**Project Title: Come dine with me**

A suggested Timetable approach, the times are at the discretion of the school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Proposed Approach</th>
<th>Alternatives/Extensions</th>
<th>Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 9:30- | Exhibition space of pictures of soccer players, local sports players, a video playing of Ronaldo, short video of a teacher/student from the school talking about their diet  
Project introduction/rationale/student voice, food types  
Present their learning at the end of the day in a variety of ways (healthy eating menu for the school, create a dish for them to enjoy, use green screen to create a CCS Bake off) | Gather evidence, live poll for breakfast, lunch and dinner  
Graph results  
Categorise food types  
healthy/unhealthy | Posters, teacher/student video, sample diets  
Go to webinar live poll survey  
Or Mentimeter or Padlet |
| 10:00 | Co-create roles: planning/research/shopping/menu/photos/Cost/budget  
Research supermarkets and prices online | Upload photos to a shared drive | Graphic organisers: placemat, ranking ladder, dotmocracy |
| 10:40 | Get on your feet, if you want to eat  
In small groups, carry out their tasks  
-Planning the menu/food pyramid  
-Research-decision making on available resources  
-Shopping  
-Photography group working, labels of food, actual food | Reflect on the benefits and challenges  
Track and trace food items  
recording country of origin and distance to Ireland | Food pyramid, map to the shops, samples of nutritional labels, website to look at costing |
| 12:00 | Create a plate | | Serving utensils, dishes, cutlery, chopping boards and food |
| 1:00 | Come dine with me, tasting of dishes (following government health guidelines) and giving a food review on each using review sheets with agreed success criteria | | Food review sheets |
| 2:00 | In breakout rooms, upload their meal plans, collaborate on food reviews in breakout rooms. Create a shared document | | Food review template with a word count |
| 2:45 | Stimulus for discussion: YouTube video on why food is important for a soccer player during their 2019 season | | [https://youtu.be/gjindWEGWZI](https://youtu.be/gjindWEGWZI) |
| 3:00 | Reflection  
Review the learning cycle: Plan, Monitor, Evaluate  
What did I learn? (Numeracy, Literacy, Learning to Learn and Technology)  
How to present their work? (Digital diary each day)  
WWW (What Worked Well):  
EBI (Even Better If):  
Blue sky thinking | Online reflection poll |
Planning for Student-Centred Learning: Strategies to Support Remote Learning

Developing Creativity: Green Screen

**Description**

Green screen allows the student/teacher to remove the green background and replace the backdrop with an image or video of their choice. This technology allows students to discuss, evaluate or reflect on their learning using their imagination and digital skills.

**Applications:**

- The illusion and special effects capture the students’ imagination while promoting both curiosity and creativity.
- An effective example of using technology for the creation of new tasks, previously inconceivable.
- Facilitates students to move from the area of enhancement to transformation as recommended by the SAMR model (Dr. Puendetura) for online learning.
- Promotes Student Voice/Choice whereby students choose the place/concept/activity. Opportunities to learn and places to visit are both endless and exciting.
- Energises students, promotes active learning online and reduces the potential for online fatigue.
- Directly places students at the heart centre of the learning process.
- Allows students to collaborate in groups to produce parts of a larger project. Individual clips can be linked and amalgamated using apps such as iMovie or Shadow Puppet.
- Promotes independent learning whereby students film and edit the technology by themselves.
- Banks of exemplars can be created by collating clips previously completed by students. Such resources can assist students in the identification and co-creation of success criteria for upcoming projects.
- Students can engage in peer-assessment by providing feedback on green screen clips produced by their classmates. Students can learn a lot from each other in this way.
- Allows students become the ‘sage on the stage’ while teachers assist, monitor and advise as the ‘guide on the side’.

**Key Consideration:**

This strategy can be utilised to further embed the key skills and to activate rich and inclusive learning experiences across the planning process.

**Links:**

### Key Skill Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communicating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students learn to express themselves in new and appealing ways.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students gain lifelong, significant skills associated with preforming and presenting.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staying Well</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students really enjoy the learning process and value it as a positive, enriching experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students develop self-confidence as part of their own learning journey.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students learn to value the importance of staying safe.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Being Creative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students imagine new ideas and gain the opportunity to implement and act on those ideas in real time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students get to explore options and alternatives as they imagine themselves ‘at the scene’ anywhere in the world and their sense of curiosity is ignited as a result.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Working with Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students learn to develop good relationships while working with others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills such as cooperation and the importance of respecting difference are further developed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**School Self-Evaluation:** “Teachers strategically select and use approaches to match the learning intentions of the lesson, meet the learning needs of students, and open up further learning opportunities.” (Pg. 19, Looking at Our School, 2016)

**Digital Learning Framework:** “Teachers model high-level teaching, knowledge and skills, using digital technologies to support student creativity, innovation and knowledge creation.” (Pg.7, Digital Learning Framework, 2017)
WAYS TO ACTIVATE STUDENT ENGAGEMENT:

- Creative opportunities for students to act scenes from famous plays or create their own pieces of contemporary drama.
- Students create a weather report from anywhere in the world. Example, Polar Vortex, Chicago.
- A news channel broadcast from a live volcanic eruption. Example, Stromboli, using live webcam footage.
- Scuba dive in the Great Barrier Reef to view damage to coral and/or pollution/plastic waste in the oceans.
- Students can go back in time and re-enact history with photos of historic backdrops.
- Tuairisc nuachta beo ón Ghaeltacht

Reconnecting with School: Guidance on Summer Programme

Provide students with the practical and technological skills they need to engage in a meaningful way with blended learning in the future.
Remote Learning Supports

Planning for Student-Centred Learning: Strategies to Support Remote Learning

Online Break Out Rooms

Description:
There are many platforms that are being used by teachers to facilitate online teaching, learning, assessment and reporting. These platforms support a range of useful features that enable teachers to support the students in their class.

Break Out Rooms are one such feature that is proving effective in supporting learning.

Applications:
- Targeted support for students in need of additional support within the lesson.
- Jigsaw activities.
- Teachers can facilitate formative assessment events such as classroom-based assessments.
- Formative feedback opportunities with small groups.
- Facilitating students as learning supports for each other.
- Assigning roles within a group activity.
- Synchronous response to student needs.
- Access and challenge inputs to support cognitive development.
- Teachers can switch between rooms to observe and engage.
- Students can use an interactive whiteboard whilst in their individual Break Out Rooms on some platforms.
- Teachers can stimulate curiosity by assigning different stimuli to each group for the purpose of a ‘concept-attainment’ activity. Each group can then present and justify their understanding of the concept to the full class.

Key Consideration:
This strategy can be utilised to further embed the key skills and to activate rich and inclusive learning experiences across the planning process.

Links:
Remote Learning Supports

Key Skill Development

Communicating

Teachers and can work with smaller groups to meet identified needs during tasks.

Teachers can switch between rooms to monitor engagement and to provide synchronous/asynchronous feedback that supports learning.

Working with Others

Students can collaborate within their groups to share prior knowledge, problem solve and generate new ideas. Student voice and choice can be facilitated.

Students can jigsaw learning activities, engage in peer assessment and identify as learning supports for one another.

Managing Information and Thinking

Students are given age and stage appropriate, banks of time, to apply critical thinking skills.

Students have the capacity to work independently and gather their thoughts before linking back with the main group.

Being Creative

Students can explore options and alternatives in responding to stimuli and assessment activities.

Students and teachers can co-create success criteria and apply it to peer assessment strategies.

Students can showcase and practice presentations within a safe and supportive environment.

School Self-Evaluation: “Teachers strategically select and use approaches to match the learning intentions of the lesson, meet the learning needs of students, and open up further learning opportunities.” (Pg. 19, Looking at Our School, 2016)

Digital Learning Framework: “Teachers model high-level teaching, knowledge and skills, using digital technologies to support student creativity, innovation and knowledge creation.” (Pg.7, Digital Learning Framework, 2017)
WAYS TO ACTIVATE STUDENT ENGAGEMENT:

**Gaeilge/MFL**
Students work in pairs to create and upload voice memos in the target language which help to promote their oral and aural competencies.

**Geography**
Each group works one process as part of the water cycle, creates a pic collage demonstrating that process and then shares that image with the larger group.

**Maths**
Each group receives the same maths challenge to solve. When the groups come back together, everyone can share their approach and what they

**Science**
Every group is given the same hypothesis, attendees can brainstorm different ways to prove it. Whether or not a solution is found, they can still come back and discuss their methodology. One student can rotate around each group to offer further support.

**Physical Education**
Learners can also take on the role of sports mentors as well. Different students can take turns educating each other on their favourite sport each other and then receive instant feedback from fellow students and instructors.

**Art**
Collaborative collage making. Each group creates part of a collage under an overall theme and the pieces are amalgamated into one thereafter.

**Link to Planning Unit**
Reconnecting with School: Guidance on Summer Programme

Provide students with the practical and technological skills they need to engage in a meaningful way with blended learning in the future.
Planning for Student-Centred Learning: Strategies to Support Remote Learning

Recorded & Live Webinar Lessons

Description:
Webinars are online platforms that facilitate teachers in delivering live webinar lessons with synchronous supports.

Webinars also facilitate teachers in delivering recordings to accommodate asynchronous supports.

This platform has a number of useful functions to improve engagement levels for students who are accessing teaching, learning, assessment and reporting remotely.

Applications:
• Students can access the webinar recording after it has taken place and create their own timetables.
• Students can access the webinar recording from a multitude of platforms. It can be during a walk outside if the household is a difficult place to focus in.
• Teachers can use the engagement dashboard to observe and respond to attentiveness, hands raised and time elapsed.
• Practice mode allows teachers the opportunity to become comfortable with the platform's functionality.
• Presentation controls can be passed between teachers to accommodate team-teaching approaches.
• Participant engagement levels are supported by the availability of live polls and surveys.
• Synchronous feedback can be given to participants via a live Q&A function.
• Asynchronous feedback can be given at a later point as the chat log can be saved. This is a useful tool in helping teachers to gauge knowledge or skill development that needs further support for all or the some and few.
• All webinar recordings are kept and stored in a video hub to access at any time.
• Teachers can schedule webinars to take place at any time and send reminders to participants at set intervals if required.
• Handouts, attachments, video and web links can be uploaded for participants to access during the webinar.
• Students can also be invited to take control of the presentation to develop digital learning technologies competencies and skills.

Key Consideration:
This strategy can be utilised to further embed the key skills and to activate rich and inclusive learning experiences across the planning process.

Links:
Remote Learning Supports

Key Skill Development

**Communicating**

Students have the platform to develop the skills of listening and expressing themselves.

Students can develop their literacy levels by changing the language settings and by typing their questions and feedback during the presentations.

**Staying Well**

Students can access the webinar or webinar recordings at a time that best suits their situation.

