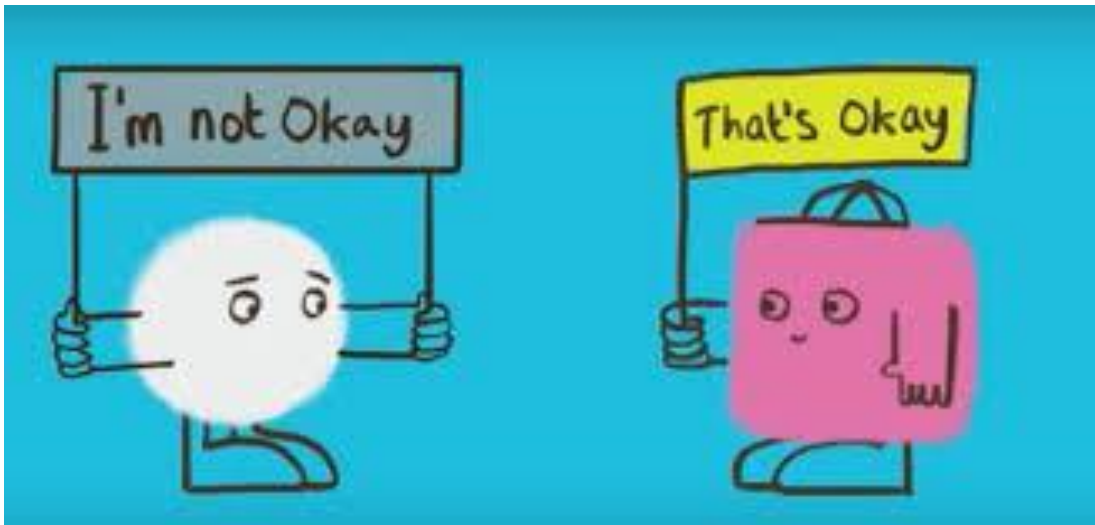


It is Okay to Not Feel Okay



It is understandable that children might be feeling worried about going back to school and out into the world again after Lockdown. It is important that we let them know that it's okay to feel and encourage them to talk about their feelings in a healthy way. The resources you will find in this pack will help children understand their emotions and begin to talk about how they are feeling.

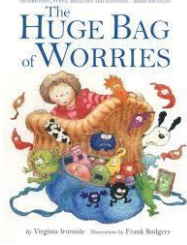
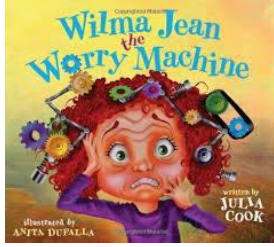
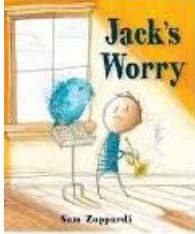
In this pack you will find:

- Book links
- Questions for discussions
- Useful activities
- Mindfulness ideas

You are encouraged to join in the conversation with your children. When we are comfortable expressing our feelings children feel comfortable to do so too.

Worries

We all feel worried. It is important to share our worries with others to make them smaller. These stories are great to understand worries and how to help.

<p>The Huge Bag of Worries By Virginia Ironside</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l2frcolYqiI</p>	
<p>Wilma Jean the Worry Machine By Julia Cook</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jkAp4dcCb0s</p>	
<p>Jack's Worry By Sam Zuppardi</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TQ0wyzjr5mg</p>	

Questions for discussion:

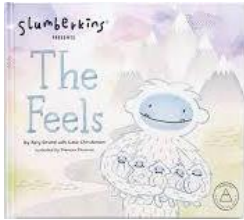
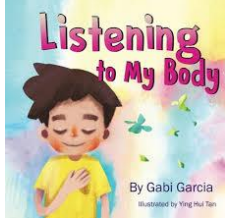
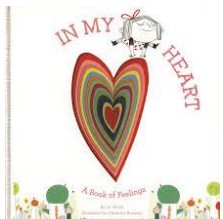
- * What worries do you have today?
- * What thoughts do you have when you are worried? (eg. everyone will laugh at me, I'm not going to be good at that)
- * What does being worried feel like for you? (eg. my hands get very sweaty)
- * What do you do when you feel worried? (eg. sometimes I cry)
- * Who can help you when you feel worried? How can I help with your worry?

