

WELLBEING THROUGH SPORT.

ACTIVITY PROGRAMME

*Developing positive mental
and physical health*



INTRODUCTION

At this difficult time, it's essential that we all act to protect our mental health as well as our physical health. To support the mental health and wellbeing of children and families across our communities, Team Mental Health and EdStart Sports Coaching have partnered to design and develop a range of fun Wellbeing Through Sport activities to do at home. These can also be adapted for use in the schools supporting children who remain in education at this time.



The Aim of the Wellbeing Through Sport Activity Programme:

The aim of the Wellbeing Through Sport Activity Programme is to support children and families to have fun together whilst promoting positive mental and physical health.

It's important for us all to understand what 'mental health' is. The World Health Organisation describes mental health as 'a state of wellbeing' where a person realises their potential and ability, can cope with 'the normal stresses of life', is able to work productively, and contribute to their community. Our mental health is an integral component of our health. Like physical health, we all have mental health and at this time, it is essential to support children and families to look after and protect it. (World Health Organisation, 2018)

In 2008, the New Economics Foundation (NEF), as part of the 'Foresight Mental Capital and Wellbeing Project' published the '5 Ways to Mental Wellbeing'. This framework reflects the findings of research from around the world looking at how we can improve our mental health and wellbeing. In the main, this research evidence related to adults. However, in 2014, The Children's Society and NEF published the outcomes of further research which found that the '5 Ways to Mental Wellbeing' were also relevant in terms of children's everyday activities and their sense of wellbeing.

The '5 Ways to Mental Wellbeing' include:

- **Connect**
- **Be Active**
- **Take Notice**
- **Keep Learning**
- **Give**

(New Economics Foundation, 2008 & The Children's Society, 2014)

CONNECT

Definition:

Connecting with family members, friends, neighbours or people who share the same interests.

Background:

It's important for us all to feel as though we're part of something and that we are understood and accepted. This protects our mental health by boosting self-esteem, improving wellbeing, and protecting against loneliness. This is important because loneliness has been associated with poor mental and physical health. There are lots of different ways to connect and, whilst our physical connections are limited, it's important for us to think about different ways to do this. For children, having the opportunity to speak to family members about things that matter to them is significantly linked with positive wellbeing of young people.

Note:

As parents and carers, it's vitally important to ensure that we understand the risks certain forms of connectivity present, and that we act to keep our children safe. More information about staying safe online can be found here:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

BE ACTIVE

Definition:

Being physically active in a way that works for you and that you enjoy.

Background:

Physical activity is not only good for our physical health, it's good for our mental health too. Exercise makes us feel good and even the smallest amount can make a positive difference. Being active outside in green space is also good for us and can help reduce stress levels. If there is the opportunity to do this safely, then try. However, it's important to ensure that you and your family stick to the social / physical distancing rules in place. If it's not possible to get outside, open a window to let in fresh air and natural light. You could also try finding some images of green space online and look at them before, after, or even whilst you're exercising. Not quite a walk in the countryside, but it can have a positive impact in terms of reducing stress.

TAKE NOTICE

Definition:

Being present in the moment and being aware of the world around you.

Background:

Life can be challenging and overwhelming at times and we often forget to find time to focus on the positives. Taking the time to notice the world around us promotes good mental health by helping us to appreciate and feel grateful. It may also help us to recover better from the stress we experience. The more you practice, the easier it becomes. Mindfulness is a great way to help children be present in the moment, and to take notice. There is evidence that shows mindfulness can help children to feel calm, have greater compassion and improve their attention.

KEEP LEARNING

Definition:

Learning new things or helping our brain to stay active.

Background:

Learning new things, rediscovering old hobbies or interests, and keeping ourselves mentally stimulated promotes good mental health. This doesn't have to be a major commitment and things like reading, singing, playing a game, cooking a meal, or brushing your teeth with the hand you wouldn't usually use, can all be beneficial and fun.

GIVE

Definition:

Being kind and doing something nice for someone.

Background:

Giving to others makes us and others feel good. The smallest acts of kindness really can make a difference because they create positive feelings, and a sense of self-worth and value. They also help us connect with others which really promotes good mental health and wellbeing.