Being healthy and physically active can be encouraged if webinars are designed with those factors in mind. Example: A webinar on coastal erosion at a specific location. Students can hike, listen and observe while at the location.

**Managing Myself**

Students can build a learning timetable that meets their needs in a remote learning setting.

Students can make considered decisions based on the peer feedback from the live polls and surveys.

Students can pause and revisit webinars in ways that couldn’t have been perceived before.

**Being Literate**

Students can create reports and presentations using the ideas and feedback of their peers.

Students can submit queries and suggestions as they learn to write for different purposes.

Students can develop their spoken language in presenter mode.

---

**School Self-Evaluation:** “Teachers strategically select and use approaches to match the learning intentions of the lesson, meet the learning needs of students, and open up further learning opportunities.” (Pg. 19, Looking at Our School, 2016)

**Digital Learning Framework:** “Teachers model high-level teaching, knowledge and skills, using digital technologies to support student creativity, innovation and knowledge creation.” (Pg.7, Digital Learning Framework, 2017)
WAYS TO ACTIVATE STUDENT ENGAGEMENT:

**Business**
Students vote in live polls highlighting their favourite media advertisement.

**Geography**
Students engage with a pre-recorded webinar at a time that suits their own schedule to identify, compare and contrast soil samples in their neighbourhood.

**Science**
Teachers engage in team teaching in the co-creation of part of a webinar highlighting cross-curricular links, i.e. the acid test on limestone.

**English**
Students add to the live chat voicing their opinions surrounding an issue being debated during the webinar.

**Maths**
Students develop graphical skills through a scales or ranking mentimeter activity during the webinar.

**MFL**
Students develop writing skills through adding to the live chat.
Students become the ‘guest-speaker’ for part of the webinar whereby a pre-recorded audio or video clip is shared.

Reconnecting with School: Guidance on Summer Programme

Provide students with the practical and technological skills they need to engage in a meaningful way with blended learning in the future.
Numeracy is the ability to use mathematics to solve problems and meet the demands of day-to-day living.

Students’ numeracy skills can be impacted by extended absence from school and ideally a summer programme would be mindful of numeracy in cross-curricular contexts.

Students should be supported to:

- Use mathematical understanding across a range of subject areas and contexts.
- Encourage a problem-solving approach to tasks.
- Estimate time/length/space and guess outcomes.
- See patterns, trends and relationships.
- Gather and use data.
- Apply mathematical understanding to a range of contexts.
- Develop positive attitudes to numeracy and to the value of studying Mathematics and subjects with a strong numeracy foundation.

Reconnecting with School: Guidance on Summer Programme, DES (2020)


https://ncca.ie/en/junior-cycle/framework-for-junior-cycle
**Indoor Activities**

**Rock, Paper, Scissors**

*Students collaboratively gather and analyse data using the rock, paper, scissors game*

This resource uses the classic rock, paper, scissors game which is familiar to students, to look at data and to consider when data is random and how we might recognise random data. The students begin by rolling a die to decide on rock, paper, scissors. Rock being 1 or 2, paper 3 or 4 and scissors 5 or 6. Their answers are recorded on a record sheet. The students should see this data is random with Player 1 winning, Player 2 winning and a draw equally likely. Next the students play the game in the normal way. Student reflection and teacher-guided discussion will help the students to see that at least for some games the outcomes are no longer equally likely, these are no longer random. To complete the students can watch a video on rock, paper, scissors which introduces the idea of game theory to students. All the resources including the video, PowerPoint slides and record sheets are available from *resolve education*. The reSolve: *Maths by Inquiry* project is managed by the Australian Academy of Science in collaboration with the Australian Association of Mathematics Teachers and funded by the Australian Government Department of Education.


**Record Sheet**

**Video** [https://education.abc.net.au/home#!/media/2851539/](https://education.abc.net.au/home#!/media/2851539/)

**Statistics: Student Investigators**

*Students will gather data in the classroom from a question they have posed.*

*Students will present their data in a chart of their choosing.*

This is another statistics-based numeracy challenge for students. This resource takes us step-by-step on how to use it with students in a classroom setting. Students pose their own question, set up a survey, conduct their survey then present their findings. It can be adapted or scaffolded to suit the students in the classroom.

Eg Pie chart

Students gather and use data.

[https://www.teachingideas.co.uk/graphs/pie-chart-challenge](https://www.teachingideas.co.uk/graphs/pie-chart-challenge)
The Golden Ratio and the Human Body

*Students use measurement to explore ratios and patterns*

The golden ratio can be found in art, music, and architecture. In art the measurements of the body can be found using the golden ratio. NRICH .org designed this resource to allow students to use their own body measurements to find the golden ratio. An explanation of the golden ratio follows based on an investigation of the Fibonacci sequence which is also prevalent in nature. Students then have the opportunity to use golden rectangles to produce the golden spiral and consider where these spirals may appear in the world around them.

Students explore Fibonacci sequence and construct a Golden Spiral (collaboration with Visual Art/Graphics teachers may be helpful)

https://nrich.maths.org/7668

Maths Relay Race

*Students work collaboratively to solve maths tasks*

Questions are placed at a set distance from students
One person from the team must race out and collect a question
Students then work together to solve the problem
When question is solved, the next person on the team races to collect a question
The game continues on until one team has all questions solved


Maths in cooking

*This activity gives students the opportunity to work across a range of subjects to develop their numeracy skills.*

Make some healthy snack bars for break
Compare cost of ingredients online or in shops
Calculate the fastest route to the shops
Try to find discount voucher
Measurement of ingredients, conversion, ratio etc.
Link with Home Economics for nutritional values
Compare with shop bought bars (price (including unit pricing), nutrition, hidden costs, etc)
Investigate how much physical activity is needed to burn off the calories, explore different types of exercise to find which burn energy quicker (Collaboration with Physical Education/Home Economics may be beneficial)

Make Your Own Celebration Bunting

*Apply mathematical understanding to a range of contexts*
Why not make your own celebration bunting and practise measuring angles, identifying triangles, and multiplying with fractions all at the same time?

Full resource available here

**Battle of the Robots**

*Apply mathematical understanding to a range of contexts*

Build a fantastic pellet-shooting junk robot whilst practising measuring, working with averages, decimals, and data!

Full resource available here

Other fun resources such as salt dough craft, paper aeroplane pilots and desert island treasures can be found at:

https://home.oxfordowl.co.uk/kids-activities/fun-maths-games-and-activities/

---

**Outdoor Activities**

**Go on an angle hunt**

*Apply mathematical understanding to a range of contexts*

Why not get your students to go on an angle hunt? You could make a template such as the ones we sourced these from twinkl.ie, then get out and about to see if students can spot right, acute and obtuse angles in their environment. Why not get the pupils to take accurate measurements of angles on the playground, then get them to create their own map with missing angles to challenge their partner, which they can then mark themselves. During your angle hunt you could also integrate some discussion about the occurrence of horizontal, vertical, perpendicular, and parallel lines.

**Target Games**

*Apply mathematical understanding to a range of contexts*

Set a target and allocate a particular score for each area of the target into which pupil can throw a beanbag. Check with the PE department or make your own!

Pupils can have clipboards and be responsible for noting down scores and adding them up. This is easily adaptable using single-digit numbers, move on to multiples of 10, 20 and 100 or challenge with a mixture of three or four-digit numbers.

You could even get them adding decimals numbers. Why not challenge each team to calculate their mean score at the end?

**Build a tower challenge**

*Encourage a problem-solving approach to tasks.*

*Apply mathematical understanding to a range of contexts*

This lesson focuses on tall buildings and their structures. Students will work in groups to design the tallest tower they can with limited materials that can support the weight of a golf ball for two minutes. They will design their tower on paper, build their tower, present on the design process and display the performance of their tower to the other groups, evaluate their results and those of the other groups. Their findings will then be collated on the reflection sheets provided.


**Numeracy Orienteering**

*Students see pattern, trends and relationships.*

Numbers placed around a woodland/school yard with three mathematics questions underneath.

In groups of 2/3/4 students start at different stations. Find solution to question then the mean of all three solutions.

This brings them to their next station. Up to 10 teams, all having different routes.

---

**Online Activities**

**Factors and Multiples Chain**

*Students will see patterns, trends and relationships*

Choose a starting number from a 1-100 square

Then choose a factor or multiple of that number
Keep crossing out factors or multiples of the last number in the chain

E.G. Shane started with 60, 30, 6, 96, 16, 32, 8........

What is the longest chain you can make?

https://wild.maths.org/factors-and-multiples-chain

Numeracy Ninja

*Students Develop positive attitudes to numeracy and to the value of studying Mathematics and subjects with a strong numeracy foundation*

A free resource that is very useful for students’ mental arithmetic. They have to answer 30 questions in five minutes without the use of a calculator. Depending on what score the students gets out of 30, they are a certain “Ninja belt”. There is a free PowerPoint with the questions and solutions and also an excel document to track scores on the numeracy ninja website.

https://www.numeracyninjas.org/

Online Resources from NRICH

*Students can use digital technology to engage with a variety of mathematics games*

NRICH has a range of online games which support numeracy while encouraging students to find value and enjoyment in maths

https://nrich.maths.org/9465
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Player 1</th>
<th>Player 2</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>P1 P2 D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>P1 P2 D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>P1 P2 D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>P1 P2 D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>P1 P2 D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>P1 P2 D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>P1 P2 D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>P1 P2 D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>P1 P2 D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>P1 P2 D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>P1 P2 D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>P1 P2 D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>P1 P2 D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>P1 P2 D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>P1 P2 D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>P1 P2 D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>P1 P2 D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>P1 P2 D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>P1 P2 D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>P1 P2 D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>P1 P2 D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>P1 P2 D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>P1 P2 D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>P1 P2 D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>P1 P2 D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>P1 P2 D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>R P S</td>
<td>P1 P2 D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Player 1 | Player 2 | Result |
R P S    | R P S    | P1 P2 D|
R P S    | R P S    | P1 P2 D|
R P S    | R P S    | P1 P2 D|
R P S    | R P S    | P1 P2 D|
R P S    | R P S    | P1 P2 D|
R P S    | R P S    | P1 P2 D|
R P S    | R P S    | P1 P2 D|
R P S    | R P S    | P1 P2 D|
R P S    | R P S    | P1 P2 D|
R P S    | R P S    | P1 P2 D|
R P S    | R P S    | P1 P2 D|
R P S    | R P S    | P1 P2 D|
R P S    | R P S    | P1 P2 D|
R P S    | R P S    | P1 P2 D|
R P S    | R P S    | P1 P2 D|
R P S    | R P S    | P1 P2 D|
R P S    | R P S    | P1 P2 D|
R P S    | R P S    | P1 P2 D|
R P S    | R P S    | P1 P2 D|
R P S    | R P S    | P1 P2 D|
R P S    | R P S    | P1 P2 D|
R P S    | R P S    | P1 P2 D|
R P S    | R P S    | P1 P2 D|
R P S    | R P S    | P1 P2 D|
R P S    | R P S    | P1 P2 D|
R P S    | R P S    | P1 P2 D|
R P S    | R P S    | P1 P2 D|
Literacy in Action

*Literacy includes the capacity to read, understand and critically appreciate various forms of communication including spoken language, printed text, broadcast media, and digital media.*

(Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life, The National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy among Children and Young People 2011-2020)

Good literacy skills remain the foundation of all learning. Encouraging students to focus on improving literacy skills will be very important in the programme and this can be done through any subject area or any task assigned to students. Some guidelines for developing good literacy skills:

- Build in discussion time to learning tasks and activities to promote oral literacy
- Develop students’ oral skills by asking them to talk about their learning
- Teach skills of reading comprehension in an explicit manner
- Use pre-reading strategies such as activating prior student learning, prediction techniques and questioning in advance of reading any text
- Build student vocabulary through encouraging them to reuse newly acquired words
- Provide lots of opportunity for students to explain the meaning of new words and concepts orally
- Give students opportunities to read for pleasure and to read materials that they are interested in
- Increase student motivation by having competitions for a short story/ a short poem or a film or book review

[Reconnecting with School: Guidance on Summer Programme, DES(2020)]
Relevant documents:


https://ncca.ie/en/junior-cycle/framework-for-junior-cyc
Team Competition

You (students) are reporters for your local newspaper. Your team are the judging panel for ‘The Most Powerful Image Published in 2020’ with one winner only.

