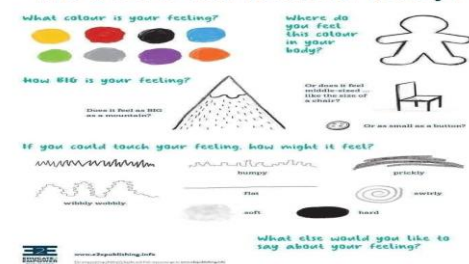
- Emotions have a purpose – even difficult ones.
- We can't control our emotions, but we can control our response.
- Wellbeing is not so much about feeling good as being good about feeling.
- We only understand what we feel when we label it.
- Young people have the labels adults teach them.

Scaled approaches help children & young people identify when their emotions are changing & how to take action before any escalations happen. 5 or 3 point scales are commonly used.



<http://www.internationalfuturesforum.com/iff-kitbag>
Kitbag can be used to promote discussion & exploration around emotions – it comes in a practical cloth wrap or online format – all Fife based practitioners can use their corporate email address to access the full toolkit.

How Are You Feeling Today?



Visuals can be a useful method of encouraging children & young people to share their emotions. Sometimes they do not have the words to describe how they are feeling.

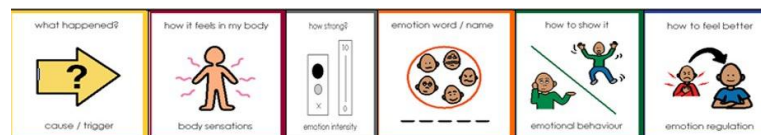
Name it To Tame It (Dan Siegel)

To gently interrupt this cycle, you initiate Name It to Tame It right after you notice your body's first response. It might look like this:

- You notice what your body is telling you: that you're feeling angry, afraid, sad, etc.—and you take a deep, slow breath in
- You recognize the fact that this situation is upsetting you—without reprimanding yourself—and you slowly exhale
- You honestly name what you're feeling: e.g., "anger, anger, anger" or "fear, fear, fear"—and you take a deep, slow breath in
- You notice your body slowly calming itself—and you exhale
- You keep naming and breathing until you feel your body regulating
- Naming the emotions creates a kind of healthy distance between you and the reaction. You recognize an important truth: you're experiencing an emotion, but you aren't caught up in or controlled by it.

Source: [Name It to Tame It: Label Your Emotions to Overcome Negative Thoughts](#) | [Mindfulness.com](#)

Emotion Talks/Emotion Works/Fix It Folders are a great way to facilitate conversations about specific incidents – they also promote pupil voice & building resilience.



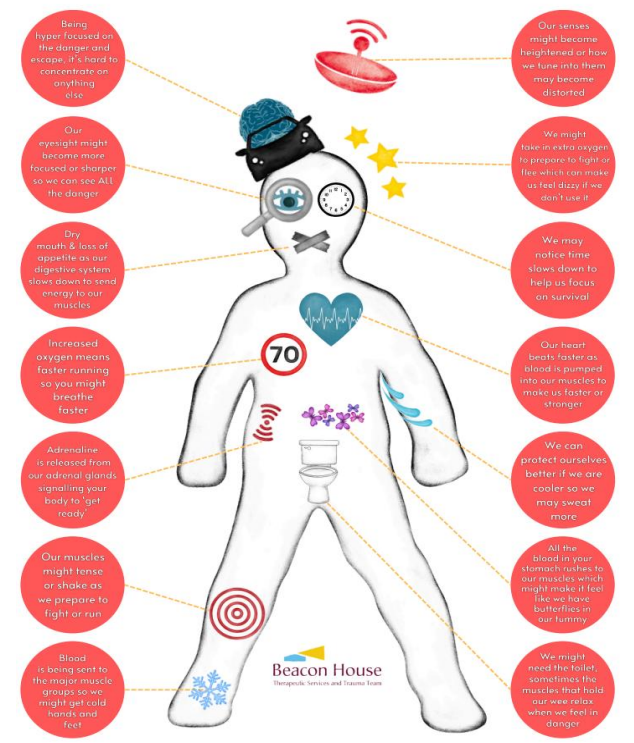
The Education Endowment Foundation have shared their 6 recommendations for improving social & emotional learning in schools – See image above.

When someone experiences a stressful event, the amygdala, an area of the brain that contributes to emotional processing, sends a distress signal to the hypothalamus. This area of the brain functions like a command centre, communicating with the rest of the body through the nervous system so that the person has the energy to fight or flee. (<https://www.health.harvard.edu/>) In practical terms this means that the rational / thinking part of the brain goes 'offline' (Dr Dan Siegel)

How the Fight-Flight-Freeze Response might look / feel




FIGHT	FLIGHT	FREEZE
Yelling, Screaming, Using Mean Words	Wanting to Escape, Running Away	Shutting Down, Mind Goes Blank
Hitting, Kicking, Biting, Throwing, Punching	Unfocused, Hard to Pay Attention	Urge to Hide, Isolates Self
Blaming, Deflecting Responsibility, Defensive	Fidgeting, Restlessness, Hyperactive	Verbally Unresponsive, Says, "I don't know" a lot
Demanding, Controlling	Preoccupied, Busy with Everything But the Thing	Difficulty with Completing Tasks
"Oppositional", "Defiant", "Noncompliant"	Procrastinating, Avoidant, Ignores the Situation	Zoned Out, Daydreaming
Moving Towards What Feels Threatening	Moving Away From What Feels Threatening	Unable to Move, Feeling Stuck
Irritable, Angry, Furious, Offended, Aggressive	Anxious, Panicked, Scared, Worried, Overwhelmed	Depressed, Numb, Bored/Apathetic, Helpless

- ### Tips to help calm & soothe the stress response system
- Try to *understand* the problem ('Curious not furious')
 - Increase *physical safety* – give choices, have clear exits, keep onlookers to a minimum, create a den like space
 - Increase *psychological safety* – consider your tone of voice, body language
 - Teach *self-soothing* skills – stretching, calming music, breathing techniques, tapping etc
 - Use *mindfulness* – sensory approaches (5-4-3-2-1), counting breaths, stretching movements, body scan
 - Use *scripted language*
 - Consider *Window of Tolerance* – give time for stress response to calm down before reflecting on incidents
- (Sources: Louise Bomber 2020, Tina Rae 2021, Pooky Knightsmith, 2024)



It can often be helpful to discuss body sensations with children & young people to help those experiences seem less scary!

Read-Watch-Do Source: www.wholeheartedschoolcounseling.com

-  [There's No Such Thing As Naughty - Kate Silverton](#)
-  [Toxic Stress Derails Healthy Development – Harvard Uni](#)
-  [Blog Resources – Dr Pooky Knightsmith](#)

Dr Dan Siegel's techniques to nurture the 'Whole Brain Child': **Name It To Tame it** (help the child name strong emotions) - **Engage, Don't Enrage** (share your calm) - **Move It or Lose It** (support physical activity) - **Let the clouds of emotion roll by** (teach that emotions come & go) - **SIFT** (help children to recognise Sensations Images Feelings & Thoughts) - **Connect through Conflict** (show empathy & promote dialogue) (Siegel, 2012)

Our nervous systems are impacted by: What's going on inside us – the environment – others around us – other people's nervous systems – the atmosphere – familiarity or the unknown – trauma or loss – regulation experience – the support network of other people around us. (Bomber, 2020)

Teaching children gratitude can help them feel happier, support better social relationships, and improve overall health and well-being. Strategies that can help foster gratitude in kids include asking gratitude-focused questions, performing acts of kindness, and modelling gratitude in your own life. [How to Teach Children Gratitude](#)

Ideas to teach gratitude

- Teach children to say thank you
- Praise pro-social behaviour
- Ask gratitude questions
- Perform acts of kindness
- Model gratitude (Say "Thank you" - Talk about gratitude - Express gratitude)
- Create a gratitude board
- Make gratitude jars
- Establish a gratitude ritual e.g. starting the morning or ending the day with a discussion about what we are grateful for
- Look for the positives

(Source: [How to Teach Children Gratitude](#))

Benefits of teaching gratitude

- Children are happier
- Teens have greater life satisfaction
- Children are healthier
- Grateful children turn into grateful adults

Read-Watch-Do

[Wellbeing in the Primary Classroom](#)

[What Went Well](#)

[Ideas for practice](#)

GRATITUDE PROMPTS

1. A **strength** of mine for which I am grateful is...
2. Something money can't buy that I'm grateful for is...
3. Something that **comforts me** that I'm grateful for is...
4. Something that's **funny** for which I'm grateful for is...
5. Something **in nature** that I'm grateful for is...
6. A **memory** I'm grateful for is....
7. Something that **changes** that I'm grateful for is....
8. A **challenge** I'm grateful for is....
9. Something **interesting** that I'm grateful for is...
10. Something **beautiful** I'm grateful for is...

Suggestions for Gratitude topics

Draw something/someone:





1. That makes you happy
2. You couldn't live without
3. That helps you
4. That makes you smile
5. You love
6. You are thankful for
7. You think is kind
8. You think is fun
9. That makes you feel good
10. That makes you laugh

The [Raising Grateful Children Project at UNC Chapel Hill](#) has revealed that gratitude has four key parts:

- 1. Noticing:** Recognizing the things you have to be grateful for.
- 2. Thinking:** Thinking about why you've been given those things.
- 3. Feeling:** The emotions you experience due to the things you've been given.
- 4. Doing:** The way you express appreciation.

Gratitude Treasure Hunt

Explore your surroundings and find things you're grateful for. How do they make you feel?

 <input type="checkbox"/> Something that makes you smile	 <input type="checkbox"/> Find someone that makes you happy	 <input type="checkbox"/> Find something beautiful
 <input type="checkbox"/> Find something that reminds you of a good memory	 <input type="checkbox"/> Find something that is unique to you	 <input type="checkbox"/> Find something that makes you feel calm
 <input type="checkbox"/> Find something that represents you	 <input type="checkbox"/> Find something that makes you feel safe	 <input type="checkbox"/> Find something you love in nature
 <input type="checkbox"/> Find something you can share with someone else	 <input type="checkbox"/> Find something you are grateful for	 <input type="checkbox"/> Find something that reminds you of a loved one

Let's help every child thrive

[The Gratitude Tree for Kids \(Incl. Activities + Drawings\)](#)

H.O.P.E

(Healthy Outcomes from Positive Experiences)

The HOPE framework asserts that improving the lives of all children, particularly those exposed to experiences or conditions that create toxic stress, requires intentional, informed efforts that reduce adversity and promote positive experiences. The focus of HOPE is on the promotion of positive childhood experiences that create a strong foundation for learning, productive behaviour, and physical and mental health. It also suggests that there must be a focus on strengthening the capabilities and resources of parents and other significant adults in children's lives in order to promote young children's healthy development. (Sege & Browne, 2017)

Relationships



Safe and supportive relationships within the family and with other children and adults. Being in nurturing, supportive relationships are critical for children to develop into healthy, resilient adults.

Individuals that recall having these types of relationships during childhood experience significantly lower rates of depression and poor mental health during adulthood

How can we promote safe & supportive relationships?

- Be a supportive relationship! Take the time to connect with the children around you.
- Share information about after-school activities where they might connect with coaches, mentors, or peers.
- Ask parents about the positive experiences they remember from childhood and what made those experiences good. Celebrate those with them and encourage them to think about which of the components of those relationships they want to offer their children
- Ask about other positive adults in the child's life - coaches, teachers, pastors, mentors. Celebrate those relationships and encourage consistent connection with those individuals. Play and connect with children regularly! Be silly, move your bodies together, read a book, watch a movie.

Source: <https://positiveexperience.org>

Environments



Safe, stable, and equitable environments where children can live, learn, and play.

Children who live, learn, and play in safe, stable, and equitable environments are less likely to experience poor mental and physical health as adults.

How can we promote safe, stable & equitable environments?

- Make sure schools are safe spaces for all students! Address bullying and teasing, and encourage students to be upstanders, not bystanders.
- Make sure that children and families feel represented. Look at any books, posters, curricula, or handouts. Are all kinds of families, all genders, all races, and people with disabilities represented?

Engagement



Opportunities for social and civic engagement to develop a sense of belonging and connectedness.

Children need to feel connected to their communities, loved, and appreciated. Involvement in social institutions and environments, awareness of cultural customs and traditions, and a sense that they matter and belong helps them develop into secure and resilient adults.

How can we promote access to social and civic engagement?

- Ask children about the activities they do outside of school, and delight with them in those activities.
- Work on creative projects and sharing their favourite activities with their friends. Have flyers available for Community Centres, after-school activities, and mentoring programs in your community.
- Families can volunteer in the community together.
- Create new after-school activities.

Emotional Growth



Opportunities for emotional growth where children feel supported through difficult events and emotions.

Children need to have a lot of opportunities to develop their sense of self-awareness and social cognition, learn how to self-regulate emotions and behaviour, and acquire skills needed to respond functionally and productively to challenges. Many of these skills arise during child-centred play.

How can you promote social and emotional growth?

- Help children to name their feelings as they talk about them and what they feel like.
- Remember that disagreements in peer groups are normal and show children how to disagree respectfully and productively.
- Schools can implement social and emotional learning curriculum.
- Make time for open play with friends and siblings that the children lead on their own.
- Encourage social connection the same way you encourage eating healthy foods or exercising.



The diagram illustrates the 'FOUR BUILDING BLOCKS OF HOPE' as a 2x2 grid. Each block is for 'All Ages and Stages' and lists specific goals for Children, Adults, and Older Adults.

- Relationships (Top Left):** Opportunity to develop relationships with individuals or community, expand socially, and receive information from those close by.
- Environment (Top Right):** Maintaining a stable and engaging environment, both inside and outside, with opportunity to travel safely between spaces.
- Engagement (Bottom Left):** Opportunity to become meaningfully engaged with community activities and supports, fulfilling one's sense of collaboration and creativity.
- Emotional Growth (Bottom Right):** Interactions with friends, family members, and community allowing for opportunities for introspection and personal reflection.

Source: <https://sdsusocialpolicyinstitute.org/hope-informed-university/>



An inclusive approach affords all children and young people the opportunity to be part of a community, boosting their emotional wellbeing and aiding the development of social skills. Scotland's inclusive approach celebrates diversity and allows children and young people to develop an understanding and recognition of difference, contributing to the development of an increasingly inclusive, empathetic and more just society

Scottish Government (2019)

The CIRCLE Collaboration resource has been developed to support the inclusion of all learners within the school environment.