The Wellbeing Through Sport Activity Programme has been designed to help children and families incorporate the '5 Ways to Mental Wellbeing' into our daily lives. Now, more than ever, it is essential for us to promote good mental health and wellbeing.



Using the Wellbeing Through Sport Activity Programme

The weekly activity sessions are designed to be fun and to help children and families protect their mental and physical health. Each session can be adjusted to make it age appropriate and it is designed to allow parents or carers to be flexible with their approach.

Each session will include:

- An outline of the background information relevant to the session for parents or carers
- A pre-activity introduction to the session
- A physical activity
- A reflection task

The first activity session provides an overview of the '5 Ways to Mental Wellbeing' to ensure the children develop a basic understanding of these. In subsequent sessions, each of the '5 Ways to Mental Wellbeing' will be explored in more detail.

After each of the sessions, we encourage children and their families to prepare a weekly planner to schedule in activities centred around the '5 Ways to Mental Wellbeing'. We have designed a planner that can be printed and completed on a weekly basis. (Please see page 8)

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|----------------------|---------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Connect | | | | | |
| Be Active | | | | | |
| Take Notice | | | | | |
| Keep Learning | | | | | |
| Give | | | | | |

WELLBEING THROUGH SPORT.

Developing positive mental and physical health

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|---|
| 5 WAYS TO MENTAL WELLBEING | WEEK 1 | Introduction to 5 Ways to Mental Wellbeing - Treasure hunt |
| | WEEK 2 | Connect - Creative balance chain |
| | WEEK 3 | Be Active - The name circuit |
| | WEEK 4 | Take Notice - Yoga and meditation |
| | WEEK 5 | Keep Learning - The sock challenge |
| | WEEK 6 | Give - Skills with sibling and parent/carers feedback |

PARENTS / CARERS

- Write out the '5 Ways to Mental Wellbeing' titles on separate pieces of paper
- Write out the '5 Ways to Mental Wellbeing' descriptions on separate pieces of paper
- Alternatively print out the task sheet and cut out the titles and definitions (please see page 12)
- Hide the pieces of paper with the descriptions of the '5 Ways to Mental Wellbeing' in different rooms around the house or garden (if you have safe access to one)
- Make up some clues to guide everyone taking part around the house / garden to find each of the pieces of paper

PRE-ACTIVITY

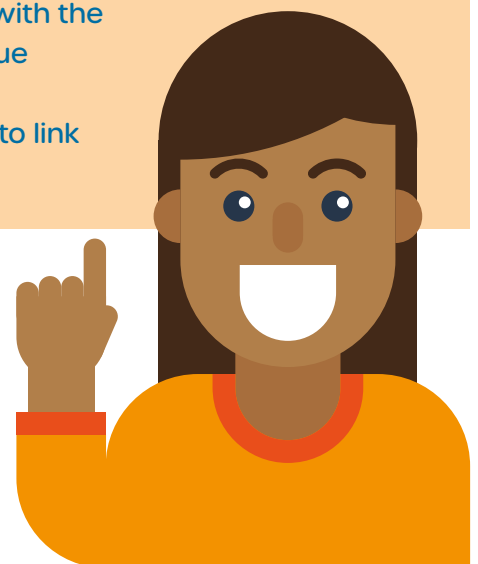
- Introduce each of the '5 Ways to Mental Wellbeing'
- Support the children to consider and discuss what each one means

ACTIVITY

- The treasure hunt should be completed as a team
- Read out a clue to guide everyone to find the piece of paper with the first description on. Once they find this, move onto the next clue
- Once all the pieces of paper have been found, work together to link the descriptions with each of the '5 Ways to Wellbeing' titles