It is Awards Day. Your task is to:

Look at the four shortlisted entries

- Create guidelines for judging the images
- Clearly explain to the audience the reasons for your choice of winner
- Decide on the prize
You and your team work for ‘Comic Creations Inc.’ creating daily online comics for teenagers. Work together to continue the story. Your print deadline is in 40 minutes.

Assign roles- writer, illustrator, editor, manager/timekeeper

Continue the story

- Brainstorm
- Give the character a name
- Invent the story/action/plot
- Think about the unexpected
- Consider mood/atmosphere
- Consider setting-where is the story taking place
- Prizes for the most inventive story
Movement Words

Suggested word list could include:

- Twirl, scamper, flit, bounce, slither, wiggle, wobble, whirl, leap, slide, shiver, drip, float, open, slide, glide, freeze, fluctuate, sink, drift, fall, drop, pause, collapse, explode, spread, grow, suspend

Students are given one word to describe / portray, using sound or movement.

- **Example - Sink** - soft, long sounds (xylophone played smoothly and slowly from top to bottom)
- Students can then be given a sequence of words as a stimulus for composition, e.g. Scampers → freeze → whir → leap → scamper

(Students must try to create a piece using all these words)

Extension Activity

Students use GarageBand or another app to digitally create or showcase sounds

Back-to-Back Drawing

(This activity can be done at a social distance. Students just need to be facing away from each other)

- Working in pairs, one student is given an object – it can be from any subject area, they then describe it in detail to their partner who cannot see it. Their partner must try to draw the shape/object they are describing and try and get as close the original shape as possible.
- This activity focusses heavily on oral communication, descriptive language and listening skills.
Add competition: – the partner tries to be the first in the room to identify the object.

**Act it Out**

- In pairs or small groups, act, mime or present a famous scene from a story or movie (a list of stories/movies is provided by the teacher), without making direct reference to its title. The title, the most audience members guess correctly, wins.

  or

- In pairs or small groups create a short poem, rap or song that is going to leave the reader wondering who you are. You can be anyone you want from a cartoon character to a movie star. If the audience don’t guess correctly – explain your choice of words and links.
Reading the news

**Stimulus material:** A news/sports article and photo on a chosen topic of interest to students. Students study the photo without reading the accompanying article.

In groups discuss:
What is the setting? Who’s in the photo? What is happening in the photo? Is it recent or old?
Predict what the article might be about.

Then students **read the headline**
Does the headline give clues about what the article may include? What kind of language is used? Does it grab reader's attention? Who wrote the article?

Students **read the article** and discuss what they think of it.
Did the content interest them? What age group would it appeal to? What kind of language is used in the article?

Finally, students are asked to summarise the article in no more than 10 sentences (oral or written response)
Students compose their own headline for the article

**Visual Literacy- Short Film: “ALIKE”**

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PDHlyrMl_U

1. Write names of colours on the board (yellow, blue, red, green). Ask students what meanings they associate with each of these colours:

   e.g yellow is usually associated with happiness and optimism.
2. Tell your students they are going to see an animation film, but **don't reveal the title.**

**Play the film until 05:30**

3. Ask students to discuss the meanings of colours in the film, focus on yellow, blue, red and grey. Then students share their ideas. (6 minutes)

4. Students continue working in pairs. They try to predict the end of the film. Tell students that in a moment they will see the end of the film which will last about 80 seconds. Students have to think what might happen in the film and then present their ideas. (15-20 minutes).

5. Play the rest of the film. Ask students how the film made them feel and what they think about the film. Ask students to write their reflections in notebooks or on separate pieces of paper which you will be able to collect. (10 minutes)

7. To finish ask your students to create the title of the film. Students can do it in pairs or individually. Write all the titles on the board. You can vote for the best one. Finally, reveal the title. (5 minutes)

Adapted from: [https://en-joyenglish.weebly.com/blog/alike](https://en-joyenglish.weebly.com/blog/alike)

**Extension Activity: Chatter topic**

Students watch the film and consider the characters.
- Student A considers the yellow character (the son)
- Student B, the blue character (the father)
- Student C, the violinist

Students discuss their characters and exchange the information they have gathered.

Describe your character. What is his role in the film?


**Manic Marketing**

Your teamwork for **Manic Marketing** in a fast-paced ultra-competitive environment.
- Teams are competing to win the end of year ‘Bonus Bonanza’ prize
- The best **Sales Strategy** for the client products wins.
- Create your Sales Strategy now!
Baby Mop

*All play, all work-fair deal*

Goldfish Walker

*Your fish deserves to see life beyond the bowl!*

Metal Detecting Sandal

*Finding Gold in the sandals*

Top Tips

- Be Persuasive
- Invent a good name for the product
- Identify the USP - Unique Selling Point
- Invent a Slogan
- Explain why it’s a ‘Must Have’ product
- Give a good deal/special offer/bargain
Greek and Latin Roots in Language

This is a great way to introduce a new word root to students and it presents a great visual of how the words are connected in meaning to a particular root of the tree.

Assign students a root or affix, which they will write at the base of the tree (root). They should also include the meaning of the root.
Students fill in the spaces on the branches with words derived from the root. They may need to reference resources such as dictionaries, internet, prepared lists of root words etc. to find words.

Students may search for these words across their subjects - Science, Maths, Music, English, Technology etc.

Teacher Toolkit for Wellbeing

Reconnecting with School Summer Programme 2020 DEIS Post Primary Schools
Table of Contents

Introduction

Section 1: Teacher Self-Care
Self-Care Tree for Summer Programme Staff
Professional Support for School Staff – Spectrum Life
Teacher Wellbeing & Self-Care – advice document (NEPS)

Section 2: Getting Ready
Hobfoll’s Five Principles of Psychosocial Care: Returning to School
Applying Hobfoll’s Five Principles of Psychosocial Care to the Preparing for the Summer Programme Phase: Strategies and Actions
Self-reflection Sheet
Connecting Conversations – Parent/Guardian

Section 3: During the summer programme
Opening Session: The Steps
Opening session: The Tips
Connecting Conversations – Child/Young Person
My Covid-19 Experience
PACE – Dr Dan Hughes
Regulate, Relate, Reason – Dr Bruce Perry

Section 4: Sample Activities
Student Voice Booklet
Breathing Exercises
Dealing with Feelings
Self-Talk Worksheet
Thoughts Log
My problem-solving steps
Compliment Circle
Praise
Gratitude Journal
Hopes and Dreams
Postcard Activity
Letter to Future Self

**Section 5: Additional Resources (NEPS)**

Supporting Children and Young People to Manage Their Thoughts and Feelings - a guide to school staff
Managing Thoughts and Feelings - a guide for students
Anxiety and stress a guide to school staff
Managing stress and anxiety a guide for students
Panic attacks guidance for school staff
Panic Attacks a guide for students
Relaxation Techniques
Children’s understanding and reaction to death according to age
Stages of grief
How to cope when something terrible happens
Ways to help your child through this difficult time

**Section 6: Further Reading**

References
Youtube clips
Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic and associated public-health requirements will have impacted on each member of the school community in a different way. The Summer Programme - Planning for Wellbeing webinar and this accompanying toolkit acknowledge that all will have been affected to some extent. However, the extent of the impact on young people will vary. Some young people may have benefited from unprecedented change in home and school life, e.g., spending more time with family, having a slower pace of life, experiencing a greater sense of community, accessing more outdoor exercise, and being exposed to different learning experiences at home. Others however, as a result of prolonged absence from school and living through a time of extreme uncertainty and threat to health, will have experienced significant stressors, e.g., parents struggling to balance work and family commitments; loss of household income; death of a family member; isolation; loneliness; witnessing relationship breakdown, violence and/or abuse; and living with others experiencing mental-health distress, substance abuse and/or addiction. Social-distancing requirements, resulting in reduced access to support systems and services, has in some cases led to increased vulnerability.

Time away from school also means that children and young people have experienced different learning opportunities over the past few months. In some cases, gaps in knowledge may have widened. This, together with the routine summer learning loss (‘summer slide’), means that on return to formal schooling inequities are likely to exist. In terms of the Continuum of Support (NEPS, 2000), school closures and the requirement to stay at home interrupted formal learning for ALL children and young people. This has resulted in SOME being cut off from access to key protective factors for their wellbeing, while a FEW will have experienced an increase in exposure to key risk factors.

The Department of Education and Skills Summer Programme for post primary schools is designed to target educational and social disadvantage and as a support for children and young people who may have experienced greater challenges in accessing education during school closures. The programme aims to support students’ social, physical and emotional wellbeing, to enable them to build relationships and to support their reconnection with school. As cited in the guidance on the delivery of the Reconnecting with School programme it is hoped that ‘By availing of the Summer Programme schools can support those students to reconnect and continue their education. The emphasis in this programme is on supporting those students to reengage with education, on building their confidence and increasing their motivation, and thereby preparing students to reintegrate into the school system in September’. (DES, May 2020).