Helpful Activity:

Using a bag, imagine your worries are inside and pull them out one by one talking about your worry. When finished, put the worry out the window and watch it float away. Take it in turns to pull out worries and talk about them together.

Feelings

We all have feelings. We get feelings because of what we see, hear, remember and do. Sometimes they are comfortable and sometimes they are uncomfortable but they are ALL okay to feel. It's important that we talk about our feelings. Have a look at some of these books all about exploring feelings.

<p>The Feels By Kelly Oriard and Callie Christensen</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FOdyu5WTP5k</p>	
<p>Listen to My Body By Gabi Garcia</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=92S5QdzV-uA</p>	
<p>In My Heart By Jo Witeck</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xIfLgHBwYx4</p>	

Questions for discussion:

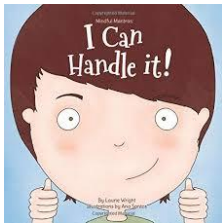
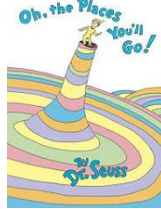
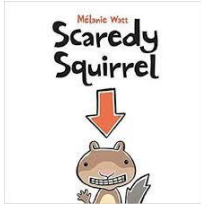
- * What feelings can you name?
- * What do you feel right now? Where do you feel it in your body?
- * When you feel _____ what do you do? (eg. when I'm happy I laugh a lot)
- * Can you think of a time you felt _____?
- * What is your favourite feeling? Why?
- * What is your least favourite feeling? Why?

Helpful Activity:

Have a check in each day with the whole family. Talk about how you feel that day, what it feels like in your body and why you feel that way. If the feeling is uncomfortable, what can you do to feel better?

Resilience

When things change it can feel uncomfortable. Sometimes we feel disappointed or angry. We can also feel anxious when we don't know what will happen. Change can be hard but change can also lead to great new adventures. Have a look at these stories to learn about ways to be resilient in an ever changing time.

<p>I Can Handle It By Laurie Wright</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M9HiJwI1DsQ</p>	
<p>Oh The Places You'll Go By Dr Seuss</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fmOCyP4VyP4</p>	
<p>Scaredy Squirrel By Melanie Watt</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mYuWUs1roks</p>	

Questions for discussion:

- * What do you feel when things change?
- * When change happens what do you do? (eg. I get angry and yell at others, sometimes I feel nervous and want to hide)
- * When change happens where do you feel it in your body?
- * Who can help you when things feel difficult?
- * Can you think of a time you had to be resilient? (eg. When school closed I missed my friends and I had to find a way to be brave)

Helpful Activity:

Make 'I CAN HANDLE IT' your new family saying. Encourage each other to recognise when things feel difficult and look for ways to make it better together.

Challenging Times

We are all experiencing very challenging times. It is important during these times that we continue to develop a strong mind. Look at these stories about facing difficult times and overcoming challenges.

<p>The Hugging Tree By Jill Neimark</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ruO9pVHLX6o</p>	
<p>My Strong Mind By Niels Van Hove</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JJ671iGO80U</p>	
<p>When You Are Brave By Pat Zietlow Miller</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qaXJCjACms0</p>	

Questions for discussion:

- * When things are tricky how do you feel?
- * When you feel _____ where do you feel it in your body?
- * Who can help you when things feel hard?
- * Can you think of time you had to be brave?
- * What wonderful things can your strong mind do?
- * Have you helped others when they are having a tricky day? What did you do?