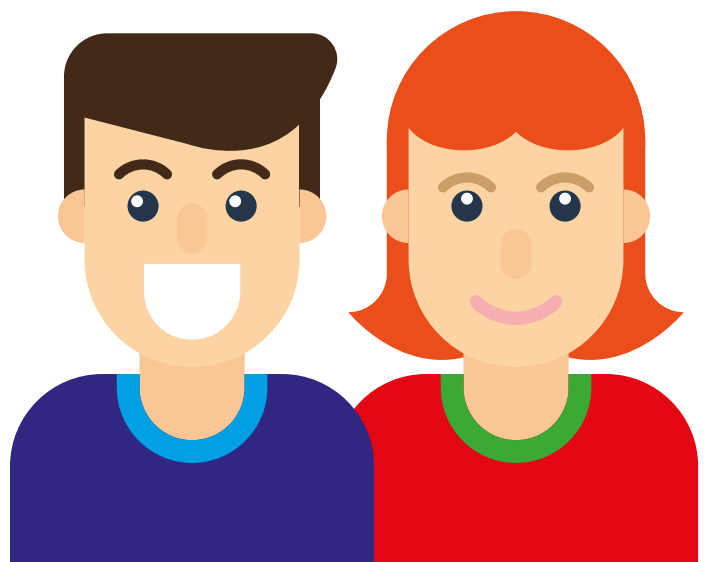
(The New Economics Foundation, 2008)

LESSON CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE



REFLECTION TASK

- Have a chat about why it's important to look after our mental health as well as our physical health
- Think about the different things we can enjoy for each of the '5 Ways to Mental Wellbeing'. (For example - Connect: Chatting on the phone, facetime with grandparents, playing games online with friends)
- Make a list of different things you can all do to bring the '5 Ways to Mental Wellbeing' into your daily lives.
- Encourage everyone to start creating their weekly planner (see page 8) and get putting these activities in! You don't have to fill the whole week, just aim to do one of the '5 Ways to Mental Wellbeing' every day this coming week.
- It might also be fun to create a family weekly planner so that you can do some of these things together.



| 5 Ways to Mental Wellbeing | Definition |
|----------------------------|---|
| Connect | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spending time with friends and family • Doing fun activities with friends and family members • Talking to family members about things that are important to us • Chatting to friends on the phone or on Facetime |
| Be Active | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercising or playing sport • Going for a walk or a bike ride • Playing team sports |
| Take Notice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being aware of our surroundings • Paying attention to how we feel in our bodies (For example, full of energy, relaxed or tense) • Paying attention to our feelings and emotions (For example, happy, sad or angry) |
| Keep Learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning new things that are fun (For example, music or drama) • Teaching ourselves new things • Doing fun activities outside school (For example, football, climbing, ice-skating or gymnastics) • Being creative and using our imagination |
| Give | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being kind to others • Doing something nice for someone • Helping other people |

(New Economics Foundation, 2008)

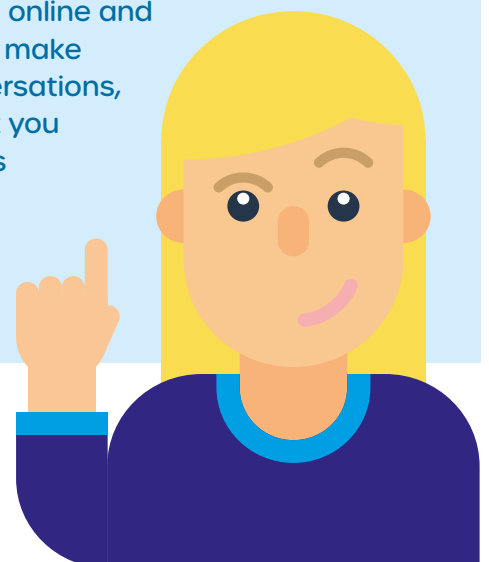
PARENTS / CARERS

- **The definition of 'Connect':** Connecting with family members, friends, neighbours or people who share the same interests
- **Background:** It's important for us all to feel as though we're part of something and that we are understood and accepted. This protects our mental health by boosting self-esteem, improving wellbeing, and protecting against loneliness. This is important because loneliness has been associated with poor mental and physical health. There are lots of different ways to connect and, whilst our physical connections are limited, it's important for us to think about different ways to do this. For children, having the opportunity to speak to family members about things that matter to them is significantly linked with positive wellbeing of young people

Note: As parents and carers, it's vitally important to ensure that we understand the risks certain forms of connectivity present, and that we act to keep our children safe. More information about staying safe online can be found here:
<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