In terms of wellbeing support, the focus for the Summer Programme target group is on providing supports and resources to ease the transition back to the learning and social environment of the school. Hobfoll et al (2007) have distinguished five essential elements of psychosocial and wellbeing support for people who have experienced disaster, tragedy and loss. These essential elements assist in helping people to return to healthy functioning and to prevent adverse long-term impacts. This model underpins the HSE
approach set out in the guidance document, *Psychosocial and Mental Health Needs Following Major Emergencies (2014)*. The impact of Covid-19 and the related public health measures can be considered a major emergency with the potential for negative impact on the health and wellbeing of all. The essential elements of an effective response which can be provided by all non-specialists are:

- promoting a sense of safety
- promoting calming
- promoting sense of self and collective efficacy
- promoting social connectedness
- promoting hope

This NEPS wellbeing toolkit and webinar uses these principles to inform a school's psychosocial response.

**Purpose of the toolkit**

‘Wellbeing has been identified in the Summer programme as both a prerequisite for, and an outcome of, successful learning. It is a prerequisite, as students need to have a sense of wellbeing in the first place to engage with education. It is an outcome of learning, as students’ wellbeing is enhanced thorough experiencing success in school’ (DES, May 2020).

This toolkit has been developed as a companion to the Reconnecting with School Summer Programme webinar. It is designed to support teachers in delivering on emotional wellbeing, which underpins the Summer Programme.

**How to use the toolkit**

The toolkit comprises a combination of NEPS developed materials and information collated from other sources (that are acknowledged in the pack). There are a number of excellent resources available from Irish and international sources. Given the large number of resources, it is not possible to include them all.

The activities are intended as a guide for teachers and are not intended to be prescriptive or exhaustive. We are aware that teachers may already have appropriate activities and/or have sourced suitable resources that also fit with Hobfoll's principles. If teachers have accessed such resources/activities, then we encourage them to use them.

When completing activities, teachers are reminded to be cognisant of literacy difficulties, the need for differentiation, the importance of clear instructions and scaffolding, as well as sensitivity to the emotions of the students. We advocate that, where possible, teachers model or complete the activities themselves before asking children or young people to do so. This assists with relationship development, attunement and collective efficacy. We also advocate that teachers consider their own wellbeing. To this end, we have provided advice in the webinar and included a section in the toolkit on teacher self-care, which signposts additional resources.
How we interact with children and young people is as, if not more, important than the activities we complete with them. We have therefore included background information about approaches to use when interacting with young people, which we believe will help promote connectedness and wellbeing in the summer programme, e.g., the PACE approach developed by Dr Dan Hughes and Bruce Perry’s work on the 3Rs.

It is intended that this toolkit is read alongside other documents, in particular the Guidance on the delivery of the reconnecting with school summer programme (DES, 2020). Although physical safety is fundamental to wellbeing, details of the public health requirements and the practical steps that schools will be required to take to keep young people and staff safe are not included in this document.

Where does this toolkit fit within the DES Wellbeing Policy and Framework?

This toolkit is part of the NEPS/DES response to the Covid-19 pandemic. NEPS is developing other supports, including a return-to-school webinar and toolkit which will be available before schools reopen in September. A modular course on wellbeing and resilience will be available to teachers in the next academic year.

Toolkit Outline

Section One

This section focuses on teacher wellbeing and self-care, the importance of which is highlighted in the webinar. It includes a NEPS resource document and information on the DES Spectrum Life support service which is available to school staff.

Section Two

The pack begins with a teacher self-reflection inventory. Teachers may wish to use this self-reflection sheet to support them in preparing for the summer programme. This is followed by a sample script for talking to parents/guardians before their child comes to the summer programme. As partnership with parents/guardians is a key tenet of the summer programme, this script will enable teachers to connect formally with parents/guardians to identify needs and concerns. We recommend that this be done on the phone or via a video conferencing platform. This section also contains a document entitled ‘Hobfoll’s Five Principles of Psychosocial Care: Returning to School’ which describes each of Hobfoll’s principles and summarises why these are important factors to consider when preparing for the return to school. Another document called ‘Applying Hobfoll’s Five Principles of Psychosocial Care: Strategies and Actions’, outlines steps teachers can take to prepare parents/guardians and children/young people for the summer programme and the return to school.

Section Three

This section starts with a group of activities, the aim of which is to facilitate children and young people in processing their experiences of Covid-19, setting expectations for the summer programme, and enabling the start of the teacher-student relationship. These
activities (i.e., *Opening Session, My Covid-19 Experience and Connecting Conversations – Child/Young Person*), coupled with the *Connecting Conversations – Parents/Guardian* activity in Section Two facilitate the promotion of a sense of safety and connectedness. It is envisaged that these exercises would be completed in the early stages of the summer programme. This section also summarises two approaches to use when interacting with students. (i.e. PACE and 3Rs).

**Section Four**

In this section there are sample activities and guidance documents which help to assist with calming and self-regulation (i.e., Breathing Exercises, *Emotional Regulation, Self-Talk* and *Thoughts Log*) and listening to the voice of the child/young person (*Student Voice Booklet*). These are designed to be used throughout the duration of the summer programme. The final documents in this section offer a bridge to the return to formal schooling, with activities that are designed to promote hope and optimism (i.e., *Hopes and Dreams, Compliment Circle, Postcard Activity and Letter to Future Self*).

**Section Five**

This section contains some NEPS documents that could be used by teachers to help children and young people support their wellbeing including documents on how to deal with thoughts/emotions, manage anxiety/stress/panic, teaching relaxation techniques and advice documents for bereavement.

**Section Six**

This section contains key reference documents that have informed this webinar and toolkit. We have also highlighted work carried out by our colleagues in the Irish education system, namely the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST), including a Teacher Wellbeing Workbook and a very relevant resource from the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) and guidance on resources from Department of Child and Youth Affairs (DYCA).
Self-Care Tree

Know your **boundaries** – what will keep you safe psychologically, physically, emotionally, etc...

**Self Awareness** – how are you feeling? What are your needs at this time? Be realistic about what you expect from yourself and others.

There needs to be clear and effective lines of **communication** to ensure that everyone knows what is happening, when, how and why.

For Staff

Encourage and develop **supportive relationships** within the summer programme setting – this should include peer support and dedicated time for checking in with each other. Allow time for **reflection** - what do you need to ensure that you are emotionally and psychologically safe? How can this be achieved?

Home – Life Balance

Ensure you get rest

Eat healthily and at regular intervals

Get some daily physical activity

Stay in touch with family, friends and community

Safety  Calm  Connectedness  Efficacy  Hope
Professional Support for School Staff

Spectrum Life

This service will replace Inspire Wellbeing from 26th July 2020.

This service is:

- Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for 365 days of the year
- There is live chat or you can request a call back on the wellbeing portal or phone app
- After being referred, a person’s appointment will be confirmed within 24 hours and scheduled within 5 days of initial contact
- You will be matched with a counsellor within 30 km of your home or place of work. This may now be online due to Covid 19
- Counsellors speak more than a dozen different languages

Support is available in a wide range of areas which include:

- Work stress and change
- Work – life balance
- Conflict
- Discrimination and bullying
- Retirement
- Remote working
- Staying motivated
- Returning to the workplace after a prolonged absence

School Staff have access to:

Employee Assistance Service (EAS)
Online Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT)
Wellbeing Platform and App
Mental Health Promotion Officer

For further information and to contact Spectrum Life

Website: www.spectrum.life
email: eap@spectrum.life
Freephone Ire: 1800411057
WhatsApp/SMS: text ‘hi’ to 087 3690010
Teacher Wellbeing & Self-Care – advice document

Introduction

It is time to start planning for returning to school through the Reconnecting with School Summer programme initiative developed in response to school closures from March 2020 due to Covid-19 restrictions. Schools staff are aware that despite their best efforts some students disengaged from school for a variety of reasons and this programme offers an opportunity for these students to reconnect with school and continue their learning. Your students will have had a variety of experiences during school closures. Some may have enjoyed the change in routine while others may have struggled with learning remotely. Some may have experienced ill health or bereavement in the family or loss of jobs since school closures while others may have had more positive experiences. However all of the students attending this programme will have had a long break from formal schooling and will need support to adjust and settle into the new routine of the summer programme. Promoting the wellbeing of the student is front and central to this support. During this time it is especially important that teachers pay attention to and take proactive steps to promote their own wellbeing and self-care. The aim of this advice document is to provide some useful pointers to teachers that can be used during this transition back to school through the summer programme and to highlight other supports that are available.

Becoming more Self-Aware

You too have gone through the restrictions and experience of COVID-19 and now are planning to return to school through the summer programme. You may have mixed feelings and that’s ok. It can be helpful to understand that what we think affects the way we feel and behave.

- **Notice your thoughts:**
  Don’t try to push your thoughts away that just makes them stronger. Notice if your thoughts are focusing on facts or your emotions (e.g. fears/worry) around the facts.
If your thoughts are focusing on your fears/worries around the facts it may be helpful to challenge these thoughts by saying statements like ‘what evidence do I have for thinking that?’, ‘could there be another explanation?’, ‘is that really true/? etc.

- **Notice how you feel emotionally:** Don’t push your feelings away as this adds to stress. Try to name your feelings. This will give them less power. Remember that feelings come and go, you will not feel like this for ever.

- **Notice how you feel physically:** Sometimes in the busyness of life or when in a caring role as teacher or family member we can put our own emotions last. This means that we can ‘ignore’ or not recognize our emotions as we care for others. But we often feel our emotions in our body and we can use this information to understand our emotions better and then learn to manage them better. Some people like to use a body scan to notice how their body feels, some people like alone time, others may enjoy a bath etc. Take the time to notice where and how you feel your emotions in your body, then breath or massage into that area to relax the tension. Find other ways to relax that work for you.

- **Notice what you do:** Our behaviour is influenced by our thoughts and feelings. Notice your behaviour or any changes in your behaviour. While it is normal to have a variety of thoughts, feelings and behaviours during school closures due to Covid 19 and now contemplating the return to school it is important to engage in self-care activities to nurture your wellbeing.

**Steps to Promote Wellbeing & Self-Care**

Be kind to yourself and understanding of your own needs at this time. If stressed it is especially important to focus and draw comfort from the people and things around you:
• **Relationships:** Teachers consistently report that relationships with colleagues are essential to their wellbeing and self-care. Similarly, the relationships that teachers have with their students have been shown to contribute positively to the wellbeing of both teachers and students (Split, Koomen, & Thijs, 2011). Ensure that you connect with colleagues running the school programme with you. It is also important to prioritise relationships outside of school to connect with family and friends.

• **Relaxation:** Take time each day to pay attention to your body and what it is telling you. Try to recognise when your body and mind are stressed. If you are feeling stressed or anxious, take a few deep breaths and concentrate on letting go of your worries even for a short time. When you take deep breaths from the abdomen, rather than shallow breaths from your upper chest, you inhale more oxygen. The more oxygen you get, the less tense, short of breath, and anxious you feel. Further ideas and resources on relaxation can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

• **Maintain Work/Life Balance:** It is important to have clear boundaries between work and leisure time. This is particularly important now as our usual leisure activities may not be available to us due to Covid 19 restrictions. Ensure that you develop new routines as you return to the school setting that include leisure time and relaxation time for you.