THE FRAMEWORK	THE FACTORS	EXAMPLES
ENVIRONMENT	The environment includes both the physical and social factors. The physical environment refers to the physical layout of the classroom and the resources used within it. The social environment concerns the attitudes, expectations and actions of peers and adults.	Iggy is very easily distracted which prevents him engaging fully in an activity. He needs careful management of his environment, including seating him away from windows, doors and other distractions and provision of a personalised task list which he ticks off as he completes, to support his learning.
STRUCTURES & ROUTINES	Structures and routines are events that happen in the same way with regularity. The start, middle and end of the routine becomes predictable through repetition. Daily routines help learners to know and anticipate what comes next. Social routines help them enjoy and interact with others.	Anna always forgets what she has to bring to school each day, which means she misses out on learning opportunities. By ensuring that specific activities such as homework are done consistently on the same day each week, she can (with the help of her parents) ensure she is organised.
MOTIVATION	Motivation gives learners incentive, enthusiasm and interest when engaging with activities and the people around them. Learners can be motivated by their own feelings, desires, self esteem, confidence and the responses of others.	Surdeep is prevented from learning by his fear of failure. He thinks he will not be good at anything, so avoids trying new activities. He needs support and some individual encouragement to be motivated to engage in new activities to develop his skills and to experience the feeling of success.
SKILLS	Skills refer to a learner's ability in the following six areas: attention and concentration; organisation and planning; posture and mobility; dexterity and manipulation; socialising, emotions and relationships; verbal and non-verbal communication.	Kit loves physical education. However, she is uncoordinated in all her movements and struggles with throwing and catching a ball. She will need activities and support at the appropriate level to help her succeed and to learn and develop new movement skills.

Read-Watch-Do

[Fife Spotlight Paper](#)

[What is Inclusion?](#)

[Circle Framework](#)

Summary of recommendations

Recommendation 1	Create a positive and supportive environment for all pupils, without exception
Recommendation 2	Build an ongoing, holistic understanding of your pupils and their needs
Recommendation 3	Ensure all pupils have access to high quality teaching
Recommendation 4	Complement high quality teaching with carefully selected small-group and one-to-one interventions
Recommendation 5	Work effectively with teaching assistants

Children & Young people tell us they want adults in school to be:

- Approachable
 - Encouraging
 - Friendly
 - Caring
 - Knowledgeable
 - Kind
- You Gov (2019)

Experiencing Joy & Happiness is more than simply feeling pleasure and avoiding pain. Happiness is about having experiences that are meaningful and valuable, including emotions that you think are the right ones to have.

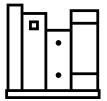
American Psychological Society (2017)

10 Keys for Happier Living

 Giving Do kind things for others	 Relating Connect with people	 Exercising Take care of your body	 Awareness Live life mindfully	 Trying Out Keep learning new things
 Direction Have goals to look forward to	 Resilience Find ways to bounce back	 Emotions Look for what's good	 Acceptance Be comfortable with who you are	 Meaning Be part of something bigger


Source: www.actionforhappiness.org

Those who experience better emotions tend to live longer, are in better health, recover from viruses more quickly, take less time off work, are more successful in their careers, are generally more productive, and have happier marriages. Children who have a sunnier disposition are more likely to get a degree, get hired and get promoted. Good emotions also improve our ability to resolve conflicts. Paul Dolan (2015)




[Read-Watch-Do](#)

[Action for Happiness](#)



[Wellbeing in the Primary Classroom](#)



[BBC Teach Happiness Assembly](#)

Happy People tend to:

- Invest a lot into their close personal relationships with friends and family
 - Express high levels of gratitude for what they have
 - Be quite helpful and altruistic
 - Have an optimistic outlook when imagining their future
 - Savour pleasures and tend to live in the present moment
 - Exercise regularly
 - Have a clear sense of purpose in life
- (Source: Adrian Bethune, 2018)

Learning About Happy Hormones

Learners could create posters or a classroom display about our 'happy hormones':

Serotonin: Regulates mood, sleep & digestion. Our diet & exposure to natural light can affect serotonin levels.

Dopamine: Helps us pay attention and is our 'reward system' - when something good happens to us, we get a rush of dopamine that makes us feel good. It gets released when we achieve something and when we laugh.

Endorphins: Protect us against stress, reduce pain and produce pleasure. Often released after exercise.

Oxytocin: Promotes prosocial behaviour and bonding between people. It helps us to be kind and show empathy towards others. It gets released when you hug or hold hands with someone or stroke a pet. It can also get released when we are kind to someone.

(Source: Louise Bomber, 2024)

10 Ideas to Create a Happy Classroom



1. Create tribal classrooms

Humans are an innately tribal and social species. We operate best, learn the most and are happiest when we feel safe, secure and connected to others.

No, your students are the class with a smile. Get to know your tribe and what makes them tick. Make everyone feel welcome and that they're part of your team. Show your tribe how to take good care of each other. A happy classroom is built primarily on positive relationships and a sense of belonging.



2. Be still

Growing evidence shows that mindfulness can help children improve their mental health, attention and even test scores. Even moments of silence in your day when you and your class pause and focus on your breathing, each time the mind wanders away from the breath, gently bring your attention back to the breath. Every time you bring your attention back to the breath after it has wandered, you strengthen the parts of the brain in charge of attention and emotional regulation.

3. What went well?

The human brain is the 'Victor for bad and Teller for good' according to psychologist Dr Rick Hanson. This suggests that helpful things we do are the ones that we are most likely to remember. So, as an adult, you could spend a few minutes each day asking yourself 'What went well?' to help create that bias and level the playing field. At the end of each day get your students to write down three things that went well for them. Ask them to share their good things with a partner. Repeat often to create that bias!



4. The stretch zone

Learning new things is a key facet of a happy life. When we're engaged and motivated in our work, we feel and learn better. But if the work is too challenging, we get frustrated and if it's too challenging, we get overwhelmed. Aim for that stretch zone just beyond your comfort zone, encouraging risk-taking and embracing mistakes. Give them words that comfort them and say 'the stretch zone' - This is where meaningful learning is sustained and the most learning takes place.



5. Flow

When the challenge of a task matches our skill level, when the task has clear goals, and when we're able to really focus on what it is we're doing, we are likely to experience that 'in optimal state' of psychology called 'Flow'. Flow states, we lose some of ourselves and fully deeply, totally, children who experience flow regularly show deeper learning, greater long-term interest in subjects, and higher levels of wellbeing. Create the right conditions so your class can lose themselves in their work!

6. Play to their strengths

Children's strengths are the core parts of ourselves that shape our personality and motivate us. Nurture this creativity, love of learning, bravery, and perseverance as much as we can give them through games. Studies show that when we use our strengths in school work, we are significantly happier. Start by getting the strengths of your class and talk them with using them in their school work and at home.



7. Practise kindness

Humans are hardwired to be kind. When we are kind to others, the reward centre of our brain lights up. Kindness is contagious and it even helps make us healthier and more resilient to stress. The best way to spread it is to be kind yourself. Teachers who use kind words and are public, respectful, generous, and self-aware have children who emulate them. You could even encourage your children to carry out random acts of kindness by being a 'Random Work'.

8. Be optimistic

Optimism is happy. Happy has better health and is less likely to suffer from depression than their pessimistic counterparts. But how can we help students be optimistic when things aren't going their way? A key is to focus on how the problem is temporary, it isn't too hard, that it is specific, it affects one area of their life but other areas are going well and it isn't personal (don't blame yourself or another external factor - would have been inevitable). Help students challenge their negative self-talk and see their situation from a more hopeful perspective.



9. Get moving

Exercise is one of the single biggest things we can do to boost our physical and mental health. Five minutes performs better academically and has better body image and higher self-esteem. Not only get your class to do 'The Daily Mile' where they jog or run a mile every day. Or simply break up lessons with a round of sit-ups, lunges, or a few laps of the playground. Studies show that children who do physical activity lessons. Get your class out of their chairs and moving more!



10. Walk the talk

To create a happy classroom for your children, practice looking after yourself. Be positive with yourself and the world. When you walk the talk, your message will feel authentic and your class will follow you. Be your yourself, have fun with your class, use their boundaries for work, talk to the kids when you need it, and care out time to the most of what makes you happy. Ultimately, a happy teacher makes a happy classroom.

Teflon vs Velcro

Even when feeling calm & content, without you being aware, our brains are scanning away, looking for negative things.

This is why negative stimuli are perceived more quickly than positive stimuli and we recognise angry faces more easily than happy faces.

Our brains try to notice bad stuff rapidly so we can take evasive action.

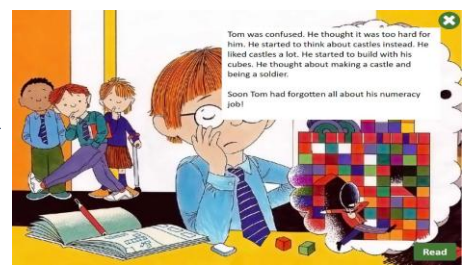
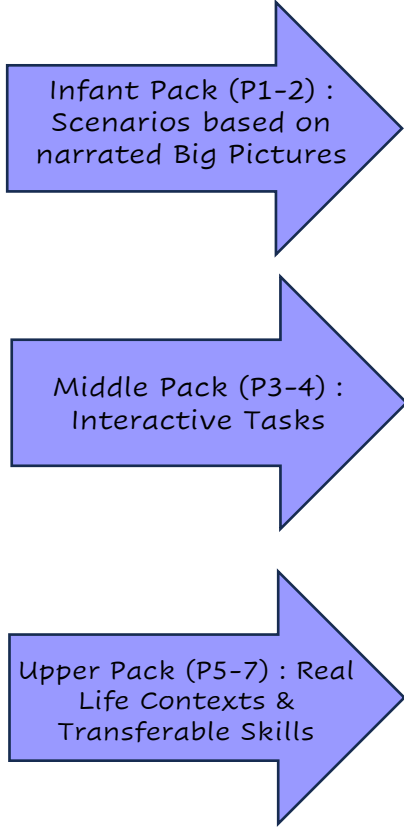
In a nutshell, positive experiences slide off like Teflon, negative experiences stick like Velcro

(Source: Nick Hanson, 2014)

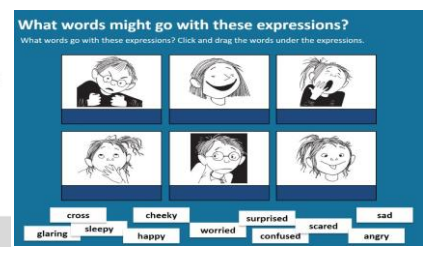
The Keeping Your Cool in School programme was first established as “Cool in School” in 2007. It has been redesigned as an online digital resource to support children in developing & maintaining positive relationships; becoming more confident in tackling challenging situations and enabling them to have a better understanding of their responsibilities in school and beyond. It provides them with the skills to manage emotions and raises awareness of wider issues affecting them and their peers. Each level of the programme explores a range of responses to different situations, focusing on aggressive, avoidant & assertive (cool) responses. It provides a range of age specific resources through primary school by encouraging and developing the attitudes and life-skills for children to grow as individuals and to thrive within the school community and beyond. (Source: www.coolinschool.com)



- Aims of the programme:**
- Help children recognise and discuss their feelings about themselves and others.
 - Equip children with the attitudes and skills they need to thrive in a changing society.
 - Encourage parents and staff to work together to teach children respect for themselves and one another, in order that they cope well with the challenges of school.



Keeping Your Cool in School was refreshed by a team of Fife practitioners from Central Teams, PSS, Primary & Secondary schools.



[Education Scotland – Keeping Your Cool In School](#)

[Keeping Your Cool In School Promotional Clip](#)

[Keeping Your Cool In School Online Resource](#)

What learners in Fife say about the resource:

If your friends are having a bad day, you can spread your coolness & then they'll become cool.

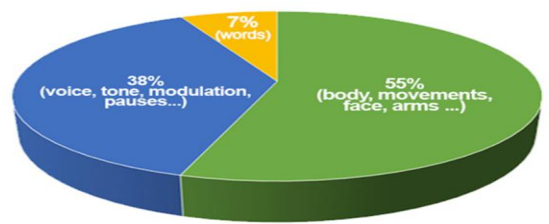
It teaches you to be kind to others & lots of other strategies.

It teaches you how to keep your cool & not be aggressive or avoidant. It makes learning fun!

Language is a vital means of communication - Nurture Principle 4

It is important for children and young people to be able to understand and express their thoughts and feelings. It is also crucial for adults to understand the importance of their own language towards children and young people, and how this can impact them. Children often 'act out' their feelings as they lack the vocabulary to name how they feel. Informal opportunities for talking and sharing are just as important as more formal lessons teaching language skills. This enables words to be used instead of actions to express feelings, and imaginative play can be used to help children understand the feelings of others. It is helpful to provide opportunities for pupils, parents and staff to express their views, and that adults model how to share feelings and experiences. Pupils' voices should be valued, and language should be assessed, developed and embedded in all aspects of the curriculum at the appropriate level for the child or young person. (Nurture UK)

How we communicate Source: Open University



Affirming, validating and empathetic messages

I am seen
I'm wondering if...
I've noticed how...
It looks like you are feeling worried about...
You're letting me know that this is...

I am accepted
It's okay to feel angry about...
I know this is a big ask for you...
I understand that you think this isn't fair.
That was so hard, but I'm still here for you.

I am empowered
What do you need from me?
Which choice do you prefer?
How can I make this easier for you?
It's okay to say no if you're not ready.

I am remembered
I missed you while you were gone.
We are so happy to see you again.
I haven't forgotten about you.
I was thinking of you when...

Source: www.epinsight.com

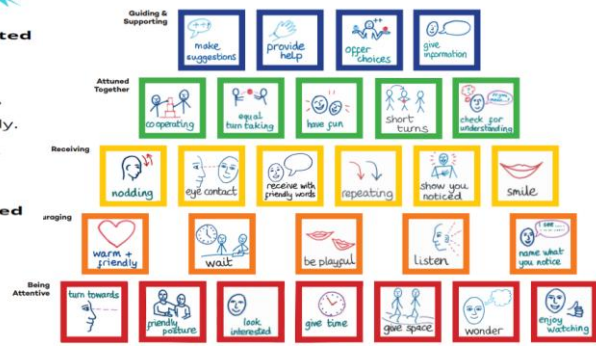
- Read-Watch-Do
- [Attunement to support engagement](#)
- [Power of Relationships](#)
- [Attunement Profile \(pg 66\)](#)



Source: Nurture UK

Principles of Attunement

(Connected Moments & Video Interaction Guidance)



Helpful Phrases

- "I've heard what you said".
- "Let's stop and think for a moment".
- "You are upset at the moment. That's fine. I am here to help you. We can sort this out."
- "When we feel angry, we can... That helps us to feel calm again. Then we can re-join the group"
- "Everyone feels angry sometimes. Let's look at what you can do when you are angry."

Language as a means of communication

- Understand and express thoughts and feelings.
- Role of the adult.
- Informal opportunities for talking and sharing
- Opportunities for pupils, parents and staff to express their views
- Pupils' voices should be valued,
- Recognising emotions & early warning signs
- Strategies to de-escalate

The Principle in Practice

Source: Fife EP Service

Language supports co-regulation

Adults model language of emotions

Restorative Conversations

Use of attunement framework

Teaching of social interaction skills

Behavioural expectations named & clear

Instructions broken down

Language modified

Dan Hughes PACE Approach

Source: Fife EP Service



Learning is Understood Developmentally – Nurture Principle 2



A nurturing approach recognises that positive relationships are central to both learning and wellbeing. A key aspect of a nurturing approach is an understanding of attachment theory and how early experiences can have a significant impact on development. It recognises that all school/ELC settings staff have a role to play in establishing the positive relationships that are required to promote healthy social and emotional development and that these relationships should be reliable, predictable and consistent where possible. A nurturing approach has a key focus on the school environment and emphasises the balance between care and challenge which incorporates attunement, warmth and connection alongside structure, high expectations and a focus on achievement and attainment. It is based on the understanding of 6 Nurturing Principles. (Education Scotland)

What would good practice look like within a nurturing, ACEs aware and a trauma informed educational context?