PRE-ACTIVITY

- Everyone involved should discuss the different ways we can connect with people
- Explain to children the importance of staying safe online and let them know it's important to let you know if they are worried about anything or feel unsafe
- Let children know you're interested about what they're doing online and talk about it; a bit like you would talk about school. If we can make talking about our online activity part of our day to day conversations, children are more likely to feel relaxed and find it easier to let you know if something negative has happened, or if something is worrying them
- Introduce the activity and ask everyone to pick a household item to use for the balance challenge



LESSON CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE

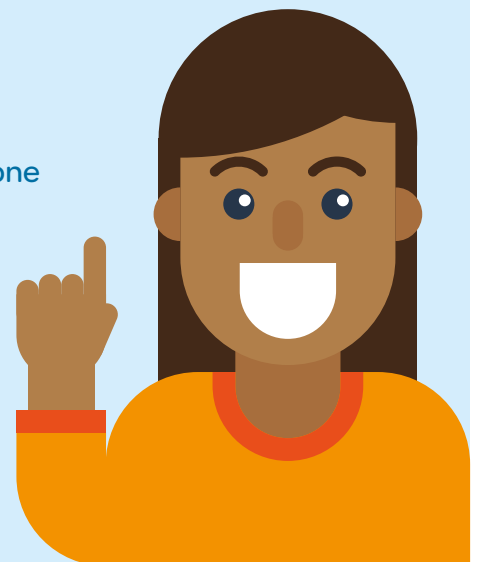
ACTIVITY

- Using their selected household item, each person taking part must think of a creative way to balance the item on their body and hold the position for 30 seconds
- When everyone's ready to go, get a phone out and take it in turns to video each other completing the challenge
- At the end of the challenge, nominate three friends to try the balance challenge out
- Safely send your video to your nominated friends and ask them to send you a video of them attempting the challenge back to you. Only share your videos with the friends you have nominated and those who have nominated you. Don't share anyone else's video without their permission
- Enjoy having a laugh watching the videos of friends completing the balance challenge and feel proud for getting other people involved!

REFLECTION TASK

- Have a chat about why being connected with people is important and ask children how they feel about the new rules on social / physical distancing, and what they miss about spending time with other people
- Think about different ways we can remain connected to others at the moment, especially to the people / things we miss in the current circumstances
- Make plans to do this in different ways throughout the week. This could be on your own or as a family. Some ideas might include having a chat with friends online, playing a family game at home, writing a letter or drawing a picture for someone
- Start a new weekly planner and include some of the ideas from this session

Note: If children are using online devices to connect with others, remind them to speak to you if they are worried about anything online



PARENTS / CARERS

- **The definition of 'Be Active':** Being physically active in a way that works for you and that you enjoy
- **Background:** Physical activity is not only good for our physical health, it's good for our mental health too. Exercise makes us feel good and even the smallest amount can make a positive difference. Being active outside in green space is also good for us and can help reduce stress levels. If there is the opportunity to do this safely, then try. However, it's important to ensure that you and your family stick to the social / physical distancing rules in place. If it's not possible to get outside, open a window to let in fresh air and natural light. You could also try finding some images of green space online and look at them before, after, or even whilst you're exercising. Not quite a walk in the countryside, but it can have a positive impact in terms of reducing stress

PRE-ACTIVITY

- Everyone involved should discuss why regular exercise is good for our health
- Encourage the children to think about this in terms of both the body and mind
- Everyone should make a list of the exercises they enjoy doing on their own, and with other people