• **Creativity:** Do things that challenge your creativity and make you feel productive like gardening, drawing, writing, playing an instrument, or building something (Psychological Society of Ireland, 2011). Creative Ireland is an all-of-government culture and wellbeing programme that inspires and transforms people, places and communities through creativity. Consider how you might get creative with your students during the summer programme to support your own and their wellbeing.
• The **Getting Through COVID-19 Together** launched by the Government has a website which provides tips and advice on topics such as *physical activity*, parenting, coping with daily routines, supporting the ‘cocooned’ and getting involved in the community solidarity efforts. It can be accessed [here](#).

• **Personal & Professional Development:** Teachers have had to adapt their suite of teaching methodologies in a very short period of time. This can generate understandable feelings of worry and uncertainty. Acknowledge these feelings and congratulate yourself on all that you have learned and achieved in the effort to support your students. It is helpful to encourage a professional culture which learns from both successes and failures. And where teachers can ask for help from a colleague or management when needed.

**Supports**

**Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Service**, provided by Spectrum Life, can be contacted at free phone IRE 1800 411 057 or by e-mail at eap@spectrum.life. or **WhatsApp/SMS:** Text ‘Hi’ to 087 369 0010

The service offers a free confidential service 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, providing counselling and other supports on a range of personal health and wellbeing issues.

**Useful Resources**

• Many of the [Teaching Unions](#) have guidance and support relating to teacher wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic available on their websites.

• The [Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST)](#) has a range of resources to support teacher wellbeing available [here](#).

• The [Centre for School Leadership (CSL)](#) has ideas and supports available for school principals and teachers [here](#)
References


### Hobfoll’s Five Principles of Psychosocial Care:

### Returning to School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Developing a sense of...</th>
<th>This is...</th>
<th>Why is this Important?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SAFETY</td>
<td>A belief that your needs and the needs of those you care about will be met now and in the future. A belief that you are protected from harm and that those around you will stay safe.</td>
<td>Essential to reduce the impact of stress and anxiety. Essential for learning and to reconnect with adults and peers. The less stressed we are the more we are able to think, plan, engage and learn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CALM</td>
<td>Being able to relax and stay composed or grounded, rather than become numb, shut down, agitated or overly excited. (Self-regulate)</td>
<td>Being able to relax your body and mind allows you to focus and concentrate on what you need to do. The more regulated/calm we are the more we are able to think, plan, engage and learn. It also promotes the ability to engage in higher-order thinking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONNECTEDNESS</td>
<td>Having relationships with others (individual or groups) who understand you and support you</td>
<td>The restoration of school communities is central to recovery, providing a connection back to a key social group in the lives of students. Rebuilding connections and relationships with teachers and peers will be critical in providing a basis for readiness to learn. Teachers can provide a secure base to challenge and prevent the development of negative cognitive thought patterns. Connection is much more important than the absence of a threat (Covid-19).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFFICACY</td>
<td>Self-efficacy is the belief that you can do what you need to do, deal with challenges and handle tough times. Community efficacy is the belief that the school community you belong to can do what it needs to do to thrive and take care of its members.</td>
<td>In times of crisis, efficacy beliefs may be challenged and people may feel they have lost their competence to solve problems and handle ordinary day to day challenges. (lose hope/agency/motivation) A key enabling factor in building self-and community efficacy following a crisis is the restoration of school communities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hope</td>
<td>The expectation that things will work out; a feeling that everything’s going to be alright. Hope can include a belief that others will be there to help.</td>
<td>Hope is critical for learning - motivation to achieve goals both in the short and long term. Remember: Return to school can re-ignite hope and purpose for many students and their broader community. The media, schools and community can focus on positive goals, building strengths and telling individual stories and re-building connections and hope.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from Hobfoll et al (2007)
Applying Hobfoll’s Five Principles of Psychosocial Care to the Getting Ready Phase: Strategies and Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SAFETY</th>
<th>PARENTS</th>
<th>SUMMER PROGRAMME STAFF</th>
<th>YOUNG PERSON</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Make a “Check in” telephone call with parents to inform them of the public health measures that will be in place to keep their child safe.</td>
<td>During your check in call with parents, sensitively gather relevant information on the lockdown experience. This should include information on what went well, what was difficult and any loss experienced. Check in with the summer programme team. Share hopes and goals. Engage in team planning where possible.</td>
<td>Ensure that they are aware of the public health measures that are in place to keep them safe. Consider providing an e-book to describe the summer programme and activities. Provide a virtual tour so that they are familiar with the lay out.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convey a compassionate, non-judgemental attitude towards families. Acknowledge the efforts and challenges that people have encountered trying to support their children’s learning at home. Meet families and young people where they are at.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CALM</th>
<th>PARENTS</th>
<th>SUMMER PROGRAMME STAFF</th>
<th>YOUNG PERSON</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Convey a calm attitude in all communication with parents.</td>
<td>Plan for the inclusion of teacher self-care and self-regulation activities throughout the day.</td>
<td>Prepare a quiet space in the classroom where they can self-regulate. Plan for the inclusion of self-regulation activities throughout the day. Provide a worry box where they can write or draw their worries.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONNECTEDNESS</strong></td>
<td><strong>Efficacy</strong></td>
<td><strong>Hope</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make a “Check in” telephone call with parents to find out some information about their child.</td>
<td>Support parents to prepare their children for the summer programme.</td>
<td>Ask parents to set out what their hopes are for their children in the summer programme.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check in with summer programme team, share hopes and goals</td>
<td>Encourage participation and team work in planning how to implement public health guidance in the school and classroom.</td>
<td>Promote Hope: Express gratitude. Set short and medium term goals. Set out hopes for the summer programme and share them with students on day one.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Think about how to provide a warm, effusive welcome to the young people. Create welcome signs. Ask them to think about a summer programme name in advance, to create a sense of group identity and connectedness.</td>
<td>Plan for collaborative learning opportunities and how you will include young people in the planning of activities. Inclusion of strengths and interests in the summer programme.</td>
<td>Use hope clouds to gather their hopes for the summer programme (prepare a hope sky) Let them express gratitude for the good things (prepare a gratitude tree) Keep the tone of communication up beat and enthusiastic.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reconnecting with School: Summer Camp/Programme

This self-reflection sheet has been designed to support summer camp/programme teachers in preparing to welcome children and young people back to a formal education setting through the DEIS Reconnecting with School: School Summer Camp/Programme. While most children and young people will be looking forward to returning to school, some may be feeling a little uncertain and a few may be feeling worried and anxious about returning to school, especially if their contact with school has been intermittent during school closure. It is intended that this DEIS summer camp/programme will support children and young people’s wellbeing and sense of connectedness by enabling them to reconnect with peers and teachers, thus promoting their re-engagement with school.

Public health measures mean that there are now new routines and rules in schools and therefore the school environment may look a little different than it did before Covid-19. Children and young people have an inbuilt capacity to adapt, so most will settle into the summer camp/programme without difficulty, weathering the challenges that that these public health measures will bring. Others may need additional encouragement and support to prepare for the transition back to formal education. Transition back to school will be a process and not a single event. It is important therefore that all children and young people are supported to experience a successful time in this programme, which in turn will support them in returning to school in the new academic year.

The following self-reflection sheet is designed as a guide to help teachers to support children and young people on this transition journey. Teachers may wish to use it as a guide in their preparation for this summer camp/programme. By reflecting on the statements outlined below, it is hoped that teachers will identify their own key strengths (√) and needs (X). A toolkit has been developed to support teachers in addressing any identified needs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SAFETY: getting ready for the return to routine</th>
<th>✓</th>
<th>?</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have a plan for my welcoming session.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am comfortable with supporting children and young people to share their experience of Covid-19 and school closure.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am comfortable allowing children and young people to discuss their thoughts and feelings.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am comfortable acknowledging the continued uncertainty about Covid-19.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have visual reminders of rules relating to Covid-19.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I recognise the importance of prioritising wellbeing over educational activities during the summer camp/programme.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I devote time to supporting my own wellbeing.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am aware of professional supports that are available.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CALM: planning for a calm and predictable day</th>
<th>✓</th>
<th>?</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have considered how my systems for routines and transitions are accessible to all children and young people and are adapted for children and young people with additional needs.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I plan to include children and young people in developing summer camp/programme rules.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a variety of activities to regulate children and young people, i.e., activating and calming activities.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I plan to co-regulate by taking part in regulation activities with children and young people.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>Calm</td>
<td>Connectedness</td>
<td>Efficacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to help children and young people to recognise their own emotional states.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can model self-control, e.g., staying calm when stressed, using a warm tone of voice when frustrated, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have plans for how to relax and recharge at the end of the day during the summer camp/programme.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EFFICACY: investing time and energy in recognising children and young people’s potential</strong></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a list of jobs/activities that will develop children and young people’s sense of responsibility.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have identified opportunities where I can give children and young people age-appropriate choices and control.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have identified the good decisions, actions and behaviours that I plan to encourage through praise.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have identified games and activities to support children and young people to work together as a team.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have identified games and activities to support children and young people to engage in problem solving.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will share my daily successes with a colleague, family member or friend.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONNECTEDNESS: spending time getting to know the children and young people and their parents/guardians</strong></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a plan to connect with parents/guardians before the start of the summer programme.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am comfortable reassuring parents/guardians who may be concerned about their child attending the summer camp/programme.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I recognise that I will need to adjust my expectations to accommodate the different experiences that children and young people will have had during school closure.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a plan to greet each child/young person individually, using a variety of strategies.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am aware of the importance of spending time developing personal connections with the children and young people in my group.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am comfortable giving time and space to hear children and young people’s personal stories.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to be present, attentive, attuned and responsive when children and young people are talking to me.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will plan activities to help children and young people to re-establish connections and make new friendships.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a variety of creative activities to build a sense of connectedness.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will take the time to develop connections with colleagues during the week of camp/summer programme.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HOPE: staying focused on positive outcomes</strong></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can facilitate conversations with children and young people to promote a strengths-based and future-focused perspective.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can teach children and young people how to develop positive self-talk.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am aware of the signs of grief and know how to support children and young people who are bereaved.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am aware of the importance of expressing gratitude in promoting wellbeing.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am hopeful that the summer camp/programme experience will reconnect children and young people with school life.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I am hopeful that the summer camp/programme experience will inform my teaching practice into the future.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My key strengths</th>
<th>My key needs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONNECTING WITH PARENTS/GUARDIANS

KEY MESSAGES
• It is time to reconnect children and young people with learning and friends.
• The camp/summer programme is a safe and fun place to be.
• Teachers are there to support children and young people.
• Children/young people will need to be reminded about all they have learned.
• We are all in this together.
• We can feel hopeful about the return to school.