- Whole school focus on wellbeing; social and emotional learning and the building of resilience
- Awareness of the impact of adverse experiences and trauma
- A focus on what has happened to an individual rather than what is wrong
- Developmentally appropriate supports
- A range of universal whole school approaches
- Senior Leadership Teams and practitioners who are reflective and supportive
- Take forward many features of highly effective practice

Sources: Education Scotland



Source: Nurture UK

Learning is Understood Developmentally

- Children are at different stages of development – socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually
- Responding to children ‘just as they are’
- A non-judgemental and accepting attitude
- Feeling safe and secure

The Principle in Practice

Differentiated curriculum

Individual targets where appropriate

Opportunities to collaborate

Staff awareness of language development

Choice of learning mode

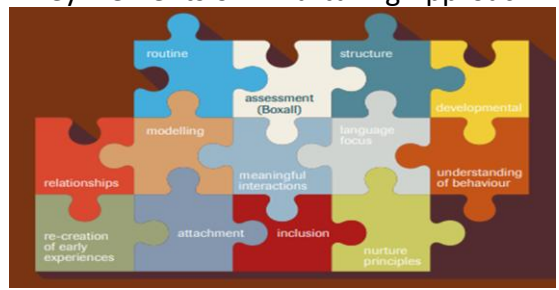
Opportunities for wider achievement

Explicit teaching of social skills

Opportunities to practise self-regulation

Source: Fife EP Service

Key Elements of A Nurturing Approach



Read-Watch-Do
[Nurture As A Whole School Approach](#)

[Nurture Principle 1](#)

[EP Insight Website](#)

Think about a Wall of Needs (Adapted from Adoption UK).

Socialisation

Friendships

Feeling Kept in Mind

Choice

Autonomy

Empathy

Co-Regulation

Setting Limits

Repair

Predictability

Consistency

Structure

Child-led Play

Commenting

Mirroring & Matching

Attuned Responses

Trust

Healthy Sleep

Physical Activity

Safety

Sensory Stimulation

Comforting Touch

Nurturing relationships & experiences build healthy foundations.

"Imagine a house with fragile foundations or soggy cement... the child's social, emotional, and developmental age may differ to their developmental age " - Dr Karen Treisman

Source: www.epinsight.com

Key Considerations – We have many big asks of our children & young people. These should be taken into account from a developmental perspective: Separation from parents/carers, Feeling emotionally & physically safe, Trusting other adults, Sharing attention, Trying new things, Resolving conflict, Asking for help & Managing Change.

Source: www.epinsight.com

Lundy's Model of Participation:



- Influence**
- Why am I conducting this research and what do I hope that it will achieve?
 - How can I ensure that the benefits for children (in the way they are seen, understood and supported) outweigh the time, investment and potential discomfort they experience?
 - How will children and their views be represented and shared and be true to who they are and their experiences?
 - Will children learn through their experience of research and have an opportunity to play a part in how findings are shared?
 - How will I promote and disseminate findings to ensure that it will have the most influence?
- Audience**
- Am I the right person to be conducting this study: do I have the skills to safely and effectively engage children and young people, to build knowledge and have impact? What skills or knowledge do I need to build to meaningfully engage children?
 - How do I ensure that children are afforded the right to privacy and confidentiality and what steps will I take to ensure that there are not repercussions for them as a result of their participation?
 - How am I recording what children have shared, their priorities and wishes and how will I present these to progress their goals and needs?
 - What steps will I take to ensure that those who need to learn from the research (policy-makers, practitioners, politicians, communities and decision-makers) are able to access and act on what has been learned?
- Space**
- Is the environment within which I engage children safe for children: is it private and how have I ensured that there are no repercussions for them?
 - Is it comfortable and conducive to meaningful conversations? How can I change the environment (i.e. bring things with me) to make it more child-friendly?
 - Is it accessible so that all children, despite any special needs or challenges, can safely and meaningfully participate? (Is it accessible for children with disability, from different cultures and backgrounds?)
- Voice**
- How do I ensure that children are prepared to participate, in a way that they choose and is most safe for them?
 - Do they understand what they are being asked to do, why they're involved and what you are hoping to achieve?
 - How can I support their informed consent, making them aware of any risks or consequences for their participation?
 - How do I give them the best opportunity to express their views in a way that is most meaningful for them?
 - Is my approach child-friendly and does it empower children to take control over what they do and don't share and how they participate?

Learner participation in schools and early years settings includes all the ways in which children and young people engage in practices and dialogue with educational staff, parents, carers, and community members to create positive outcomes and changes. (Education Scotland)

4 Arenas of Participation (Education Scotland):

Participation Arena 1: Learning, Teaching, and Assessment

The first arena of participation concerns learning, teaching, and assessment. This comprises educational experiences that can happen in, for example:

- classrooms
- playrooms
- sports and performance spaces
- science laboratories
- libraries
- outdoor settings
- and other studios, workshops and learning spaces

In this arena, all young people have opportunities to influence and participate in decisions about the experiences, tasks, the topic, content, timing, learning, resources and materials involved in how they learn, are taught, and assessed.

Through participation, learners will exercise a key role in actively supporting curriculum making within Curriculum for Excellence through on-going dialogue with teachers and others.

Participation Arena 2: Opportunities for Personal Achievement

Opportunities for personal achievement constitute the second arena of participation. Schools and ELC settings routinely offer a diverse range of learning experiences, such as:

- volunteering
- award schemes
- clubs and visiting speakers
- sports events: as player, coach or supporter
- performers, food-making and developing the young workforce
- public performances of music, dance, theatre
- competitions
- other school or school-community events

Through targeted work within this arena, learners can influence a variety of important factors. Opportunities for personal achievement can be shared, designed or improved by giving pupils ownership or input and providing them with resources and facilities. Through engagement in this arena, young people are able to significantly influence school ethos and culture.

Participation Arena 3: Decision Making Groups

The third arena involves participation in many kinds of decision-making groups in schools, libraries and other places. Learners take part in the everyday and most strategic decisions that shape and provide different directions. This comprises, for example:

- child-led groups
- pupil councils
- peer-review groups
- children and young people's involvement in parent-teacher sessions and other forums
- school governors and estates groups
- other management and steering committees

These groups and committees influence:

- management and leadership
- school budgets, systems and structures
- school rules, policies and procedures
- staff selection
- curriculum, facilities and support for children and young people
- community events
- school buildings and grounds development and design
- other governance issues

In this arena, children and young people can address effectiveness and accountability, influence the culture, systems and processes of schools and of decision-making which in turn, connects forms of language, operations, and facilities.

Participation Arena 4: Wider Community

The fourth arena is about working in partnership with other services, parents, carers, and the wider community.

Through learner participation, schools and ELC settings can responsibly build links with the wider world and collaborate more deeply on new shared goals.

Learner participation will extend a sense of community, developing new relations with community members whose governing commitments beyond existing studies and results.

In this arena, there will be:

- engagement by learners with a range of agencies, families, and other community members
- opportunities for community members to engage and participate in school life

Learners will experience and contribute to new intergenerational dialogues, helping to support learning, and attendance to the needs of other within the wider community. These kinds of projects can build on exchanges across the generations at local, national and global levels.

Initiatives addressing this arena may be developed by learners themselves or in a culture of collaboration with external agencies and partners.

Golden Rules for Participation:

- Understand my rights
- A chance to be involved
- Remember it's my choice
- Value me
- Support me
- Work together
- Keep in touch

Source: CYPSC

Continuum of Participation:



ES Framework for Implementation:



Read-Watch-Do

[ES Learner Participation 3-18](#)

[ES Practice Exemplars](#)

[Fife Parent & Pupil Participation Blog](#)

Kate Wall's 7 Principles:

1. Define	2. Power
3. Inclusivity	4. Listening
5. Time & Space	6. Approaches
7. Processes	8. Purposes

Mindfulness can be characterised as our innate ability to be fully present in the moment – to focus on where we are and what we’re doing without allowing other, intrusive thoughts, worries or fears to permeate our minds. When we’re practicing mindfulness, we’re impartial and non-judgemental to what’s happening around us, and when our minds wander, we redirect our thoughts back to the present moment.

(Tina Rae, 2021)








Ideas for Mindful Moments

Source: <https://thistimeofmine.com/> & www.biglifejournal.com

Benefits of Mindfulness

- **Sensory Awareness:** enabling us to ‘stop & be’, eliciting positive emotions that feed into our general wellbeing.
- **Cognitive Control:** allowing thoughts to come & go freely. We can have a thought without having to act upon it.
- **Emotional Regulation:** encouraging a more de-centred perspective on negative emotions.
- **Acceptance:** treating our thoughts in a non-judgemental & detached manner, encourages us to be more tolerant & kinder to ourselves.
- **Attention Regulation:** training us in how to regulate & direct our attention at will.

Teaching Mindfulness can:

-  Decrease feelings of stress & anxiety
-  Improve focus & concentration
-  Help with impulsivity
-  Improve self-regulation
-  Develop empathy
-  Reduce aggression
-  Improve sleep

(Source: Tina Rae, 2021)

HOT COCOA BREATHING

- Have your child close their eyes & imagine holding a big mug of hot chocolate.
- Tell them to slowly bring the mug close to their face.
- Then a deep breath in, smelling the delicious chocolate scent.
- And slowly blow the steam away from the hot chocolate.



5 SENSES GRATITUDE CHALLENGE

- Have your child close their eyes and use their senses to concentrate on things they are thankful for.
- Walk them through this exercise by asking, "What is your favorite thing to listen to?", etc.



TENSE AND RELEASE MUSCLE RELAXATION

- Starting at the feet, gently squeeze the muscles in the feet by tightening them, then slowly releasing.
- Next, squeeze the large muscles in the calves for 5 seconds, then gently release. Working your way up the body, squeeze the thigh muscles for 5 seconds then gently release.
- Continue moving up the body for more relaxation.



CALMING GLITTER JAR

- Grab a jar or plastic bottle and let your child decorate it.
- Fill the bottle ¾ of the way with water followed by clear glue, food coloring, and glitter.
- Seal the lid with hot glue, shake, and have fun watching the glitter settle.

HEARTBEAT EXERCISE

- Ask your child to stand up and either jump up and down or do jumping jacks for one minute.
- At the end of that minute, have them place their hand on their heart and pay attention to how their heartbeat and their breathing feels.



LISTEN TO THE BELL

- Have your child sit somewhere comfortable and close their eyes.
- Ring a bell and instruct them to focus on the sound as it fades away.
- When they think the sound is gone, they can open their eyes.

Read-Watch-Do



[A Toolbox of Wellbeing](#)



[Dr Tina Rae – You tube Channel](#)



[The Mindfulness Teacher](#)

Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) is a peer mentoring programme that gives young people the chance to explore and challenge the attitudes, beliefs and cultural norms that underpin all forms of gender-based violence in our society. Exploring violence through a gendered lens, young people are aware of biases that exist within society and develop leadership skills in order for them to employ 'active bystander' theory. Young people explore the scope of violence and are motivated in challenging victim blaming. The programme addresses a range of behaviours including physical violence, name-calling, sexting, coercive and controlling behaviour and harassment. Individuals are not looked on as potential victims or perpetrators but as empowered onlookers with the ability to support and challenge their peers whilst keeping themselves safe. (Education Scotland)

- What are the forms of Gender Based Violence:**
- physical, sexual, emotional, verbal, and psychological abuse and violence, including domestic abuse or relationship abuse (including coercive control), rape, incest, unwanted touching, the non-consensual sharing of sexual images, and the threat of any of these acts.
 - sexual harassment, and intimidation in any public or private space (including online, work, schools, colleges and universities, and at home).
 - commercial sexual exploitation, including prostitution, lap dancing, stripping, pornography and trafficking.
 - child sexual abuse, including familial and sibling sexual abuse, child sexual exploitation and online abuse.
 - so-called 'honour-based' violence, including dowry-related violence, female genital mutilation, forced and child marriages, and 'honour' crimes.
 - transphobic, homophobic or biphobic bullying, as it reinforces and polices gendered societal norms.



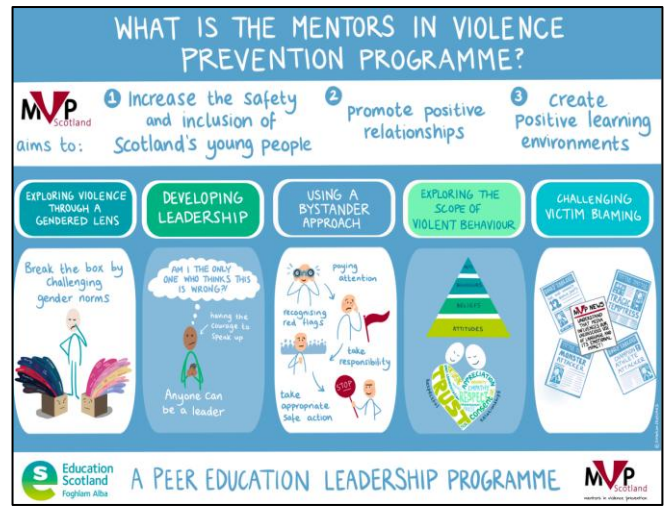
Read-Watch-Do

[Preventing & Responding to Gender Based Violence](#)

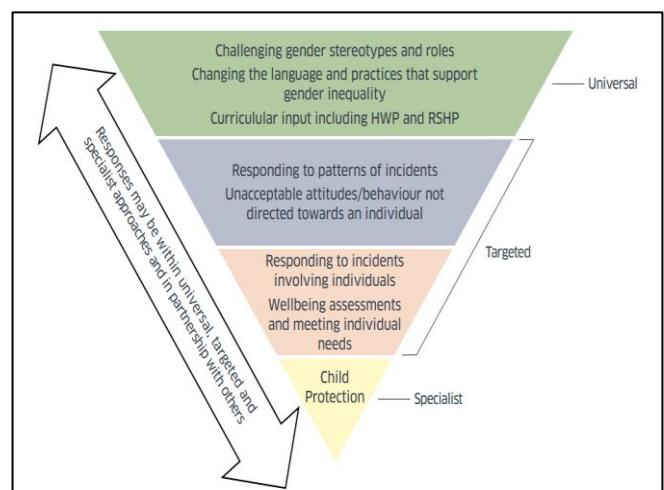
[Understanding Gender Based Violence](#)

[MVP Website](#)

Overview of MVP Programme (including 5 key components)



Universal, Targeted & Specialist Approaches to Gender Based Violence



Key features of a universal approach to GBV

Education is key to prevention. Education on GBV should aim to:

- Keep children and young people safe
- Challenge views held by people across society which normalise GBV
- Enable children and young people to identify GBV if it occurs in their own relationships, both for those experiencing and those carrying out

Real Views on GBV

"There's a boy in my class group chat who keeps spamming us with pornographic photos, and he sends really inappropriate messages. I feel so disgusted and kind of scared, but I don't know what to do about it. I've tried talking to my other friends, but they don't seem bothered about it. It makes me feel like I'm all alone."