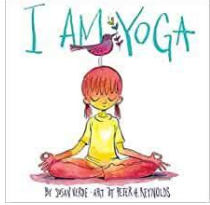
Helpful Activity:

Start each day with a positive wish. When we start with positive action it sets us up for a positive day.

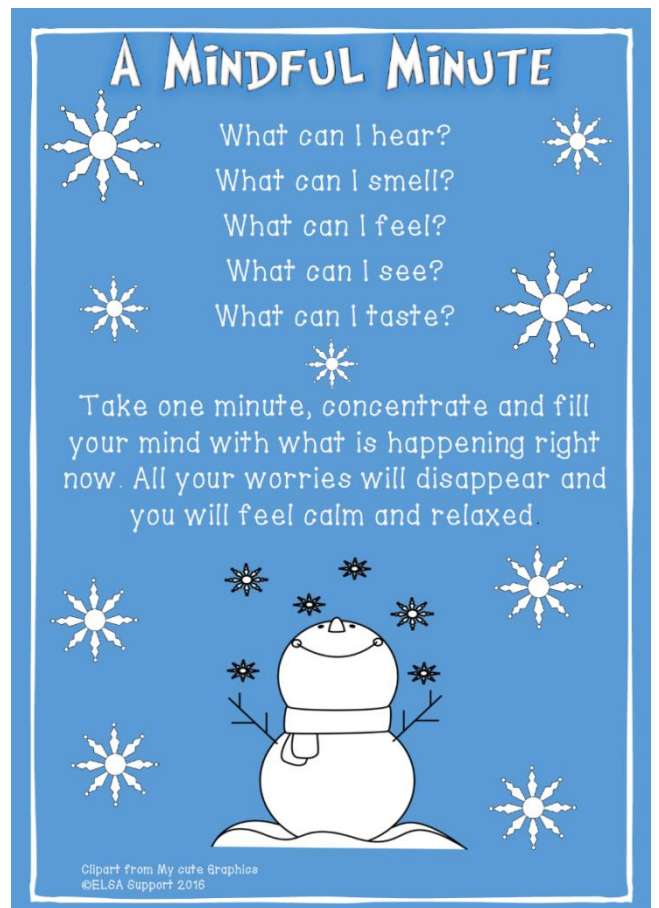
(eg. Today I will be brave and talk to someone new in the playground)

Mindfulness

When we are worried or have an uncomfortable feeling our mind will be full of unhelpful negative thoughts. It is important to bring some calm back to our mind. This can be done with MINDFULNESS: the skill of staying in the present moment. These wonderful stories teach us how to be in the here and now.

<p>It Starts with the Breath By Karla Dueck Thiessen</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5eftsTzCIw4</p>	
<p>I am Yoga By Susan Verde</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YSEN5Mj4KUY</p>	
<p>I am Peace By Susan Verde</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vnR5HDfR3JI</p>	

Mindfulness Activities to try at home



5

Fun MINDFULNESS ACTIVITIES for children

by Big Life Journal



"JUST ONE BREATH" BREATHING ACTIVITY

- Find a relaxing place, sit comfortably, and set a timer for one minute.
- Breathe deeply in and out while paying attention to any sensations you notice or sounds you hear.
- Take another slow deep breath, imagine the air moving down into the lungs and back up.
- Take one more deep breath and hold for a moment, then release it.



CREATE A GLITTER JAR

- Finding a jar or plastic bottle and allow your child to decorate it however they like.
- Fill the bottle up 3/4 of the way with water. Next, add clear glue, food coloring, and glitter then shake.
- Seal the lid and you are ready to go.



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.



GOING ON A SAFARI

- Go outside on an exciting adventure, try picking up a small rock or touching a plant or flower.
- Notice the bugs or the birds. Take a moment to kneel down and touch the earth.
- Walk mindfully paying close attention to everything. Make sure you walk in silence because you want to notice all those little details.



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.