Introducing self
At the start of the telephone call, assure the parent/guardian that there is nothing wrong, that you are just checking in with them prior to the start of the camp/summer programme. Check to see if it is a good time for them to talk and let them know that the call will only take a few minutes. Acknowledge that they have been having a busy time with their child/children at home, so thank them for taking the time to talk.

Acknowledging the situation
Covid-19 and school closures have brought many changes and stresses. Everyone has their own personal experience. Recognise that this may be the first time that their child is mixing with others, so it is understandable that they may be worried. Normalise common thoughts and feelings that they may be having as their child prepares to start at a camp/summer programme.

Providing reassurance and information
Take a few minutes to talk about the camp/summer programme. Go through the safety procedures and public health guidelines. Give them some ideas about the daily activities. Outline the daily practicalities (i.e., importance of being on-time, parents leave/collect children at the school entrance, what the child/young person needs to bring, etc.). Explore the ways that they can support their child to have a fun time and get the most out of the camp/summer programme. Identify ways to stay in touch.

Gathering information
Ask the parents/guardians about how their child is feeling about starting camp, meeting friends, and returning to school. Try to find out what their child is most looking forward to and any worries that they might have. Ask if there is anything that you should be aware of or anything that you could do to support their child during the camp/summer programme. If the child is worried, ask for ideas on what normally helps their child to relax when upset. Invite the parents to ask questions and share their concerns. Try to answer their questions as sensitively and honestly as you can. If you do not know the answer, let them know that you will link in with the camp/summer programme facilitator and get back to them with the necessary information. Invite them to share something positive about their child and to let you know their child’s main interests (e.g., favourite toy/sport/food/reward etc.).

Ending on a positive note
Summarise the main points from the call. End with a positive and hopeful message by letting them know that you are looking forward to having their child at the camp/summer programme, that you have lots of fun activities planned, and that you are confident that all will have a great time. Thank them for taking the call and for helping you get to know their child.
Opening Session

Welcome and introduction
Welcome the children/young people to the camp/summer programme. Convey your delight in having children and young people back in the school building and your excitement about the camp/summer programme. Use positive and affirming statements. Explain how the camp/summer programme is a first step in getting ready for the return to school. Make connections between the camp/summer programme and school, and spend some time getting them to talk about how these settings are alike/different.

Acknowledge the situation
Acknowledge that much has happened since they were last at school. Covid-19 and school closures have brought many changes and stresses. Everyone has had their own personal experience. Ensure that they understand that no group of people is responsible for Covid-19. Communicate the message that we all play a part in keeping everyone safe. Let them know that adults are proud of how children and young people helped our country to respond by staying at home and by following the public health guidelines.

Share experiences
Give them an opportunity to share their personal experiences of Covid-19 and be part of this conversation by sharing how you coped and your own experiences. Engage them in discussion about how they spent their time during the school closure, e.g., what they liked/didn't like, found easy/hard, etc. Engage them in discussion about how we have all experienced many different feelings (e.g., happy, excited, sad, worried, etc.) and reactions (e.g., slept more/less, kept busy/get bored, etc.). Ask them how they felt and acknowledge and normalise their feelings and reactions. Let them know that a range of feelings and reactions is normal and to be expected. Help them to see that there are healthy ways to express all these feelings. Help them to understand that feelings won't always be as intense and that they come and go. Help them to see that during this time they will have learned many new things and have found creative ways to deal with all the changes in their lives. Help them to identify the ways in which they have been resilient. Help them to recognise their own personal circle of support by identifying the people who cared for them through the uncertainty.

Explore how to stay safe
Explain the public health guidelines that are being implemented in the camp/summer programme. Stick to the current guidelines, avoid speculation about future developments, and remain optimistic about everybody's ability to follow the rules. Go through the rules and protocols in a developmentally appropriate way. Check their understanding of each rule. Model and practise the safety rules. Ask them to come up with ideas about how they can work together to follow these new rules to keep everyone safe. Brainstorm what they can do, both individually and as a group, to help themselves through this uncertain time. Thank them for all their ideas, talk about the importance of each one, and let them know that they will have a chance to put these ideas into practice.

End on a positive note
Keep the focus of the discussion on a positive future by offering affirming messages, e.g., following the rules will keep them safe, they will have lots of fun and will learn many new things over the week, etc. Remind them that scientific and medical experts from around the world are working together to find ways to treat and prevent Covid-19. This means that in time school will start to look and feel more familiar and normal. Until then everyone knows what to do to stay safe and well. Remind them that we are all in this together and that adults are there to help them get through this uncertain time.
OPENING SESSION: THE TIPS

- Carefully consider your seating to ensure adherence to the public health guidelines.
- Develop a personal script so you are at ease talking through each step.
- Follow a circle time format.
- Know your key messages (*) and use simple language.
- Have sample sentence starters, e.g., The best thing about Covid-19 was ..., The hardest thing for me was ..., Something new I learned is ..., One thing I am grateful for is ..., This week I hope that....
- Have scripts to respond to comments that might arise when sharing stories, e.g., normalise fears/ worries, acknowledge loss/stresses, accept different reaction, refocus the group back on the key messages etc.
- Find creative ways to deliver key messages and ensure that the session is multi-sensory, e.g., set up an achievement wall, gratitude flag/tree, hope cloud, etc.
- If you are concerned about anything that a child or young person shares communicate that there are adults in the school who are there to help. Discuss your concerns with the camp facilitator and take the time to have a private conversation with the child/young person and their parents/guardians. Be alert to the possibility that a welfare or protection concern may arise and be familiar with the protocols and procedures that need to be followed in these circumstances.
- End the session on a positive note and plan to revisit the discussion with informal check-ins and follow-up circle-time sessions. It is important to remember that acknowledging the impact that Covid-19 has had on the lives of children and young people is not a one-off conversation, but a way of being attuned to them as they adjust to the uncertainty of living through a pandemic.

SAMPLE KEY MESSAGES (*)

- It is time to reconnect children and young people with learning and friends.
- The camp/summer programme is a safe and fun place to be.
- Teachers are there to support children and young people.
- Children/young people will need to be reminded about all they have learned.
- We are all in this together.
- We can feel hopeful about the return to school.
KEY MESSAGES

- It is time to reconnect children and young people with learning and friends.
- The camp/summer programme is a safe and fun place to be.
- Teachers are there to support children and young people.
- Children/young people will need to be reminded about all they have learned.
- We are all in this together.
- We can feel hopeful about the return to school.

BEING HONEST

Covid-19 is still around. Some people will continue to become ill from it, which may make us all a little worried. However, we are learning more about how to deal with Covid-19 all the time. We now know more about how to protect ourselves, which means that it is safe to come back to school in a new way. We can all work together to make sure that school is a safe and fun place to be.

EXPRESSION OF FEELINGS

People have coped with Covid-19 in many different ways. We have all had varying thoughts and feelings about the situation, and have behaved and reacted in different ways. This is normal and to-be-expected as this has been a difficult time for many people. I know that you may have experienced and may continue to experience different feelings, e.g., happy/unhappy to be at home, lonely/content without friends, worried/unconcerned about the virus, etc. Some of your feelings may have been very strong, e.g., very angry/delighted to be at home. You may have had and may continue to have unfamiliar thoughts, e.g., I will never see my friends again,... I will never catch up in school..., etc. At times you may even have reacted or behaved differently than before, e.g., argued more/less with brothers and sisters, helped out more/less at home, slept more/less, ate more/less, etc. These are normal feelings, thoughts and reactions at this time. Always remember that in time your thoughts and feelings won't be as strong, as feelings come and go, and you will be better able to deal with them. I am here to listen and to help you to find healthy ways to share your thoughts and express your feelings.

ACKNOWLEDGING IMPACT

Life in school is going to look a little different than before. There are new rules and new systems, which are there to keep us all safe. We have to wash our hands more, cough and sneeze into our elbows, use only our own belongings, keep our social distance, and tell someone if we are feeling unwell. At first these new rules will seem a little strange but, I know that we will quickly get used to them.

LOOKING BACK

We have all played our part to help our country deal with Covid-19. Every child and young person, including you, has been a stay-at-home hero. This has helped to keep people safe. I know that at times this will have been a difficult thing to do but, you did it! You did what was asked and you have come out of this unusual time as a stronger, kinder and smarter person.

LOOKING FORWARD

We know that scientific and medical experts from around the world are working together to find ways to treat and prevent Covid-19. This means that in time school will start to look and feel more familiar and normal. Until then, we know what to do. We will follow our new school rules to keep ourselves and our school community safe. We will look out for each other as we are all in this together. We can do it. We will get through this together.

SPENDING TIME

I would like us to think about new ways that we could spend time together, relaxing and having fun while keep our social distance. Let us think about how we could do that.

REMAINING AVAILABLE

Know that I am here to listen if you want to talk. I am here to help you deal with any worry or problem that you might have. I may not have all the answers but, I am confident that we will be able to work together to find a solution.

REMEMBER

I am here to help you in these uncertain times. We are all in this together and will get through it together.
MY COVID 19 EXPERIENCE

What Covid-19 means to me

How I spent my time at home

Three happy memories from staying at home
1.
2.
3.

What I missed about not being at school

What I have learned about myself

What I am looking forward to in summer programme

Any questions or worries I have about being in summer programme
Playfulness involves adults interacting with children and young people in a light-hearted and reassuring manner. In a playful moment, an adult communicates interest in a child/young person and learns more about his/her world. The adult’s open, calm and engaged attitude allows the child/young person to relax and become less defensive and more reflective.

Acceptance refers to adults unconditionally accepting the inner thoughts, feelings and struggles that are behind children and young people’s behaviour. A child/young person is therefore encouraged to express his/her inner world without fear of judgement or evaluation. This unconditional acceptance on the part of the adult is critical in creating a feeling of safety and security for the child/young person. By normalising emotions and providing affirmations, the adult supports the child/young person in being open about his/her inner turmoil. The adult communicates understanding of the motives for behaviour and accepts the child/young person’s right to show his/her emotion, but helps him/her understand that certain behaviours are still unacceptable.

Curiosity involves adults supporting children and young people to become more self-aware by learning to reflect on the reasons underlying their behaviour. When adults are curious, they are interested in understanding what has happened to rather than what is wrong with children or young people. When an adult shows genuine curiosity and a real willingness to understand the meaning behind a child/young person’s behaviour, it helps the child/young person to open up about personal thoughts and feelings without fear of being judged. The child/young person is then more likely to open up and stay engaged in conversations that support the development of a deeper understanding of how his/her thoughts and feelings influence his/her behaviour.