On Friday, only people playing football are allowed to go on the astroturf, so it's always the boys and that's not fair. Boys don't let the girls play on the playground.

"There's a lot of double standards. Girls will be told off for wearing certain things but the boys aren't told off for saying things about us."

Nurture for Wellbeing – Nurture Principle 3

Nurture involves listening and responding; everything is verbalised with an emphasis on the adults engaging with pupils in reciprocal shared activities. Children respond to being valued and thought about as individuals. In practice this involves noticing and praising small achievements – nothing should be hurried. Provision and strategies should be put in place that promote the welfare and wellbeing of children and young people, as well as staff welfare and wellbeing. Consider how achievements and attainments are celebrated, and what structures are in place to promote the pupils' voice. (Nurture UK)

Staff Wellbeing

"For us to promote and support the physical and emotional wellbeing of the children, young people and families we work with, we need to have a focus on the wellbeing of all our staff."



Education & Children's Services
Health & Wellbeing Strategy
2023-26



Source: Nurture UK

The Importance of Nurture

- Listening & responding
- Adults engaging with pupils
- Reciprocal shared activities
- Noticing and praising small achievements
- Promote welfare & wellbeing of children, young people, & staff.
- Achievement and attainment is celebrated
- Promote the pupils' voice

The Principle in Practice

Source: Fife EP Service

Celebrate success

Scaffolding of challenging tasks

Growth Mindset
Promoted

Calmness & containment
offered

Positive Feedback given

Tasks differentiated by
social & emotional ability

Negative self-belief
challenged

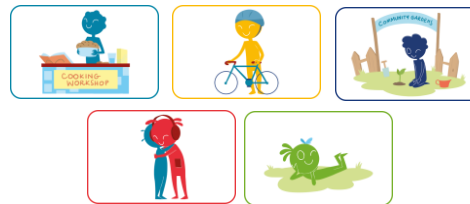
Opportunities to achieve
small successes

Developing Resilience by:

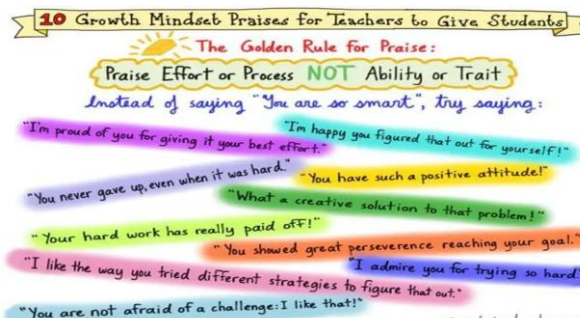
- A significant adult.
- Mastery of 'something
- A safe/secure environment
- Teaching optimism and positivity
- Strong family/ school links
- Relationships and a sense of belonging
- We don't have the same amount of resilience every day.



5 Ways to Wellbeing



Learn – Be Active – Give – Connect – Take Notice



Read-Watch-Do

[Fife Wellbeing Strategy](#)

[Nurture Principle 3](#)


[OMM & The 5 Ways to Wellbeing](#)

We can use our positive & attuned relationships with learners to promote a culture of growth & resilience - the ability to bounce back despite the odds. We can promote a secure attachment and help pupils to build a **positive internal working model of the world**. Seeing it as a positive place abundant with opportunities and exciting experiences. The greater the number of protective resources and processes an individual possesses the more likely they are to thrive. (Dr T Noble)

Learned optimism is very much a positive psychology concept; it's the opposite of learned helplessness: a phenomenon whereby individuals believe they are incapable of changing their circumstances after repeatedly experiencing a stressful event. The aim of positive psychology is to begin to catalyze a change in the focus of psychology from preoccupation only with repairing the worst things in life to also building positive qualities. (Seligman, 2000)

Martin Seligman's PERMA Model

Flourishing in stressful times: Ideas for self-care using Martin Seligman's PERMA model



P **E** **R** **M** **A**

- Positive Emotions**
What makes you feel good?
 - Favourite TV, movies and music which make you smile, laugh & relax.
 - Playing games with family, friends and work colleagues.
 - Physical exercise and breathing techniques.
 - Getting out in nature and paying attention to the sensations around you.
 - Reflecting on "Three Good Things" or "What Went Well" each day.
 - Keeping a gratitude diary of the things you cherish.
 - Making plans for the near and distant future.
- Engagement**
What "flow" activities make you lose track of time?
 - Puzzles or board games.
 - Musical instruments.
 - Yoga or meditation.
 - Writing a story, poem or a blog.
 - Indulging in creative tasks such as drawing, painting or cross-stitching.
 - Taking part in individual or team sports.
 - Working on a new display in the garden.
 - Practising a new cooking or baking recipe.
 - Making a photo collage or video of a recent trip.
- Relationships**
Who brings you joy, peace and support?
 - Catch-ups & get-togethers in person or online.
 - Showing your appreciation for work colleagues.
 - Sharing photos or souvenirs with others, to remind you of good times.
 - Spending a few minutes chatting to a stranger.
 - Using active listening & empathy when helping someone with a problem.
 - Sending a thank you card or a message that shows "I'm thinking of you".
 - Remembering someone that you love them.
- Meaning**
What causes and pursuits do you find important and worthwhile?
 - Engaging in spiritual activities.
 - Making a donation to charity.
 - Sending a care package to a family or friend in need.
 - Fundraising through an individual or group challenge.
 - Volunteering your time in a community project.
 - Sharing knowledge and teaching others about a special interest.
 - Commemorating a loved one's memory.
- Accomplishment**
What are your goals? How can they be achieved?
 - Making a "To do" list and prioritise the tasks.
 - Keeping goals S.M.A.R.T.
 - Taking on new jobs and responsibilities - a different role at work.
 - Starting a long-term project - some DIY at home.
 - Learning something new - webinars and podcasts.
 - Setting an exercise target - schedule the activities in a way which makes them rewarding and sustainable.
 - Changing your work-life balance - use a planner to organise your time better.

- ### Benefits of Learned Optimism
- Improved physical health
 - Motivation & performance
 - Long-term success

(Source: [Learned Optimism: Is Martin Seligman's Glass Half Full?](#))

Optimism involves believing that good things will happen and that you can take steps to help ensure that good things will happen.

[How Learned Optimism Can Improve Your Life](#)

Optimism Vs Pessimism

Here are the explanatory styles of an optimist and pessimist in response to a **negative** event:

Optimist	Pessimist
Temporary: This isn't what I'd planned, but it won't last forever.	Permanent: It's always going to be like this, no matter what I try.
Local: This isn't great, but at least other things in my life are going well.	Global: This means everything is ruined now.
Impersonal: I tried my best, but this was out of my control.	Personal: This is all my fault.

Here are the explanatory styles of an optimist and pessimist in response to a **positive** event:

Optimist	Pessimist
Permanent: If I keep doing what I'm doing, I can expect positive outcomes like this.	Temporary: This won't last forever.
Global: This will positively affect other areas of my life too.	Local: Just because this went well, doesn't mean anything else will.
Personal: I worked hard and made this happen.	Impersonal: I got lucky, this didn't have much to do with me.

(Source: Louise Bomber, 2020)

(Source: www.epinsight.com)

Ways to become more optimistic

Notice good things

Use positive affirmations & self-talk

Change perspective/expectations

Spend time with positive people

Forgive yourself

Focus on effort rather than results

Read-Watch-Do

Focus on what you can (and can't control)

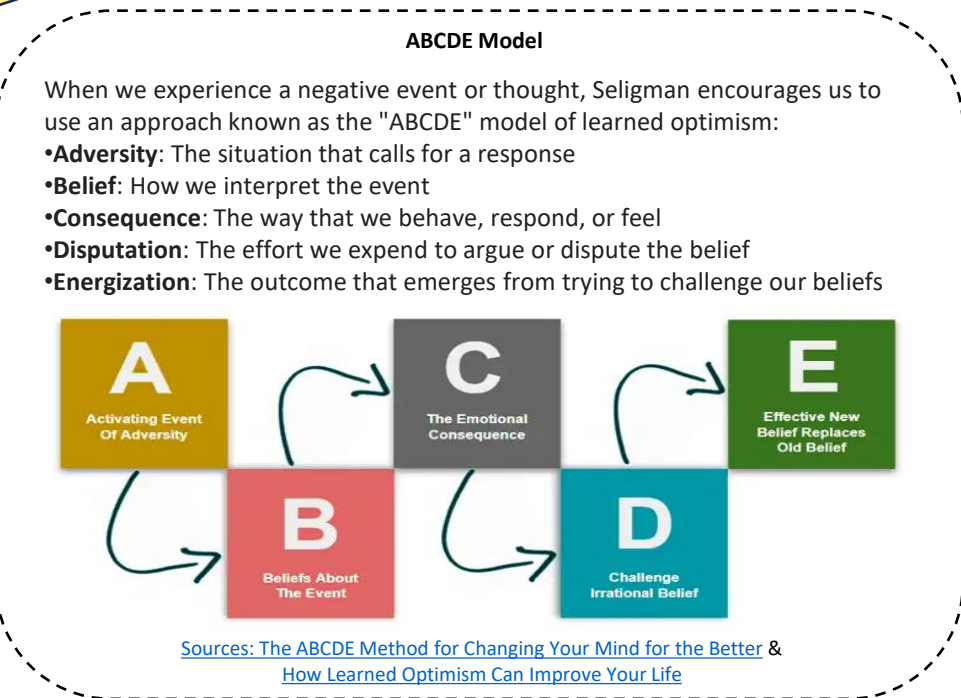
[Teaching Optimism](#)

Acknowledge negative emotions

[Choosing Optimism](#)

Celebrate your achievements

[Optimism Questionnaire](#)



This poster summarises the research of Dr Dan Hughes, Dr Chris Moore (www.epsinight.com) & Fife's Educational Psychology Team.

PACE is a way of thinking, feeling, communicating and behaving that aims to make children and young people feel safe. It is particularly effective in meeting the needs of children and young people who have experienced trauma. Developed by clinical psychologist, Dan Hughes, the approach focuses on building trusting relationships, emotional connections, containment and a sense of security. (Fife EP Team)

What is **Playfulness**?

Playfulness is about creating a fun, light and playful atmosphere when communicating with the child. It means using a light tone of voice, like you might do when story-telling, rather than an irritated or lecturing tone. It is about having fun and expressing a sense of joy.

Why is **Playfulness** important?

It shows that you really like the child – something which may not be easily understood or trusted. It can also reduce the authority of an adult's role and convey a sense of connection and optimism. It has physiological benefits – the release of dopamine and oxytocin hormones help children (and adults!) to feel pleasure, suppress pain and reduce the experience of stress and shame.

What is **Acceptance**?

Acceptance is about accepting that whatever the child (or you) are feeling right now is ok. You are accepting their thoughts, feelings and perceptions without judgement. You may not agree with their interpretation, but you accept their feelings about it. It is their experience and this is important. Don't minimise or invalidate it. Show them it's ok to feel the way they do – actively communicate to the child that you accept their feelings and thoughts underneath the observable behaviour.

Why is **Acceptance** important?

Children with a background of abuse, neglect and loss can be prone to toxic shame. They have great difficulty making sense of their thoughts and feelings and expressing these in socially appropriate ways. Acceptance shows the child that we understand and allows him or her to safely explore and communicate their inner experience. It's a way of saying "I get that this is a big deal for you".

What is **Curiosity**?

Curiosity is about approaching children with an air of 'wondering out loud'. Seek to understand what it is that drives them. What is important in their life? How can you get to the core of who they are and bring out the best in them? Curiosity means you don't judge them so quickly. You can ask more questions of them, as you are curious to know more about them.

Why is **Curiosity** important?

When early relationships lack sensitivity, responsiveness and positivity, the child may develop negative self-perceptions. This impacts their ability and willingness to explore, trust others, take risks and tolerate challenge and uncertainty in future environments and relationships. Being curious shows that you are interested in the child and that way you can validate their emotions.

What is **Empathy**?

Empathy is about putting yourself in someone else's shoes and allowing yourself to feel what they must be feeling. It gives us a sense of compassion for the child and their feelings. This is essential in helping a child feel understood. When someone really understands you, it can make a big difference to how you cope. Being empathic is not about reassuring the child (which tries to make the problem go away) but about being with them in the moment, carrying and containing their big emotions. This lays the foundation for connection.

Why is **Empathy** important?

When children have experienced relationships as rejecting, uncaring or inconsistent, they may react with initial mistrust, confusion or anxiety. Remember that Empathy may have been lacking in past relationships. Negative responses to Empathy can be stressful for us. We must resist the urge to minimise, reassure or lead with discipline. This runs the risk of the child complying out of fear or with lingering resentment.

Ideas for developing a **Playful** Approach

Warm and personalised classroom greetings – high five; fist bump; waving; quoting their favourite TV show or film.
Show – with your eyes, eyebrows, smile and tone of voice – that you are interested in and delighted by what the child is doing.
Find moments for silliness – use a sing-song voice; wear a funny hat; talk to a teddy bear or puppet; be forgetful; make mistakes.
Play games which build to a finish – peek-a-boo; hide-and-seek; ready-steady-go with bubbles; pop-up pirate; Jenga; dominoes.
Incorporate rhythmic actions into teaching – clapping; jumping; tapping; dancing; passing a balloon or beanbag; musical chairs.
Defuse stressful demands – make a game out of getting organised; practise socialising using fun role-play; use humour to divert from conflict; give the child a job during a busy transition.

Ideas for showing **Acceptance**

"I can see how you feel this is unfair. You wanted to play longer"
"You probably think that I don't care about what you want"
"You were letting me know that you were really scared when you ran out of the classroom".
"I know you were angry about what he said last time, but hitting can hurt. Let's try talking to him about it."
"I can hear you saying that you hate me and you're feeling really cross. I'll still be here for you after you calm down".
"I'm disappointed by what you did, but I know you were really upset. It doesn't change how much I care about you".

Ideas for showing **Curiosity**

"I'm wondering if you're finding this work difficult and that's why you're asking to go to the toilet more often this morning".
"I'm thinking you're a little nervous about the new teacher in our class today and this explains why you're a little quieter than usual".
"I've noticed that you've been coming up to me for a chat over the last few days. Maybe you might be worried about something".
"I'm a little confused. Usually you love going to PE, but today you don't want to go. I'm wondering what's different about today".
"When she didn't sit beside you in the dinner hall, I'm guessing that you thought she didn't want to be your friend anymore".