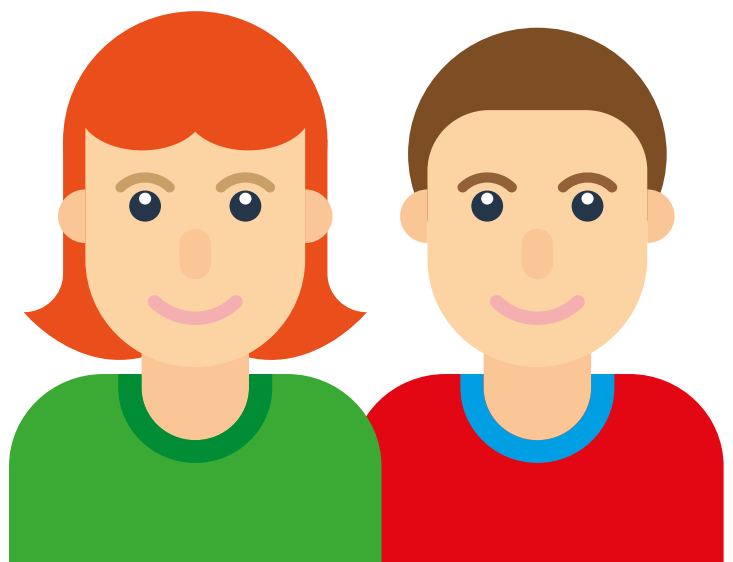
ACTIVITY

- Using the Alphabet exercise sheet (please see page 17) everyone should complete the exercises that spell out the family's surname. For example: Ashton:
 - How many times can you complete this circuit?
 - Can you use other names in your family?
(For example, the first and / or middle name of each person)
- | | |
|----------|------------------------------|
| A | 10 press ups |
| S | 5 squat jumps |
| H | 10 sit ups |
| T | 15 burpees |
| O | 45 second plank |
| N | 5 squat lunges (each leg) |

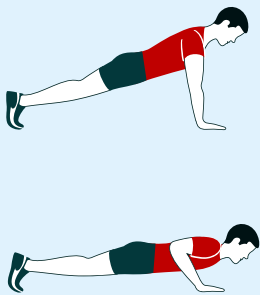
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REFLECTION TASK

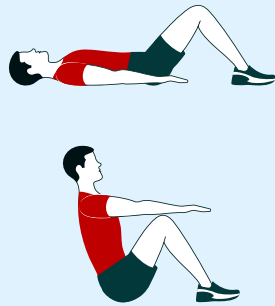
- Have a chat about what parts of the challenge people enjoyed, and what parts they didn't(!)
Try to use humour when discussing this
- Think about how exercising impacts on how we feel. Remind the children to think about this in terms of their mind and body (For example, do they feel happier than before they started? | Do they feel proud of themselves?)
- Make a list of the different physical activities that can be enjoyed with the current social / physical distancing rules in place and consider how these could be brought into our lives on a regular basis
- Start a new weekly planner and include some of the ideas from this session



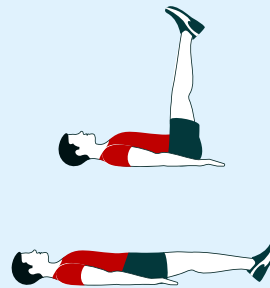
PRESS UPS



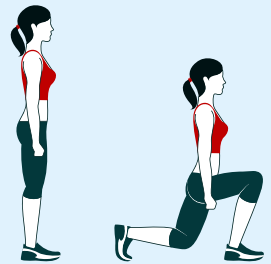
SIT UPS



LEG RAISES



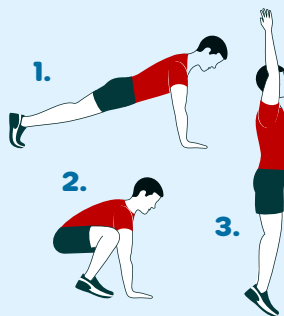
SQUAT LUNGES



PLANK



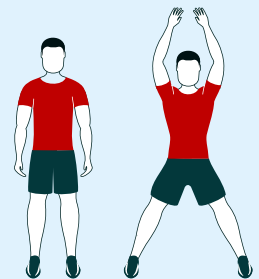
BURPEES



SQUAT JUMPS



STAR JUMPS



A 10 press ups

B 10 squat jumps

C 5 burpees

D 10 star jumps

E 10 lunges

F 30 second plank

G 10 leg raises

H 10 sit ups

I 5 press ups

J 15 squat jumps

K 10 burpees

L 15 star jumps

M 20 star jumps

N 5 lunges (each leg)