Empathy involves adults showing compassion, communicating that children and young people’s inner worlds are important to them, and that they are available if the children or young people are finding things tough. It involves an adult being present in the moment so as to understand and experience things alongside the child/young person.

You can find further information on the web ddpnetwork.org or danielhughes.org.
"Can I join in?"
"Let's skip/dance/go crazy"

"You are SO angry, I'll help you with these big feelings."
"No wonder you are upset that must have been so hard."

Listen until they stop.
Snap.
Snap.

Empathy.

P.A.C.E.

Youself.

Help children.

Feel secure.

Curiosity.

Your mind.

Open.

Connection.

Unconditional positive regard.

The well of understanding.

Your truth.

Their truth.

Their world.

Their chalk.

Your world.

Prepare to be influenced.

Acceptance.

Hug the cactus.

Sit with the uncomfortable.

Don't sweat the small stuff.

Dont sweat the small stuff.

Try to show spontaneous.

Their money.

Go dump.

The chalk.

"I wonder..."
"Tell me about that..."
"I will be curious for you..."
Regulate, Relate, Reason

Dr. Bruce Perry has developed a simple method for helping children and young people to learn, think and reflect. He refers to the importance of understanding brain structure when trying to interact especially when they are in a dysregulated state. He contends that heading straight for the reasoning part of the brain, with the expectation that a child or young person will learn, will not work if they are dysregulated and feels disconnected from others. By having an understanding of the hierarchical nature of the brain, adults can follow a set sequence of steps which will facilitate effective interaction. The three phases in this sequence are: regulate, relate and reason.

The model contends that regulating and then relating to a child or young person is the most effective way of getting information to the thinking part of the brain. Once regulated, they are more likely to be receptive to teaching and learning, which then enables any problem-solving discussions to begin. If a child or young person is in a dysregulated state, they are very unlikely to learn or remember what they have heard.

Regulate:
The first phase involves helping them to regulate and calm their stress response. Adults can assist children and young people to regulate by offering comfort and reassurance.

Relate:
The second phase involves having an attuned and sensitive relationship with the child or young person. By empathising with them and validating their feelings, adults can support the development of a connection. When adults relate to and connect with children and young people, they are reminded that they are in a safe and secure environment where adults are interested in understanding them and supporting them to deal with their thoughts and feelings.

Reason:
The third phase involves the calm, connected child or young person being ready to engage with learning. Once regulated and feeling connected, they can start to access the parts of the brain needed for reason. It is at this stage that adults can support them to remember, reflect, articulate, and become self-assured.

You can find further information at Beacon House Click here
The Three R's: Reaching The Learning Brain

Dr Bruce Perry, a pioneering neuroscientist in the field of trauma, has shown us that to help a vulnerable child to learn, think and reflect, we need to intervene in a simple sequence.

First: We must help the child to regulate and calm their fight/flight/freeze responses.

Second: We must relate and connect with the child through an attuned and sensitive relationship.

Third: We can support the child to reflect, learn, remember, articulate and become self-assured.

Heading straight for the 'reasoning' part of the brain with an expectation of learning, will not work so well if the child is dysregulated and disconnected from others.
How to use the Student Voice Booklet.

The aim of this booklet is to include the voice of the child and young person in their learning, supporting them to reach their goals. Learning occurs when a child/young person is learning ready. This is achieved by supporting the needs of the child/young person which allows them to be available to learn. By inviting the voice of the child and young person we are allowed to respond to their uniqueness in terms of their social-emotional development, communication, learning, and relationships to self and others. It also provides valuable information to the teacher about their strengths and needs which is helpful in selecting strategies to support the child/young person.

This booklet is underpinned by Person-centred approaches which are rooted within a humanistic psychological perspective and underpinned by person-centred psychology based on theory by Carl Rogers (1951). The worksheets in the booklet are adapted from Sanderson and Solution Focused Brief Therapy models.

The booklet can be completed over the summer programme, so that by the end of the programme the child/young person and teacher will have discussed the strengths and needs of the child/young person, what makes a good school day for them, what skills they may need to acquire to support their learning, and who may support them. When using the worksheets within this booklet an individual conversational approach is intended, with the teacher acting as scribe if needed.

Worksheets:
‘What I like and admire about me’ and ‘What I like and admire about you’ are adapted from the Appreciation tool (Ref: www.helensandersonassociates.co.uk). These worksheets can be used to gather information on what others like and admire about the child/young person and what they like and admire about themselves, including their gifts, talents and interests. This information helps us to think about how an individual can use their strengths to make a positive contribution to their school or to the summer programme. Some children and young people may struggle to write positive information about themselves. If so the worksheet can be completed over the summer programme and the teacher can use instances over the programme to prompt the child/young person to recognize their strengths. If the summer programme teacher does not know the child/young person the ‘What I like and admire about you’ worksheet can be completed by the teacher over the week as the teacher notices the gifts, talents, interests of the child/learner.

The ‘Good Day’ worksheet (adapted from www.helensandersonassociates.co.uk) involves gathering information about what makes a good day for the child/young
person. This information can be used to identify what is important to them and how best to support them in the summer programme and in school.

The ‘If I had a magic wand’ worksheet is adapted from the Solution Focused Brief Therapy approach and invites the child/young person to envision a preferred future, which not only promotes a sense of hope but can be used for goal setting.

The ‘Supporters’ worksheet also adapted from Solution Focused approaches can be used to help us understand who is important in the child/young person’s life and how they can support the child/young person to settle back to school and achieve their goals.

The ‘Skill Development’ worksheet underpinned by both approaches focuses on the child/young person’s sense of agency in change.

The ‘What if?’ worksheet underpinned by Solution Focused approaches invites the child/young person to explore their strengths, current skill set and resilience in coping with setbacks. By exploring the possibility of setbacks as a normal part of skill development or change, motivation is maintained and the focus remains on the goal and the strengths the child and young person has rather than the setback.
WELCOME

A booklet to help you to make a plan to get back on track and experience more good days in school.
What I like and admire about me.

Fill the spaces with things about yourself. Think about things you like, what you’re good at, your achievements or talents and your positive traits.
What I like and admire about you.

Ask your teacher to think about things they admire about you!
What is important to me right now?

Fill the spaces with things that you feel are important to you right now. What are the things you like? What makes you feel good?

Music

Hobbies

Screen Time

Food

What I really like at school.
Good Days, Bad Days

Each day can feel different and we all have good and bad days. What makes a day good for you in school? What makes a bad day for you in school?

WHAT MAKES A GOOD DAY?

WHAT MAKES A BAD DAY?
From Bad Day to Good Day.

Where are you today? Mark on the line where you feel you are today. What would it take to move you nearer to a good day?

Bad Day

Good Day

What would make today better?

__________________________________________________

__________________________________________________

__________________________________________________
If I had a Magic Wand.

If you had a magic wand what one change would you make to make your time in school better?
Skill Development

What skill(s) do you need to learn or to become better at to have more good days than bad days in school?
Supporters

Who will support you in getting better at these skills?

________________
________________
________________
________________
What if …?

What if things don’t go to plan when you are really trying to have more good days?

What might go wrong?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

What will you do?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Will that be helpful? How might things change?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Who will you go to for support to get back on track?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
BREATHING EXERCISES

An important part of emotional regulation involves bringing our bodies to a calm or relaxed state. When calm, we manage our emotions more effectively and are better able to focus on cognitive tasks, such as learning. When calm, we are more present in social situations and are more able to engage in social activities in appropriate ways. There are many ways that you can help children and young people to calm their bodies. One of the easiest ways is to teach them how to control their breathing. Four simple, yet effective methods are explained below. The first two methods are suitable for younger children, while the last two may be more appropriate for older children or young people. In all of these exercises encourage them to inhale through their noses and exhale through their mouths.

**Butterfly Breathing**
Stand or sit comfortably with your arms by your sides. Pretend that you are a butterfly and that your arms are beautiful wings. You are going to raise and lower your arms slowly, imitating how a butterfly opens and closes its wings. Slowly raise your arms while inhaling to the count of 1, 2, 3. Slowly lower your arms back down by your sides while exhaling to the count of 3, 2, 1.

See the You Tube Video, Butterfly Breathing Conscious Discipline
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1VXknVjy1T0

**Blow Out the Candles**
Imagine a birthday cake with candles is placed in front of your face. You are getting ready to blow out the candles. Inhale deeply and hold for the count of 1, 2, 3, 4. Exhale to blow out the candles to the count of 1, 2, 3, 4. Repeat.

**5 Finger Breathing**
Stretch out the fingers of your dominant hand like a star fish in front of you. Place the index finger from your other hand at your wrist at the base of the thumb. Inhale to the count of 3 as you trace your finger up along the outer side of the thumb. Hold to the count of 2 while pausing at the tip of your thumb. Exhale to the count of 3 as you trace down the inner side of the thumb. Hold to the count of 2 while pausing at the inner base of the thumb. Continue to inhale, hold and exhale as you trace up and down the other fingers in a similar way.

See the You tube Video, Five Finger breathing a simple guided breathing exercise for kids. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HQVZgpyVQ78

**Square Breathing**
Visualise a square in front of you. Let your breathing follow the shape of the square. Breathe in 1, 2, 3, 4 as you travel up the left-hand side of the square. Hold for 4 as you travel across the top of the square. Exhale for 4 as you travel down the right-hand side of the square. Hold again for 4 as you go across the bottom of the square.

See the You tube Video, Kids meditation Square Breathing (Focus and Calm)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YFdZXwE6fRE
Children and young people vary in the intensity with which they experience and express their feelings or emotions. They vary in their ability to regulate their emotions. Emotional regulation refers to our ability to manage emotional reactions effectively so as to cope with the varying demands of everyday life. Like many other skills, most children and young people develop appropriate emotional regulation skills independently however, some require explicit teaching and support to learn and practise these skills. Teachers can help children and young people to learn and improve emotional regulation skills in four ways:

Teach them to recognise body cues that are the early physiological signs of intense feelings.

Teach them to identify and label how they are feeling so as to develop their self-awareness and expand their emotional literacy.

Teach them how to rate the intensity of their feelings so as to enable them to develop more self-control.