Idea for showing **Empathy**

You are SO upset about this right now. This is really tough!"
"It hurt so much when she didn't ask you to play. You were probably thinking 'Why did she do that?' It was a real shock."
"You wanted to have another turn so badly. You were so excited about it and it's so unfair that we ran out of time".
"It seems to you like he hates you. That must be really hard. I know you like him a lot, so this is pretty confusing".
"I know it's hard for you to hear what I'm saying".
"Me saying 'No' has made you angry with me. I get why you don't want to talk to me right now"

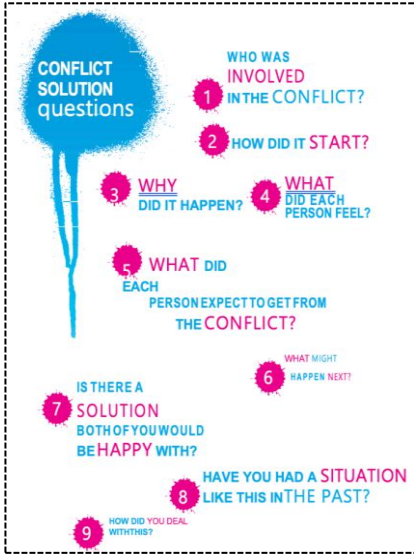
Peer mediation is a process where pupils help their peers deal with difficult situations in a constructive, non-violent way. Pupils trained to mediate using the 5-stage model of mediation which can be used for a variety of different situations – fall outs with friends, disagreements in the playground, misunderstandings, and some low-level conflicts. Pupils empowered to set up and run the Peer Mediation service themselves with a dedicated member of staff always available for support if needed. Source: Scottish Mediation

Qualities of a Peer Mediator



Peer mediation helps pupils develop:

- Nonviolent communication and listening skills
- Team work skills
- Critical thinking
- Negotiation skills
- Emotional intelligence
- Problem-solving skills
- A recognition that they are taken seriously, resulting in increased confidence and self-esteem



5 STAGES OF MEDIATION

1. WELCOME & INTRODUCTION
2. GETTING THE STORY
3. FINDING OUT MORE
4. EXPLORING OPTIONS
5. REACHING AGREEMENT (OR NOT!)

RULES FOR MEDIATORS

- > DON'T TAKE SIDES
- > DON'T OFFER SOLUTIONS
- > KEEP THINGS CONFIDENTIAL

RULES FOR PARTICIPANTS

- > SPEAK ONE AT A TIME
- > BE RESPECTFUL
- > DON'T BLAME THE OTHER PERSON/PEOPLE

? OPEN QUESTIONS ?

Open questions can help you explore a problem more fully

- Tell me about that...
- Describe...
- Say more about...
- Give me an example...
- With open questions try to remember T.E.D: Tell, Explain, Describe!

Open questions can be used to ask about feelings

- How did you feel when...
- What did you feel about...
- What are your feelings now...

Open questions can be used to ask about about what a person did and what their opinions are

- What did you do when...
- And after that...
- What do you think about...

Benefits of Peer Mediation

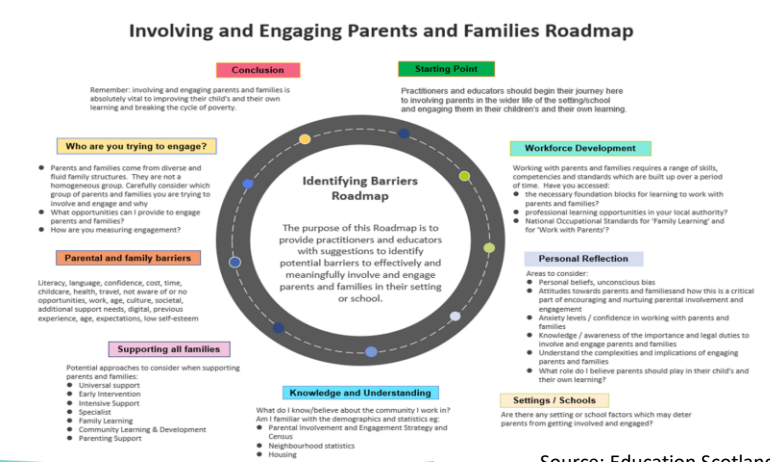
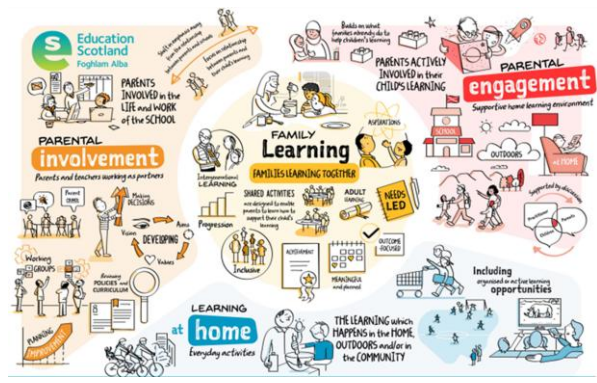
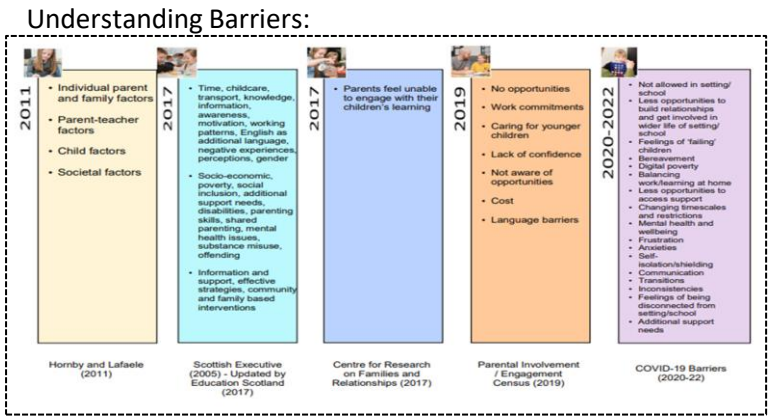
- Improved behaviour and attendance
- Improved relationships
- A more inclusive calm, caring environment
- More teaching time as teachers' time is less often taken up by resolving disputes between pupils
- The creation of listening and democratic schools



When parents and carers support their children's learning and when children learn in a stimulating home learning environment, it improves children's attainment and achievement.

NIF (2024)

Involvement to Engagement – A Continuum:



Definitions of the four elements
(Education Scotland, 2024)

Parental involvement describes the ways in which parents can get involved in the life and work of the early learning and childcare setting or school or the ways that parents can get involved in learning. Parental involvement includes activities such as parental representation in the development of policies, improvement plans and key decisions. It can include involvement in the life and work of the establishment, for instance through volunteering opportunities. Parental involvement can also include help with homework or keeping track of children's work and on-going, two-way communication between home and school or early learning and childcare setting.

Parental engagement is about parents' and families' active engagement with their child's learning. It can take place in the home, at school or in the community. Where it takes place is not important. The important thing is the quality of the parent's engagement with their child's learning, the positive impact that it can have and the interaction and mutual development that can occur as a result of that interaction.

Family learning encourages family members to learn together as and within a family, with a focus on intergenerational learning. Family learning activities can also be designed to enable parents to learn how to support their children's learning. 'Family learning is a powerful method of engagement and learning which can foster positive attitudes towards life-long learning, promote socio-economic resilience and challenge educational disadvantage' (Scottish Family Learning Network, 2016)

Learning at home is the learning which happens in the home, outdoors or in the community. It can take place through everyday activities that families already do and can overlap with aspects of organised or active learning activities.

Read-Watch-Do

[ES Strategic Framework](#)

[Harvard School of Education](#)

[Fife Parent & Pupil Participation Blog](#)

Six Types of Parental Involvement:




Source: Education Scotland

Without relatedness, no work can occur.....Connect before content. (Peter Block, 2008). Connection creates the space to then be able to explore content. Meaningful learning takes place when we have meaningful relationships. (Mark Finnis, 2021)

Using open, non-judgemental questions & planned scripting can help us to maintain attuned relationships with children & young people.

Ways to promote belonging

Affirming, validating and empathetic messages




I am seen

I'm wondering if...

I've noticed how...

It looks like you are feeling worried about...

You're letting me know that this is...




I am accepted

It's okay to feel angry about...

I know this is a big ask for you...

I understand that you think this isn't fair.

That was so hard, but I'm still here for you.




I am empowered

What do you need from me?

Which choice do you prefer?

How can I make this easier for you?

It's okay to say no if you're not ready.



I am remembered

I missed you while you were gone.

We are so happy to see you again.

I haven't forgotten about you.

I was thinking of you when...

- (Source: EP Insight)
- Read-Watch-Do
-  [Language Matters – EP Insight](#)
-  [Restorative Language](#)
-  [Fife De-escalation Pack](#)

Suggestions for Restorative Conversations

Don't Say.....	Instead Say.....
Why did you do it?	Can you share with me what happened?
Can you tell me the truth?	What is your view of what happened?
Who is to blame for what happened?	Who has been affected by what happened? What was the impact on you and on others?
You need to think about your behaviour!	What would you like to see happen? What does that look like for you?
You need to	What ideas do you have that would meet both our needs?
Who else is to blame?	Have you tried to look at what happened from another perspective?

(Source: Mark Finnis, 2021)

Attunement

“I’ve heard what you said”.

“Let’s stop and think for a moment”.

“You are upset at the moment. That’s fine. I am here to help you. We can sort this out.”

“When we feel angry we can...That helps us to feel calm again. Then we can re-join the group”

“Everyone feels angry sometimes. Let’s look at what you can do when you are angry.”

Ideas for Practice from Fife EP Service

	Big Deal/Little Deal	Hard/Easy To Do	Problem Solving
Identify/Label the Issue	“This is not a big deal – this is just a little.”	“This is quite hard/medium hard/easy to do isn't it?”	“This seems to be a problem” or “This is a bit scary/tricky”
State The Reason	“This is just a little deal because we can”	“It's hard/easy to do because”	“It's a problem because” or “It's scary/tricky because”
Offer A Strategy	“Maybe we can just wipe this milk up with a paper towel.”	“OK so we need to make a plan” “Maybe you should ask for help? Or”	“We can do” or “That should help”
General Reassurance	“There we go. You see, that was not a big deal. That was just a little deal. There's always something that works, isn't there?”	“Great; that was hard to do – but you asked for help and we did it” “There's always something that works, isn't there?” “There's always something we can do.”	“Great; there's always something that works, isn't there?” “There's always something we can do” or “There's always a way.”

This poster summarises the research of Dr Bruce Perry's Neurosequential Model of development & Louise Bomber's practical approaches to supporting children & young people.

We must reach & connect with a pupil's brain stem & mid brain, whilst things are going haywire: with the sensory motor brain first, the deep centres where unconscious, defensive, primitive responses kick in – By offering soothing comfort & reassurance, not just with our words but with all kinds of sensory communication, the only way to make genuine contact with our pupil when this particular part of the brain is driving their behaviour.

(Louise Bomber, 2020)

What's happening & what we notice

Hyper-arousal: An increase in energy levels. Some might describe the pupil as seeming 'hyper'. There is usually a lot of movement e.g. can't sit still, wriggling around, getting up & about etc.

Hypo-arousal: A decrease in energy levels. Some might describe the pupil as seeming 'flat'. There isn't much movement e.g. they might remain in one spot & seem unable to do anything.

A combo: The pupil moves between hyper & hypo arousal states in quick succession.

Breathing difficulties: The pupil breathes rapidly, maybe hyper-ventilating, catches their breath, feels like they can't breathe or has shallow breathing. (Do check in with a health care professional if breathing doesn't quickly resume)

Listening difficulties: Middle ear muscles don't function properly when a pupil is dysregulated. Without functioning middle ear muscles, they are hyper-sensitive to low frequencies (background) sounds. They have difficulties prioritising the human voice.

Physical ailments: The body can groan in all kinds of ways when a pupil is dysregulated.

Read-Watch-Do



[Know Me to Teach Me – Louise Bomber](#)

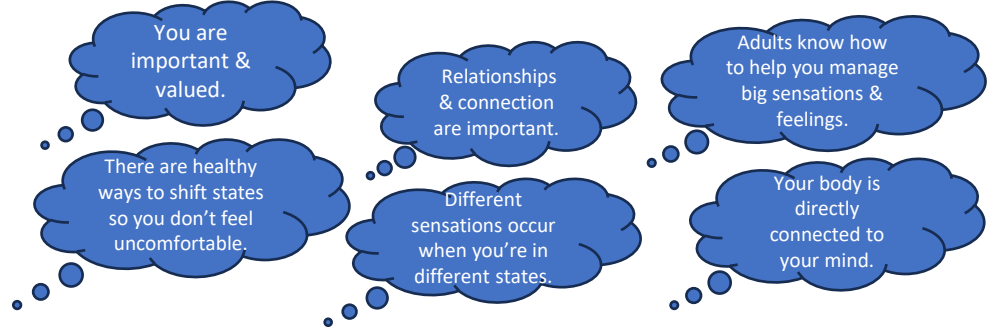


[Regulating Your Classroom – Dr Bruce Perry](#)



[Education Scotland Professional Learning Unit on Regulate, Relate, Reason & Restore](#)

Messages we communicate to pupils when we engage mind-body interventions



How can adults support children & young people to Regulate



Breathing – quieten & slow down breathing by exhaling for longer. Try searching for: belly breathing, lazy 8 breathing, box breathing.....



Relationships – relational buffering & a safe base can be provided through attuned communication & positive connections. See 'Relate' Poster



Nutrition – prolonged stress can deplete the body of essential nutrients. Try to ensure regular access to water, eat a good mix of fruit, veg & unprocessed foods, eat breakfast & regular small meals



Sleep – we can't impact on this directly, but we can work with families to encourage healthy routines e.g. getting enough hours, downtime before bed, bath/shower, decluttered space, clean sheets, stories/toys, warm drink, dim lighting/blackout curtains etc



Mindfulness & Meditation – these approaches both reduce cortisol levels. We can encourage mindful eating, watching or walking, with a focus on noticing & being present.



Exercise – can help our bodies & brains by releasing dopamine. Try to aim for 1 hour per day, but this can be split into smaller movement breaks.



Environment – try to make this as comfortable as possible by giving consideration to textures, temperature, layout, areas for privacy, volume, colour, lighting, displays, smell (depending on what works best for individuals)



Senses – offer sensory snacks (calming – chewy textures/warm drinks or alerting – crunch textures or strong flavours/drinking through a straw), use music, repetitive drumming, warm/soft blankets or ice packs, safe touch/massage.

This poster summarises the research of Dr Bruce Perry's Neurosequential Model of development & Louise Bomber's practical approaches to supporting children & young people.

We need to find ways to communicate with children & young people so they feel seen, heard & understood, especially at times when their behaviour is creating disturbance and communicating their underlying state of dysregulation and distress. If we have a relationship with the child or young person, we'll be in a better position to support and influence them. (Louise Bomber, 2020)

In order to successfully build positive relationships with children & young people , we need adults who are:

Trauma Sensitive Understanding that trauma refigures everything	Trauma Aware Recognising the signs
Trauma Informed Attuning their way of relating	Trauma Responsive Using state dependent interventions

Effective Attunement involves communicating effectively both verbally and non-verbally: considering **what** we say as well as **how** we say it.