O 45 second plank

P 15 leg raises

Q 30 sit ups

R 15 press ups

S 5 squat jumps

T 15 burpees

U 15 sit ups

V 10 star jumps

W 1 minute plank

X 5 lunges

Y 20 sit ups

Z 5 leg raises

PARENTS / CARERS

- **The definition of 'Take Notice':** Being present in the moment and being aware of the world around
- **Background:** Life can be challenging and overwhelming at times and we often forget to find time to focus on the positives. Taking the time to notice the world around us promotes good mental health by helping us to appreciate and feel grateful. It may also help us to recover better from the stress we experience. The more you practice, the easier it becomes. Mindfulness is a great way to help children be present in the moment, and to take notice. There is evidence that shows mindfulness can help children to feel calm, have greater compassion and improve their attention

PRE-ACTIVITY

- Ask everyone taking part to discuss what it means to 'take notice' (For example, being present | noticing what we are feeling in our bodies and minds | noticing the world around us)
- Discuss different techniques that can help us to be more aware of the present moment (For example, yoga | meditation | mindfulness)
- Discuss with the children the benefits of yoga and meditation for the body and mind (For example, healthier bodies by improving strength, energy levels and helping our bodies to fight infection | healthier minds by helping us to manage stress, stay calm, feel happier and stay focused so learning is easier)

ACTIVITY

- Set up a space on the floor and use a towel as a mat
- Ask everyone taking part to stand by their towels and take a few moments to think about how they feel
- Please use the accompanying video to complete the Wellbeing Through Sport yoga and meditation session



LESSON CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE

REFLECTION TASK

- Have a chat about any changes each person noticed in their bodies or minds when they were completing the video
- Think together about how you might all be able to 'take notice' more often. (For example, catching sight of a beautiful smile | hearing a wonderful laugh | enjoying something tasty to eat | seeing a lovely sunset)
- Make an individual or family diary to record moments that you noticed and appreciated
- Start a new weekly planner and include some of the ideas from this session



PARENTS / CARERS

- **The definition of 'Keep Learning':** Learning new things or helping our brain to stay active
- **Background:** Learning new things, rediscovering old hobbies or interests, and keeping ourselves mentally stimulated promotes good mental health. This doesn't have to be a major commitment and things like reading, singing, playing a game, cooking a meal, or brushing your teeth with the hand you wouldn't usually use, can all be beneficial and fun

PRE-ACTIVITY

- Ask everyone taking part to discuss the things that they enjoy learning
(For example, singing | dancing | art | football)
- Ask the children to think about why new learning is fun
(For example, feeling a sense of pride | success | achievement)
- Encourage the children to discuss the different ways we can learn
(For example, at school | with friends or family | by ourselves | through fun activities)

Note: Support children to think about the importance of practicing new skills so we can develop and improve

LESSON CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE



ACTIVITY

- You will need a wash basket (or equivalent) and several pairs of socks. There will be three rounds. In each round, try to beat your previous score
- Place the wash basket at a distance away from you:
 - 3 metres (3 - 8 years old)
 - 5 metres (8 years old - adults)
- **Round 1:** Each person taking part gets 5 attempts to throw (under arm) the socks into the basket
- Each hit in the basket is worth one point. When everyone has had their turn add up the points and see who gets the best score
- **Round 2:** This time get everyone to think about controlling their breathing as a relaxation strategy before throwing in the next round
- Advise everyone taking part to take a deep breath in through their nose followed by a slow breath out through the mouth. Tell them to repeat this three times before throwing
- At the end of round 2, discuss whether this technique was helpful. If so, in what way did it help? (For example, did they feel calmer? | did their score improve?)
- **Round 3:** This time as well as using breathing techniques, encourage the use of visualisation techniques
- Advise everyone taking part to try and picture the flight of the socks going into the basket before they throw
- At the end of round 3, discuss whether this technique was helpful. If so, in what way did it help? (For example, did they feel more focused? | did their score improve?)