- The following phrases can really help:
- "I've heard what you said".
 - "Story writing seems to be a problem, what's our goal, let's make a plan, great, we managed to do it!"
 - "let's stop and think for a moment".
 - "You are refusing to come to gym which shows me that you might be feeling anxious or scared about something."
 - "You are upset at the moment. That's fine. I am here to help you. We can sort this out."
 - "When we feel angry we can...That helps us to feel calm again. Then we can re-join the group"
 - "Everyone feels angry sometimes. Let's look at what you can do when you are angry."

Read-Watch-Do

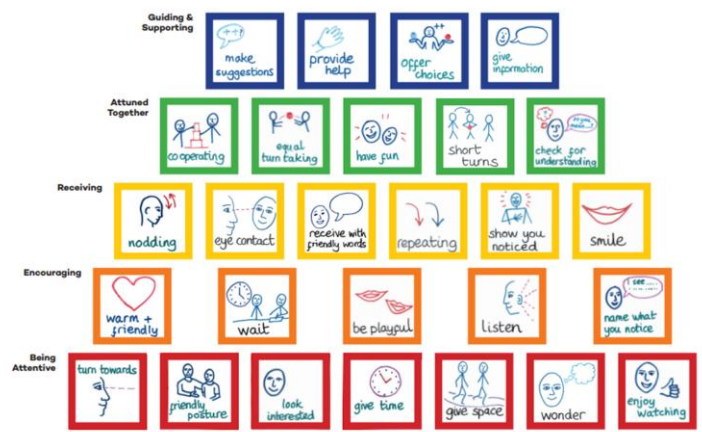


[Know Me to Teach Me – Louise Bomber](#)

[Building a Connected Classroom – Dr Bruce Perry](#)

[Education Scotland Professional Learning Unit on Regulate, Relate, Reason & Restore](#)

Attuned Relationships are key – here are the 5 Principles of Attunement



Source: Connected Moments & Video Interaction Guidance

Dan Hughes' PACE Approach



Playfulness: creating a fun, light and playful atmosphere when communicating with the child; using a light tone of voice; having fun and expressing a sense of joy; keeping interactions light and upbeat.

Acceptance: accepting that whatever the child (or you) are feeling right now is ok; accepting their thoughts, feelings and perceptions without judgement – this does not mean that you accept their actions.

Curiosity: using a quiet, accepting tone: "What do you think that was about?" or "I wonder what...?" If an adult can stay curious about why their child is behaving as they are, the child and adult are less likely to feel cross or frustrated.

Empathy: gives us a sense of compassion for the child and their feelings. This is essential in helping a child feel understood. When someone really understands you, it can make a big difference to how you cope. The adult will stay with the child emotionally, providing comfort and support, and will not abandon them when they need the adult the most.

Source: Fife EP Service

Relating via the Limbic System

Source: www.beaconhouse.org.uk

What Children & Young People say....

Source: Louise Bomber

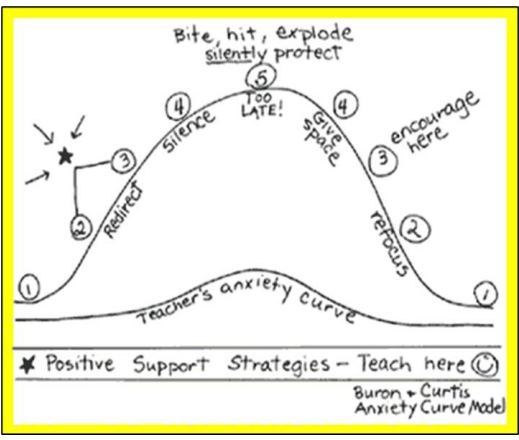
This poster summarises the research of Dr Bruce Perry's Neurosequential Model of development & Louise Bomber's practical approaches to supporting children & young people.

Once we are convinced that a pupil in front of us is in a state of calm or alert, then we can engage their cortical brain – the top, thinking part. They are able to fully engage in learning. We need to teach our pupils that they can impact on the world, in increasingly positive ways. That they matter: that their choices matter. With us alongside them we can open up all kinds of possibilities and opportunities together. An alternative way of living. Knowledge is gold!
(Louise Bomber, 2020)

Helpful scripting suggested by Fife EP Service

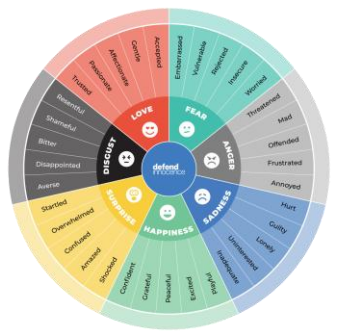
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Consider 'The Journey of Events'



The 5 Point (or 3 Point) Scale

How am I feeling?	What can I do?
5 Explode—I feel angry and I am not sure how to calm down. I need an adult to help me.	I need to leave the classroom. I need to get to a safe place. I need some space - I will let you know when I am ready to talk.
4 Rumbling—I feel like I am starting to lose control. I may need space and some support.	I can ask for a brain break. I can go to my safe place. I can move away from something that is upsetting me.
3 Bubbly—I am feeling frustrated or something is worrying me. I may need a break to calm myself.	I can let me teacher know how I am feeling. I can get something from my sensory box. I can write or draw the problem.
2 Ok—I know something is not right but I know what I need to do.	I can think about something that makes me happy. I can take deep breaths. I can go and have a drink.
1 Happy—I feel good about myself and what is going on around me.	I can carry on having fun.



Emotion Wheels

"Emotions help us to adapt to our environment. This process begins with making sense of our sensations. Our emotions are our brain's interpretation of our sensations. Sensations only become meaningful through this process of cognitive framing, where we interpret the cause and purpose of our emotions."

Alan McLean

Practical Approaches

Teach strategies for self-regulation: breathing techniques, going for a walk, moving away from the situation, finding help from a trusted adult or friend, talking, counting to 20, read through an appropriate story together

Bombers' Big Four As Teaching Points

Behaviour	Teaching Point
Disrespect	In our school we respect each other
Damaging Belongings	In our school we care for belongings of our own and each other's
Injury	In our school we value all living things
Taking from others, things not our own	In our school we respect other's boundaries around their bodies & belongings

Source: Louise Bomber

- Provides a mutual definition of terms - "1 is always 1".
- There is clarity and a shared understanding.
- Simplify language
- Break down unclear concepts
- Manage emotion
- Help teach recognition of internal feelings and cues
- Teach self-regulation (reading our own bodies)
- Help alleviate a power struggle
- Can be used by mainstream, nursery or ASN teachers with all learners
- Can be individualised

Strategies are simple, clear, flexible and based on the author(s) = adult and child, so from that relationship the 5 Point Scale can be personalised and even fun to include humour.

That makes it a respectful, thoughtful, flexible, versatile and practical instructional tool.

Support with reflection & problem-solving:
"What did you want to happen?"
"Let's think of what we could do differently"
"What would help you to try that next time?"

Identifying things that we can control, things we could control with help, and things that are beyond our control.

Resist over-talking. Describe what you see instead of demanding what you want. Offer positive choices to give control, minimise shame and build trust.

Source: Defend Innocent Pinterest
Read-Watch-Do

[Know Me to Teach Me – Louise Bomber](#)

[Reframing Classroom Discipline – Dr Bruce Perry](#)

[Education Scotland Professional Learning Unit on Regulate, Relate, Reason & Restore](#)

This poster summarises the research of Dr Bruce Perry's Neurosequential Model of development & Louise Bomber's practical approaches to supporting children & young people.

This particular stage – Repair has the capacity to be a life-changing opportunity but also has the capacity to hamper new growth. Relationship ruptures are inevitable. We all mess up from time to time. Every time we repair a relationship with a child or young person, we teach them that there is usually an exit strategy. That it's possible to put things right and we are often made stronger as a result of our difficulties. So there is no reason to panic or be afraid of ourselves or each other. The message of hope.
(Louise Bomber, 2020)

Advice from Dr Chris Moore (www.epinsight.com)

Take ownership for your part in a rupture: "I was frustrated because I know how hard you can work. It must have been scary when I raised my voice & I'm sorry for upsetting you".

- Show that the relationship endures: "I know things didn't go well yesterday, but I was thinking about you & I'm glad to see you today".
- Convey parts language: "I can see your worried part because of the change in routine today".
- Offer hope: "We've found out that we need to practise this so things will get easier".
- Use "Time In" to stay present and co-produce letters of apology and acts of kindness.

We must always engage in relational proximity not withdrawal. What happens within this fragile window between a rupture & repair can either strengthen or weaken a pupil's attachment security.

(Source: DA Hughes, 2009)

Read-Watch-Do

[Know Me to Teach Me – Louise Bomber](#)

[Rupture/Repair Cycle – Dr Suzanne Zeedyk](#)

[Education Scotland Professional Learning Unit on Regulate, Relate, Reason & Restore](#)

Six Principles for Repair

- Keep possible stressors low
- Keep shame possibilities low
- Remain warm, open & engaged
- Consider who else should be involved but keep the numbers as limited as possible
- Be actively involved yourself so that anything completed is in partnership
- Always repair 1-1 or 2-1, when the time is right with the individual who got offended or hurt

What repair in relationships looks like:

- 1. Apologising:** "I'm sorry that I ..." Acknowledge the rupture and take responsibility for what you did wrong that caused harm.
- 2. Expressing regret:** "I'm sorry this happened." Acknowledge the rupture and express genuine sadness about what happened.
- 3. Truly listening to each other and making space for hurt feelings:** Repair is about feeling heard and understood again. No quick fixes, no trying to get another person to see it your way, and no defending your viewpoint.
- 4. Getting the relationship back on track:** Repair can happen quickly and implicitly e.g. engaging in an activity that fosters connection, making the other person feel cared for and seen.
- 5. Small acts of repair:** Leaving a note, writing a text, making eye contact to convey understanding, providing soothing physical gestures that comfort the other person.
- 6. Making amends:** Taking explicit responsibility, accountability and actions to work towards what is needed for the person who got hurt to feel safe, seen, soothed and secure again.

(Source: Complicatedlife)

Using Visuals

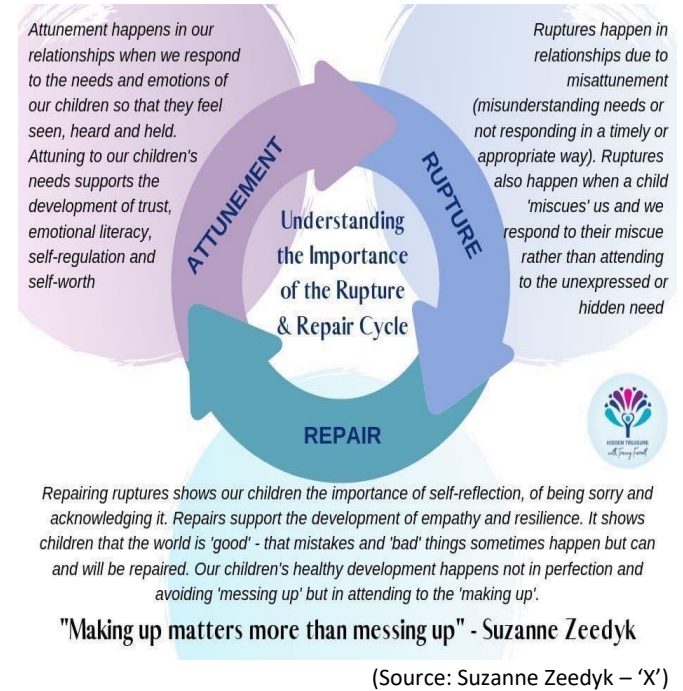
Children & young people may wish to use visuals e.g. postcards, post-its, notelets, pictures to help them say sorry.

Random Acts of Kindness

Knowing a little about the person the child or young person has offended or hurt helps them to consider doing something they might appreciate.

Pay Back Time

Sometimes it can be important to pay back time instead e.g. helping to tidy up a classroom or mess made during an incident. It's important that adults co-model here – togetherness is an essential element of repair & restore.



Resilience

Resilience describes a person's capacity to cope with changes and challenges and to bounce back during difficult times. The more resilient someone is, the better they are at getting through tough times, and the better their chances at recovering from experiences of adversity and trauma.

Ways to develop Resilience

- A significant adult
- Mastery of 'something'
- A safe/secure environment
- Teaching optimism and positivity
- Strong family/ school links
- Relationships and a sense of belonging
- We don't have the same amount of resilience every day.

Read-Watch-Do

[Resilience \(harvard.edu\)](https://resilience.harvard.edu)

[Moving from ACEs to RESILIENCE](#)
- [YouTube](#)

[Power of Positivity Packs](#)
(Primary)
(Secondary)

Qualities of Resilient Learners



Edith Grotberg of the International Resilience Project defines resilience in terms of three sources:

I have	I am	I can
Trusting and loving relationships with others	Loveable	Communicate
Structure at home	Loving	Solve Problems
Role models	Proud of myself	Manage my feelings
Encouragement to be independent	Responsible	Seek out Trusting Relationships
Access to health, education and social care	Hopeful & trustful	Understand my temperament

Education Scotland's Resilience Alphabet & The Journey



The Journey...



"The wellbeing of youth, facing pandemic-related stressors was tied, foremost to the quality of relationships with the major adults in their lives – at home & at school. It will be helpful to ensure that as much as possible, all students have access to at least one supportive adult at school & where possible it will be helpful to promote peers' support of each other."

Suniya S. Luthar et al

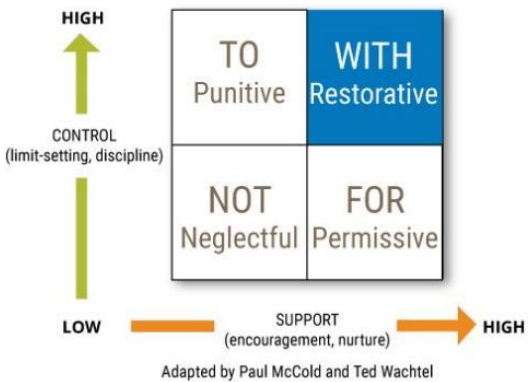
Adverse Childhood Experiences



Ref: Center on the Developing Child

Restorative Practice: Describes a way of being, an underpinning ethos, which enables us to build and maintain healthy relationships. It provides a strong framework within which we can promote a whole-school ethos founded on the importance of relationships. This includes a range of approaches to managing conflict and tensions in a way that repairs harm and mends relationships if and when those relationships to break down. (Mark Finnis, 2021)

Social Discipline Window



Developing & Showing Empathy

- Perspective taking or putting yourself in someone else's shoes
- Staying out of judgement & listening
- Recognising emotions in another person that you have maybe felt before
- Communicating that you can recognise that emotion

"Empathy fuels connection, sympathy drives disconnection" (Brene Brown)

The Power of Language

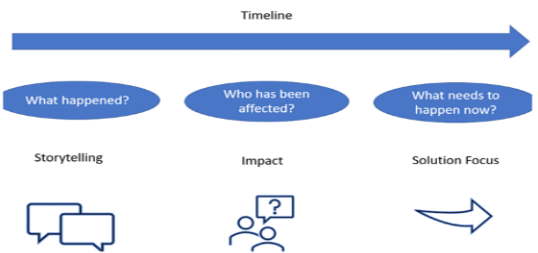
Don't Say.....	Instead Say.....
Why did you do it?	Can you share with me what happened?
Can you tell me the truth?	What is your view of what happened?
Who is to blame for what happened?	Who has been affected by what happened? What was the impact on you and on others?
You need to think about your behaviour!	What would you like to see happen? What does that look like for you?
You need to	What ideas do you have that would meet both our needs?
Who else is to blame?	Have you tried to look at what happened from another perspective?

Paradigm Shift

Traditional Discipline	Restorative Practices
School and rules violated	People and relationships violated
Justice focuses on establishing guilt	Justice identifies needs and obligations
Accountability = punishment	Accountability = understanding impact, repairing harm
Justice directed at offender, while victim is ignored	Offender, victim and school all have direct roles in justice process
Rules and intent outweigh whether outcome is positive/negative	Offender is responsible for harmful behavior, repairing harm and working toward positive outcome
No opportunity for remorse or amends	Opportunity given for amends and expression of remorse

(Peninsula School)

The 3 Bubbles (M Finnis)



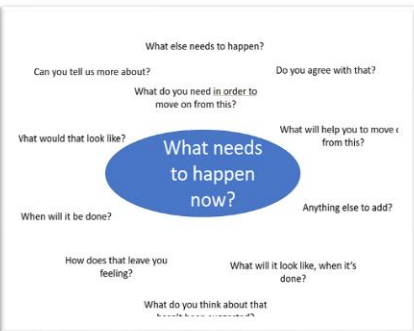
"Build bridges, not brick walls" (M Finnis)

Read-Watch-Do

Restorative Practice

<https://www.youtube.com/@markfinnis7895>

33 Ways to Build Better Relationships



A Safe Space is an area of the learning environment where a child can go when they feel overwhelmed or need time and space to regulate behaviour.

Safe Spaces should be:

- Readily accessible to the child so that they can go safely and independently when they need to
- Available whenever they are needed by the child, for as long as they are needed

(Tina Rae)

Safe Spaces can be:

- A pop up tent, if a child likes to feel enclosed
- A cloth over a table to create a den
- A corner of the room with cushions
- An area outside the classroom with clear physical boundaries
- A chalk circle in a corner of the gym hall with a cushion
- A space containing things you know will help the child to calm down – you might involve the child in planning this
- A high backed chair in a quiet area of the school

Location

- Consider location
- Seating
- Semi-private
- Easily Accessible



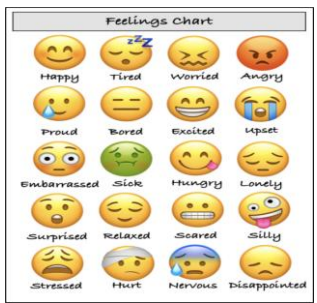
Furniture

- Chair, beanbag, sofa
- Desk/table
- Access to music



Visuals

- Breathing Techniques
- Emotional Temperature
- Activities
- Strategies



Calm Down Tools

- Glitter Jar
- Squeeze Ball
- Play-doh
- Timer
- Kinetic Sand
- Expandable Ball
- Listening Station



Tina Rae states that a calm corner should be a safe place where children & young people can give themselves the opportunities to be resilient, stay calm & focussed – importantly, allowing all children to remain within the classroom.

Developing their self-awareness, greater levels of adaptability, flexibility & independence should be core aims of such a space.

Calm corners can also provide refuge, a place to take time out to reflect & express feelings.

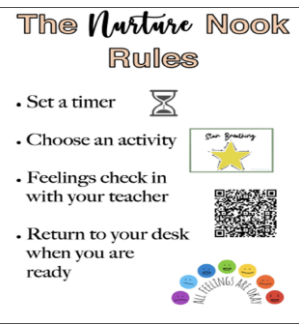
Read-Watch-Do

[NHS information](#)

[Dr Tina Rae 'Calm Corners & Safe Spaces'](#)

Teaching About The Calm Corner

- Why we need this
- What it does
- What resources are there
- When we use it



If there is no space for a calm corner/nurture nook within the class or learners are older/need a more discrete option, calm boxes or bags can be a nice alternative – they can contain positive affirmations, mindful tasks, breathing exercises or small toys/gadgets.

It's important to note that all classrooms and areas of the school are built around the same ethos, approaches and language – NOT JUST IN A NURTURE ROOM/BASE.

Self-Regulation (Incl Co- Regulation)



Positive
Emotions

Negative
Emotions



Positive emotions & experiences slide off (like Teflon), whereas negative emotions & experiences stick (like Velcro)

What Young People Say....



Read-Watch-Do

[Fife Spotlight Paper](#)

[Why Self Regulation is Important](#)

[Mehrit Self-Regulation Toolkit](#)

Co-regulation is the **interactive** process which supports self-regulation development from birth until young adulthood. Adults play a key role in supporting children & young people to identify & manage strong emotions.

Self-regulation is the ability to monitor and control our own behaviour, emotions, or thoughts, altering them in accordance with the demands of the situation. It includes the abilities to inhibit first responses, to resist interference from irrelevant stimulation, and to persist on relevant tasks even when we don't enjoy them.

How Are You Feeling Today?

What colour is your feeling?

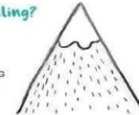


Where do you feel this colour in your body?



How BIG is your feeling?

Does it feel as BIG as a mountain?



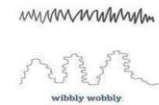
Or does it feel middle-sized - like the size of a chair?



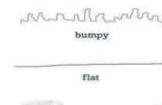
Or as small as a button?



If you could touch your feeling, how might it feel?



wibbly wobbly



bumpy



prickly



flat



soft



hard

What else would you like to say about your feeling?



www.fife.gov.uk

www.fife.gov.uk

Potential Stressors

Lighting



Noise



Hydration & Nutrition



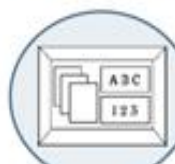
Seating Options



Smells



Visual Clutter



Ref: Mehrit Center

"Emotions have a purpose – even difficult ones.

We can't control our emotions but we can control our response.

Wellbeing is not so much about feeling good, as being good about feeling.

We only understand what we feel when we label it.

Young people have the labels adults teach them

Alan McLean (2022)

Types of Stress

Positive Stress

- Brief increases in heart rate and mild elevations in hormone levels.

Tolerable Stress

- Serious, temporary stress response, buffered by supportive relationships

Toxic Stress

- Prolonged activation of stress response systems in the absence of protective relationships.

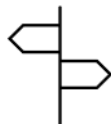
5 Principles of Trauma Informed Practice



Safety
(not threat)



Trust
(not betrayal)



Choice
(not control)



Collaboration
(not coercion)



Empowerment
(not restriction)

Bruce Perry (well respected neuroscientist) states that trauma is any event which leads to an altered stress response. This can be further broken down to focus on BIG T trauma and LITTLE T trauma.

Big T trauma can include:

- Abuse
- War
- Natural disaster
- Parental Mental / Physical Health Issues
- Parental Separation

Little T trauma can include:

- Friendship issues
- Bereavement
- Shame or punitive conversation
- Moving house
- Parents arguing
- Failing an exam/test.

"The more healthy relationships a child has, the more likely he will be to recover from trauma and thrive. Relationships are the agents of change"

Dr Bruce Perry

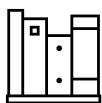
What is wrong with this child?

What has happened to this child?

What contribution can be made at level of child/school/ community to support this child?

Ref: Education Scotland

Read-Watch-Do



[Trauma Informed Practice: A Toolkit for Scotland](#)



[NHS Education for Scotland - Sowing Seeds](#)



[NHS Education for Scotland Trauma Training](#)

Non trauma informed	Trauma informed
Power over	Power with
Person needs fixing first	Person needs safety first
Us and them	We are all in this together
Labels, pathology	All behaviour is communication
Fear based	Empathy based
I am here to fix you	Support healing
Person made a bad choice	People who feel unsafe do unsafe things
Behaviour viewed as a problem	Behaviour viewed as solution
What's wrong with you?	What's happened to you?
Blame/shame	Respect
Goal is to do things the 'right' way	Goal is to connect
People are bad	People are doing the best they can

Transitions - Nurture Principle 6

Children and young people experience many transitions throughout their lives, and on a daily basis; transitions from home to school, between classes and teachers, from breaktime to lessons, or moving from primary to secondary school. Changes in routine are invariably difficult for vulnerable children and young people, and school staff need to help the child to transition with carefully managed preparation and support. Pupils should be included in the planning of support, as well as parents and carers where possible, and information should be shared at key transition points. Staff need to understand the emotions that may be triggered by both small and large changes, and children should be pre-warned or reminded about changes in routines, using visual timetables to emphasise this. Consider periods of transition for your children; is there inexplicable behaviour just before the end of the day? Do staff feel frustrated by pupils who cause disruption as they move around the school? Children and young people may feel calmer if time can be made to discuss how they feel when things change, in an open and honest way, to help them put coping strategies in place.

(Nurture UK)

Ways to help www.epinsight.com

- Exchanging a small photo with a key adult.
- Holding onto a button, stone, keyring or toy.
- Matching bracelets, ribbons or hearts on wrists.
- A tissue with a familiar perfume or aftershave.
- Staying connected by an "invisible string".
- Visual or musical countdowns for rhythm and repetition.
- Memory cards for returning to tasks at a later point.

Adding Structure & Routine

- Meet-and-greets with a key adult.
- Maintaining predictable routines.
- Extra time for processing and planning.
- Opportunities for regulating activities.
- Practise transitions with fun role-plays.
- Talk through pictures of new places.
- Provide breaks and choices for atypical days.
- Have a back-up key adult for staff absences.
- Continuous communication with parents/carers.

Positive Endings and Beginnings

- Exploring and accepting all feelings about the change.
- Illustrating the journey with pictures, roads and stories.
- Postcards or video messages from previous key adults.
- Names and photos of key people in new settings.
- Visits and virtual tours of unfamiliar locations.
- Reassurance and practical tips from older students.
- Consistent, reflective and proactive approach by all staff.

Read-Watch-Do
[Transitions \(Anna Freud\)](#)

Moving to Primary & Secondary School

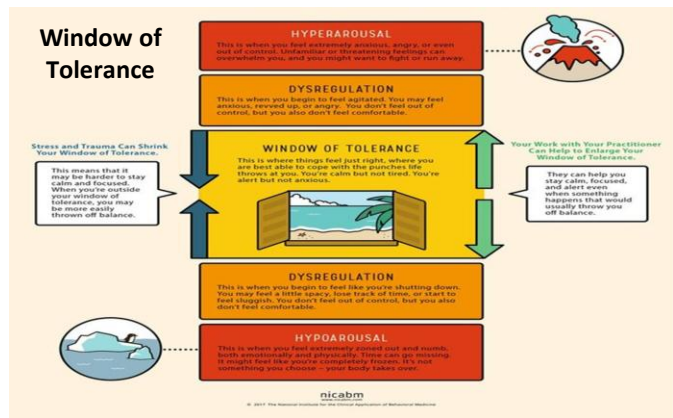
Transition Top Tips



Importance of Transition in Children's Lives

- Many transitions - home to school, between classes & teachers, from breaktime to lessons, or moving from primary to secondary school
- Changes in routine are invariably difficult for vulnerable children and young people
- Carefully managed preparation and support
- Pupils & families should be included in the planning
- information
- Emotions may be triggered
- Children should be pre-warned or reminded about changes (visual timetables)
- Discuss when things change
- Put coping strategies in place

A secure base is a prerequisite for a child's ability to explore, develop & learn.
(Amir Levine)

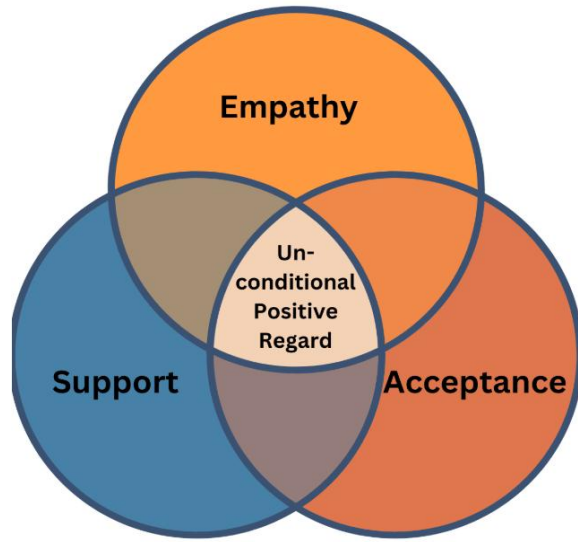


The Principle in Practice Source: Fife EP Service

Visible plan for the day	Pre-warnings & time given for transitions
Visual countdown used for transitions	Support for transitions is personalised
Transitions are managed during welcome, break, lunch & home-time	Restorative conversations used to transition from incidents
Visible routines in class	Support for transitions is personalised

Unconditional positive regard is showing acceptance and care for someone without judgment. It is a core component of Carl Rogers’ humanistic approach to therapy and can play an important role in nurturing healthier relationships, boosting self-esteem, and fostering personal growth. This concept has a valuable place within our education contexts too.

Source: [What Is UnconditionalPositive Regard?](#)



What does Unconditional Positive Regard look like in practice?

- Attuning to your learners – getting to know them
- Asking / talking about their interests
- Using positive language when discussing learners with other professionals
- Having a positive view of the learner & their ability to learn, develop & thrive
- Being curious about their behaviour & seeking to explore the reasons behind it
- Building genuine, authentic, trusting relationships
- Demonstrating acceptance – everyone needs to be and feel part of something
- Being empathetic

Source: The Kindness Principle (2021)

Unconditional Positive Regard

Facilitates an environment in which students feel valued and accepted regardless of their behaviour, emotions, failures or successes in the classroom.

Separate the student from the behaviour

Maintain a vision of the child's wholeness

Call them out with love in your voice


Credit: Creating Trauma-Informed Strength-Based Classrooms book
Tom Brunzell & Jacolyn Norrish

UNCONDITIONAL POSITIVE REGARD MEANS I CARE ABOUT YOU, YOU HAVE VALUE, YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO ANYTHING TO PROVE IT TO ME, AND NOTHING WILL CHANGE MY MIND.


IT'S SEEING SOMEBODY AS A WHOLE AND COMPLETE AND WORTHY PERSON STARTING FROM A PLACE WHERE CARE DOESN'T HAVE TO BE EARNED. IT'S JUST ASSUMED. EVERYBODY GETS CARE.