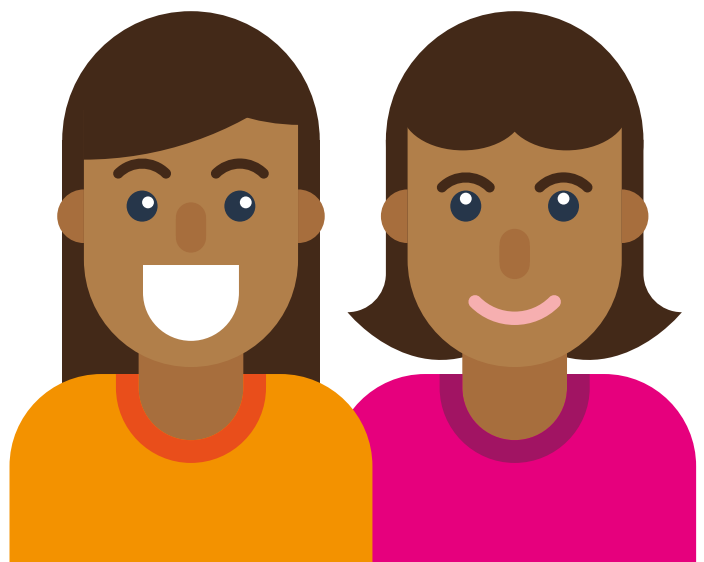
Note: If this is too easy, you can move the basket further away until it becomes challenging. You can create a competition between family members, or just work with the children to improve their own individual scores between rounds. Highlight the importance of staying calm and practising new skills to help us develop them

LESSON CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE

REFLECTION TASK

- Have a chat with the children about the importance of learning in school and why it is important to continue learning even if they're not going to school
- Think about and discuss different things that interest each other. Consider ways to learn more about these interests
- Make plans to bring these interests into daily life and to try new things out
- Start a new weekly planner and include some of the ideas from this session

Note: It might be helpful to think with the children about jobs there are to do around the house and use this session to think about how they could learn some new skills relating to these. They could then be built into their weekly planner. When children attempt or practice a new skill, use praise to encourage them. Developing new skills helps them to feel a sense of pride and achievement.



PARENTS / CARERS

- **The definition of 'Give':** Being kind and doing something nice for someone
- **Background:** Giving to others makes us and others feel good. The smallest acts of kindness really can make a difference because they create positive feelings, and a sense of self-worth and value. They also help us connect with others which really promotes good mental health and wellbeing

PRE-ACTIVITY

- Discuss with everyone involved, why it is important to be kind
- Discuss why it's not okay to be unkind
- Ask the children to talk about ways they have been kind to others

ACTIVITY

- Use any sporting equipment or household item for this activity. Think of a skill you could practice and show the children how to do it. Examples might include:
 - Kick ups with a football
 - Kicking a pair of socks into a washing machine from distance (how many times can you hit the target?)
 - Press ups with a ball or round object on your back
- Tell the children to spend 15-20 minutes practicing the skill so they feel confident to show others
- Everyone involved should take it in turns to demonstrate their skill



LESSON CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE

ACTIVITY - CONTINUED

- Receive and provide feedback
 - Everyone involved should take it in turns to give a piece of positive feedback to the others (For example, what was good about the skill? | why was it good?)
 - As a group, think about how individual skills could be improved and provide helpful and constructive feedback
- Reflect and go again
 - Everyone taking part should think about the feedback they received and use it to make positive changes. They should then practice their skill for a further 10 -15 minutes
- Again, everyone involved should take it in turns to demonstrate their skill to the group
- Receive and provide feedback
 - Everyone involved should take it in turns to give a piece of positive feedback to the others (For example, was the skill improved? | how was it better?)
- Encourage everyone involved to appreciate the feedback they have received and express gratitude by thanking people for their support

REFLECTION TASK

- Have a chat about how it felt to give and receive positive feedback comments (For example, did it make you feel good? | did it make you feel happy? | did it make you feel valued?)
- Think about different ways kindness can be expressed
- Make a promise to express kindness and gratitude on a regular basis (For example, plan doing something nice for some one | at the end of each day think of and write down three good things about the day - gratitude diaries have been shown to reduce stress and promote good mental health)
- Start a new weekly planner and include some of the ideas from this session

REFERENCES

New Economics Foundation (2008). Five ways to mental wellbeing. Government Office for Science. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/five-ways-to-mental-wellbeing>

The Children's Society (2014). Ways to wellbeing: Research report. Available at: <https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/Ways%20to%20well-being%20report%20FINAL.pdf>

World Health Organisation (2018). Mental health: strengthening our response. Available at: <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-health-strengthening-our-response>

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