YOU'RE ALLOWED TO MESS UP. YOU'RE ALLOWED TO HAVE STRUGGLES, BUT THAT IS NEVER GOING TO INVALIDATE YOUR WORTH, AND IT'S NEVER GOING TO INVALIDATE MY CARE FOR YOU.

ALEX SHEVRIN VENET
THE CULT OF PEDAGOGY PODCAST, EPISODE 214

- 

Read-Watch-Do

[The Kindness Principle](#)
- 

[Unconditional Positive Regard](#)
- 

[Podcast: Unconditional Positive Regard](#)

No matter what experiences contribute to making a student who they are—poverty, wealth, trauma, ethnicity, gender, challenging home life, supportive caregivers—all students deserve unconditional care and support: *I am always going to be here to care for you, through struggles, mistakes, bad moods, or inappropriate behavior. Nothing can change my mind.*

[Connecting with Unconditional Positive Regard | Teaching Channel](#)

The values of a school should be intended to support the personal, social and emotional development of all learners in the school community. They are the foundation of developing positive relationships, and they should be understood by all staff, learners and stakeholders. It is, therefore, important to ensure that values are embedded in all school processes, including approaches to promoting positive relationships and behaviour. (Source: Promoting Positive Relationships & Behaviour in Schools)

Reflecting on our Values



Integrity, accountability, commitment, creativity/learning, listening/engaging, pride



Social justice, integrity, trust and respect

- The values are reflected across the Professional Standards and are relevant to all registered teachers regardless of post. Values are complex and work to shape who teachers are as professionals.
- The educational experiences of all learners are shaped by the values and dispositions of those who work to educate them. In recognition of the importance of professional values, they have been placed at the heart of the Professional Standards.
- A commitment to the values underpin the range of relationships, the thinking and professional practice of teachers across Scotland.

Fife's Education Directorate has an established set of shared values, to inform the way that our services are developed, designed and delivered – and to provide a clear framework to influence practice and inform decision-making. They are:

- **Compassion** – showing empathy, sensitivity, kindness, understanding, a non-judgemental attitude, and actively engaging to help and support every child.
- **Ambition** – being ambitious for every child and doing all that we can to remove challenges or barriers to their happiness, development, learning and achievement.
- **Respect** – acknowledging and upholding the dignity and rights of every child, being inclusive and celebrating diversity, actively listening and giving a voice to every child.
- **Equity** – fairness, justice, without bias or discrimination – removing or mitigating the impact of any barriers that children may in their lives, enabling all to thrive and flourish.

(Source: Education Directorate Plan 23-26)

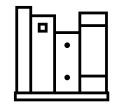
Professional Values:

Help	teachers develop their professional identity and 'way of being' as education professionals
Develop and drive	teacher's individual and unswerving professional commitment to all learners and colleagues
Support and encourage	teachers to see beyond the classroom or subject
Help	teachers to know and develop the whole child through addressing their individual needs
Develop	teacher's understanding of their role in collaborative working with a range of partners
Recognise	the contribution that teachers can make to safeguarding young people and where necessary transform their lives



(Source: GTCS [Reflection Tool](#))

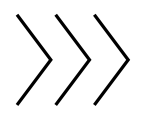
Read-Watch-Do



[Education Directorate Improvement Plan 23-26](#)



[Values Based Education](#)



[Relationships & Behaviour Checklist](#)

Tips for creating shared values:

- Engage your students and colleagues in identifying your shared values.
 - Limit the number of shared values.
 - Define explicitly the institutional behaviours your shared values should engender.
 - Proclaim your shared values loudly.
 - Begin shaping your vision in pictures, not words.
 - Articulate an ambitious vision.
 - Give yourself a timeframe for achieving your vision.
 - Once established, make your vision visible to everyone.
 - Check every so often that you are on course to realise your vision.
 - Involve all your staff in developing your core purpose.
 - Ask your students to help get the wording of your core purpose right.
 - Keep your core purpose brief.
 - Make sure everyone knows your core purpose.
 - Live by your core purpose and your shared values every single day.
- (Source: [From vision to action: choosing your school's values](#) | [Optimus Education Blog](#))



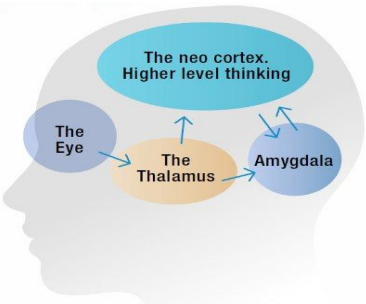
The window of tolerance was originally described by Dr. Dan Siegel as the optimal zone of arousal in which a person would be able to function and deal with day-to-day stress most effectively. Most people can deal with the demands and stress of everyday life without much difficulty. However, for those who have experienced trauma, anxiety, or other mental illness, it can be difficult to stay in your optimal zone. In these circumstances, a person may exhibit hyperarousal or hypoarousal behaviours.

(Dr Dan Siegel, 2010)

How we get pushed out of our Window of Tolerance

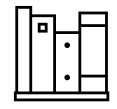
In an emotional hijack the stimulus from the eye hits the Amygdala first. If the Amygdala detects a threat it sets off the fight, flight, freeze reaction hijacking both brain and body.

Adapted from Morris and Casey 2006



When supporting others to widen their Window of Tolerance, we should take account of Dr Bruce Perry's neurosequential model the Regulate- Relate – Reason – Restore/Repair concepts

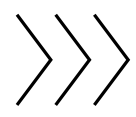
Read-Watch-Do



Window of Tolerance – EP Insight



Window of Tolerance Animation – Beacon House



[Reflecting on your own Window of Tolerance](#)

Ideas to reduce hyperarousal:

Breathe with a shorter inhale & longer exhale – Ground yourself with your surroundings – Eat and drink more mindfully – Tense and relax different body parts – Gently rinse hands with warm water – Dimmed lights & gentle music (Source: www.epinsight.com)

HYPERAROUSAL

Excessive activation/energy in the form of fight/flight responses



- SMOOTH SAILING
- DYSREGULATION
- FIGHT/FLIGHT/FREEZE

HYPOAROUSAL

Freeze response, emotionally flat, lack of energy and response

Source: www.mindmypeelings.com/blog/window-of-tolerance

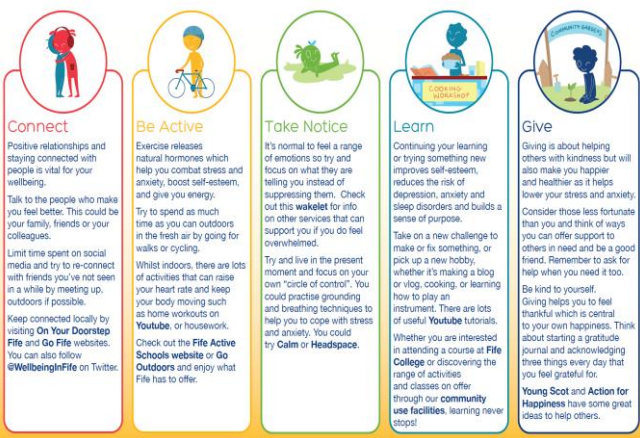
Ideas to reduce hypoarousal:

Breathe with a longer inhale & shorter exhale – Schedule more physical activities – Set achievable goals with small steps – Crunchy food and pungent aromas – Rinse hands with cold water – brighter lights & fast music (Source: www.epinsight.com)

Our wellbeing is not static – our physical and mental health fluctuate in response to internal and external variables. When we have good levels of wellbeing we feel that life is well balanced, we feel more resilient, and we can cope more effectively with any challenges that might come our way. The wellbeing of our staff is important because we aim to be an organisation that values and cares about everyone who works here. When the wellbeing of our staff is positive there are important benefits for them as individuals, for the organisation, and importantly for the service users they strive to support.

Fife Staff Wellbeing Strategy (2021)

Five Ways to Wellbeing



Read-Watch-Do

Staff Wellbeing Strategy

Wellness Action Plan

Staff Wellbeing Toolkit & Action Plan

What impacts on our wellbeing:
Change – how organisational change (large or small) is managed and communicated
Control – feeling a sense of autonomy and influence in how you go about your work

Demands – workload, expectations, work patterns, the work environment
Relationships – feeling that relationships at work are positive, open, and constructive

Role – understanding our role within the organisation, its purpose and how it contributes to the wider aims and outcomes we are trying to achieve

Support – feeling encouraged, supported and valued by the organisation, managers and colleagues

Our Minds Matter Continuum for Staff



Signs your wellbeing is at risk:

At risk warning	Type of wellbeing		
	Physical wellbeing Examples:	Psychological Wellbeing Examples:	Social Wellbeing Examples:
Red Stop, take action	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Disrupted / no sleepExhausted or lethargicDrinking alcohol / abusing substances to copeNo physical or leisure activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Feeling unable to cope or afraid nearly all the timeBecoming angry at work and at homeTotally absorbed in thoughts about difficult or terrifying work events	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Isolated from or avoiding connections with colleaguesCut off from family and friendsAvoiding and/or dreading any social activity, social isolation
Amber Possible risk: time to do something	<ul style="list-style-type: none">More tired / weak than normalReducing activities that bring sense of enjoyment / meaningInrequent or unhealthy eating and drinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Feeling angry or anxious, low or sad at work much of the timeDifficult to focus: At the edge of your personal "stretch" zoneCan't stop thinking about difficult events from the work shift	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Limited sense of connection with work colleagues / teamReduced social contactWithdrawing mentally from loved ones
Green None	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Physically fit and strong, exercising as normalSleeping well, restedEating and drinking as normal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Enjoying leisure activitiesFeeling mentally well, focusedBeing interested and curious about the world	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Feeling connected to colleagues, regular opportunity for check insRegular meaningful restorative contact with loved ones

Ways to preserve your wellbeing:

DURING WORK		
Physical wellbeing - Doing <ul style="list-style-type: none">Permission from self and others to take breaks in a safe environmentEat and drink wellPace yourself	Psychological wellbeing - Thinking and Feeling <ul style="list-style-type: none">Focus attention on what you can controlNotice and limit repeatedly thinking about challenging eventsUnderstand normal responses to stressNotice your own stress response, acknowledge it is OK and normal to feel stressTake mental "breathing space" breaks when physical ones may be impossible	Social wellbeing - Connecting <ul style="list-style-type: none">Opportunities for regular check in with colleaguesWork with a buddy where possibleMaintain a connection with outside support in breaks
LEAVING WORK		
Physical wellbeing - Doing <ul style="list-style-type: none">Do a physical "check in" - "Am I OK?"What steps do I need to take to be OK?Who can I speak to / what do I need?	Psychological wellbeing - Thinking and Feeling <ul style="list-style-type: none">Take a moment to say to yourself "Today's shift is over, I have done what I can"Reflect on your day and acknowledge your feelings. What went well?Intentionally switch your attention to home, restore, recharge, replenish and rest	Social wellbeing - Connecting <ul style="list-style-type: none">Connect and share with colleaguesCheck on your colleagues before you leave. Are they OK?
AT HOME		
Physical wellbeing - Doing <ul style="list-style-type: none">Balance - try to plan activities that you know help you relax and that provide light to the shade of the day's workPrioritise rest, exercise and eatingPlan a wind-down routine to sleep	Psychological wellbeing - Thinking and Feeling <ul style="list-style-type: none">Awareness - notice the day's impact on your Body, Emotions, Relationships and ActivityPlan a wind-down routine to mentally and physically disconnect from workTake time to consciously switch off mentally from work	Social wellbeing - Connecting <ul style="list-style-type: none">Connection - create and sustain mental and physical connections to people and activities that are importantConnect also to your values - why is this work important to you and your community?

Source: NES Wellbeing Planning Tool

Helpful Links & Resources

[Healthy Working Lives](#) [NHS Live Well](#)
[NHS Living Life](#) [On Your Doorstep Fife](#)
[Education Support Partnership](#)
[SAMH](#) [Mental Health Foundation](#) [MIND](#)

This poster summarises key information from [The Zones of Regulation | A Curriculum For Emotional Regulation](#)

The Zones of Regulation is an internationally renowned intervention which helps children to manage difficult emotions, known as ‘self-regulation’. The Zones of Regulation organise our feelings, state of alertness, and energy levels into four coloured Zones – Blue, Green, Yellow, and Red. The simple, common language and visual structure of the Zones of Regulation help make the complex skill of regulation more concrete for learners and those who support them. We learn to regulate our Zones to meet our goals and task demands, as well as support our overall well-being.

Discussing The Zones

- Discuss what emotion the child feels in each zone e.g. in the yellow zone I may feel worried.
- How they physically feel e.g., in yellow zone I may have butterflies in my stomach or have sweaty palms (if feeling anxious).
- Then discuss what might they be doing- what be their actions e.g., in yellow zone would they be pacing around, snapping at others, fidgeting?
- Then discuss how to help them move into the Green zone e.g. if I was in the Yellow zone and feeling anxious, I might find competing some yoga stretches/ breathing techniques helps me get back into the green zone.
- Create a list of strategies that work for the child
- Remind the child that we are all unique and the strategies that work for one person might not help them so they need to think about what would help them.
- Remind them that we will experience all zones and there are no good or bad zones.
- Our success in regulating our emotions depends on us recognising our emotion, understanding it and putting a support strategy in place.

Read-Watch-Do



[Background Research](#)



[Zones of Regulation](#)



[Official Website](#)



POSSIBLE BODY SIGNALS:

- Heavy Limbs
- Moving Slowly
- Slow Heartbeat
- Foggy Head

- Ways to regulate in the Blue Zone:
- Rest
 - Recharge
 - Energise
 - Seek Comfort

In all these situations, the common theme is noticing our lower energy and/or down feelings and options for managing them.



POSSIBLE BODY SIGNALS:

- Relaxed Muscles
- Comfortable
- Body Temperature
- Focused/ Engaged Brain

- Ways to regulate in the Green Zone:
- Eat a healthy snack
 - Exercise
 - Take a break
 - Pause for a mindful moment.

These restorative actions help us proactively care for ourselves so we can move forward with ease



POSSIBLE BODY SIGNALS:

- Wiggly
- Heart Beating Faster
- Body Warming Up
- Muscles Tense
- Thinking Faster

- Ways to regulate in the Yellow Zone:
- Use caution and take a deep breath
 - Slow down our racing thoughts and speech by using a mindfulness tool
 - Pause to take notice
 - Take a break to collect ourselves



POSSIBLE BODY SIGNALS:

- Heartbeat Fast
- Skin Flushed
- Hot/Sweating
- Muscles Tense

- Ways to regulate in the Red Zone:
- Pause and count to 10 before we act
 - Stop and use our self-talk to help us gain a sense of control
 - Pause and take a big breath to regulate our impulses



Remember the Zones by using a traffic light system

- BLUE ZONE** = 'rest area where you pull over as you are tired and need to recharge'.
- GREEN ZONE** = 'the person is 'good to go''
- YELLOW ZONE** = 'caution, slow down or take warning'
- RED ZONE** = 'stop and regain control'