Empower them by teaching them to identify a range of tools and strategies that they can use to self-regulate and that assist in the healthy expression of emotions.
Children and young people often engage in self-talk. This can be either positive self-talk, where they recognise what is positive about themselves and their situation, or negative self-talk, where they are self-critical or focus more on negative aspects of their situation. If you notice children or young people engaging in negative self-talk, alert them to the importance of their becoming aware of their negative self-perceptions. Give them opportunities to practise changing their thinking. This exercise involves encouraging children or young people to write down the situation that is causing them to engage in negative self-talk, to identify negative self-talk statements, and to practise changing these negative statements into more positive, hopeful and calming self-talk statements. Children and young people may need much encouragement and practice to persist with this work before positive self-talk becomes a habit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Negative self-talk</th>
<th>Positive self-talk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Helpful thoughts are based on facts and lead to appropriate feelings and behaviours. Unhelpful thoughts are based on our emotions (e.g. fear, worry) around the facts, which leads to unnecessary unpleasant feelings (sadness, worry, fear) and behaviours (avoidance, aggression). Unhelpful thoughts have the potential to overshadow helpful thoughts, which often lead to unpleasant feelings and inappropriate behaviour. If you notice a child or young person engaging in unhelpful thinking, encourage them to challenge these thoughts. Challenging unhelpful thoughts gives a child or young person the necessary space to see a situation differently, leading to a more measured response. This exercise, involving use of a thoughts log, comprises three components: (1) encouraging children or young people to write down their unhelpful thoughts; (2) supporting them to counter their negative thinking by asking thought challenger e.g., Where is the evidence? What would I tell a friend in this situation? How did I cope in the past? Is thinking like this helping me or making me feel worse? (3) helping them to replace their negative thoughts with more positive and reassuring ones.

Thoughts Log

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unhelpful Thought</th>
<th>Thought Challenger</th>
<th>Helpful Thought</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Where is the evidence? | What would I tell a friend in this situation? | How did I cope in the past? | Is thinking like this helping me, or making me feel worse? | Safety | Calm | Connectedness | Efficacy | Hope | Rialtas na hÉireann Government of Ireland
Children and young people often find it difficult to think about ways to handle challenging situations or deal with conflict. Teaching them the steps involved in effective problem solving helps them to feel more confident about dealing with everyday problems. Teachers can support children and young people to learn and practise the key steps involved in effective problem solving. Outlined below is a six-step problem-solving model. The six key steps involve: (1) defining the problem, (2) identifying possible solutions to the problem, (3) anticipating the outcome of each solution, (4) selecting the best solution, (5) implementing the solution, and (6) evaluating the outcome.
Compliment Circle

Giving and receiving compliments are two separate skills that are not always easy to learn. Many children and young people need to be taught both skills as these will help them to develop positive self-esteem and build positive relationships. Recognising and naming strengths and positive qualities in themselves and others will help them to develop self-efficacy and extend their friendship group and social supports. A compliment circle is an activity where each child or young person gets the opportunity to give a compliment to a classmate and receive a compliment from a classmate. A compliment circle therefore supports children and young people in reflecting on their own strengths and those of others which can support the development of a positive classroom atmosphere.

1. Before starting, teachers need to decide on a system for exchanging compliments, i.e., highly-structured/teacher-led to more informal/child-led. The level of structure required varies depending on a number of factors including age, ability-level, and familiarity with the process of giving and receiving compliments.

2. Decide in advance how compliments will be exchanged as this may involve preparation of materials, i.e., the use of concrete or visual supports. Very young children and/or children and young people with special educational needs may need prompting and a more concrete approach, particularly when this activity is being introduced and is new to them. Teachers can structure the content of the compliment circle by giving cue cards containing a picture, word or sentence. These cards can be physically handed over as the compliment is given.

3. When introducing a compliment circle, spend some time explaining the process and expectations.

4. Teachers may need to teach and model how to give and receive a compliment.

5. A golden rule of compliment circles is for compliments to be acknowledged. The person receiving the compliment needs to look and smile at the person giving the compliment and say: Thank-you. The person who has given the compliment needs to respond with: You are welcome. Such acknowledgement ensures that the impact of the compliment is more profoundly felt by all, thereby increasing self- and collective-efficacy.

6. In the beginning, many children and young people may be uncomfortable giving and/or receiving compliments and may make superficial comments. With regular practice, they will become more comfortable with the process and better able to give and receive more meaningful compliments.

7. Provide many opportunities for practice by setting up compliment circles as a regular feature of the class routine.

8. Once children and young people have become used to giving and receiving compliments, they may be encouraged to compliment themselves aloud e.g., I compliment X for ..... I compliment myself for ......
When teachers praise, the relationship between the child/young person and the teacher is nurtured. This forms the basis of trust. When the praise is specific and targeted it can be used as a strategy to shape desired behaviours. This shifts the time spent on disciplining undesired behaviours towards praising the desired behaviour. Think about the behaviours you wish to encourage. You may include these into the group rules. You may need to model and teach these behaviours. You may also set up scenarios to ‘catch’ the children/young people demonstrating these desired behaviours. Then you need to praise any child/young person who demonstrates the desired behaviour. Be specific in your praise. Below is a sample of praise statements to choose from. You may also wish to create your own.

You do a super job of ....
Good idea for ....
What a wonderful job you've done of ....
You have worked so hard ....
That's a creative way of ....
You put a lot of effort into that ....
Pat yourself on the back for ....
Give me five for ....
That's correct. That's a cool way to ....
You are a real problem solver for ....
Great thinking ....
Keep at it, you are working really hard and getting it!
You are a real problem solver for ....
Hey, you are really thinking, you ....
Wow, you have learned how to ....
You figured it out..... Well done!
That was great teamwork.
You are being a good friend/classmate by ....
You are really good at sharing your ideas with the class that is really helping us all learn.
Thanks for being so patient and waiting while I was ....
You went out of your way to help this morning by ...
It helps us when you ....
What a good way to be a friend by helping her/him with that.
You are making a good choice.
I like the way you remembered to walk quietly to your desk.
I knew you'd remember to get ready for the next activity without any reminders.
Thank you for making a quiet choice during work time. Your classmates appreciate your thoughtfulness.
I'd love to hear your answer, but first I need to give someone else a chance.
You took the time to clean up the art materials, that's very thoughtful.
I like the way you ..... 
It's a pleasure to have a class like this because ....
Practising gratitude is a simple and effective way to encourage positive emotions, improve self-esteem, build resilience, and protect wellbeing. Gratitude exercises help children and young people to feel more grateful for or appreciative of the good things in their lives. Gratitude journals work by training them to become more aware of the positive aspects of their daily lives, and may slowly help them to develop a more positive focus in their perceptions of everyday situations. Books and video clips may be used to introduce gratitude activities. Teachers can support positive reflection by providing key writing prompts. When children and young people are new to this activity, they may find it difficult or may only focus on materialistic things however, their thought processes will develop and their expression will become deeper and more meaningful over time. These activities may be carried out at any time during the day and/or may be used to provide a positive and predictable end to a school day.

A person I am thankful for

One thing I am grateful for

One new thing I have learned

A happy moment from my day
Inviting children and young people to consider their hopes and dreams for the future helps them to see that school is a safe and supportive place where their voices and views are valued. By naming their hopes and dreams, they are setting personal goals for the future, which will help them to make personal connections with what they will learn in school and therefore engage more wholeheartedly with learning.

In this activity, children or young people are asked to think about their hopes and dreams for their camp/summer programme or the next school year, and then to draw or write them down in a cloud template. This can be a private self-reflection activity, a paired-activity with a partner, or a circle-time activity that is shared with the rest of the class/year group.

Initially, teachers need to engage the children or young people in discussion about their hopes and dreams, i.e., how they may be big/small, short-term/long-term, easy-to-achieve/require effort, etc. Explore how they may be able to achieve some of their hopes and dreams on their own, whereas others may require help and support. Ask them to write/draw one thing that they will do to get closer to their hope or dream, and one person that they could ask for help. They may need to be given sentence starters, e.g., One hope that I have for this year is ..., The first step I will take to make my dream come true is ..., The person I will ask to help me is ..., They can help me by ... When completed, the clouds may be kept in a private location or displayed as an art activity.

Adapted from https://youngminds.org.uk/media/2900/hope-clouds-activity.pdf
POSTCARD ACTIVITY

Tuning into the positive nurtures wellbeing. This sentence completion activity allows children and young people to tune into positive, hopeful thoughts about themselves and the future. It could be carried out at an individual, class or whole-school level.

Step 1 Select a theme for the activity, e.g., safety, calm, efficacy, connectedness, or hope.

Step 2 Decide whether the activity will be carried out as an individual, class or whole-school activity.

Step 3 Ask the children or young people to complete the selected cards, either by writing or drawing. Where a child or young person has a difficulty with or is reluctant to write or draw, the card may be used as a prompt for an oral-language activity, with an adult acting as scribe.

Step 4 Once completed, the group is invited to share and talk about their cards if they wish. Some may prefer to keep their cards private.

Step 5 When discussion is completed, the children or young people are given the option of displaying their cards on a noticeboard or as part of a themed visual display, e.g., rainbow of hope, gratitude tree, wall of strengths, etc.

Step 6 The children or young people are given the option of taking their cards home at the end of the week. Older children/young people may like to take a photograph, if this is allowed.
I hope...

I feel safe when...
I work hard at...

I am good at...
I try my best at...

I am grateful for...
I relax by...

I like to...
A person I admire...

Name a person_____________________.
This person helps me by...
I feel calm when...

I know I am safe when...
I look forward to... 

People I am grateful for...
I am improving at...

I am proud about...
Dear my future self,

Today’s date is______________.
I am ________ years old.

The best bits of school being closed were __________
_________________________________________________
_________________________________________________
_________________________________________________

The hard bits of school being closed were __________
_________________________________________________
_________________________________________________
_________________________________________________

Some of the things that helped me manage the hard bits were ______________________________________
_______________________________________
_______________________________________
_______________________________________

My advice to others would be ______________________
_________________________________________________
_________________________________________________
_________________________________________________
Things I am grateful for right now

My advice for you in the future is

My hopes for my future self

Three things that will be important to remember
1. 
2. 
3. 

From: _________________________
Supporting Children and Young People to Manage Their Thoughts and Feelings - a guide to school staff

It’s time to start planning the return to school through the Reconnecting with School summer programme. While many children and young people will be excited about the prospect of returning, some may also be worried or nervous about this change in routine. This document advises on ways to support children and young people to manage unhelpful thoughts and unpleasant feelings so that they can successfully settle into the summer programme and back to school.

Thoughts feelings and behaviour - the link

The basis of Cognitive Behaviour Therapy is that what we think affects how we feel and behave. Understanding how thoughts, feeling and behaviour impact upon each other can help us understand children and young people’s behaviour and how to support them. Helpful thoughts are based on facts and lead to appropriate feelings and behaviours. Unhelpful thoughts are based on our emotions (e.g. fear, worry) around the facts, which leads to unnecessary unpleasant feelings (sadness, worry, fear) and behaviours (avoidance, aggression). While we all engage in unhelpful thinking from time to time, a continuing cycle of unhelpful thinking is not good for wellbeing. While all children and young people will need time to settle into the new routine of the summer programme, some may engage in unhelpful thoughts such as:

“This was not the summer I planned, it’s not fair”
“I have forgotten everything I learned in school”
“School will be so different, nothing will be the same”
“I couldn’t join school activities online and now I’ll be behind everyone else”
“What’s the point in going back to school?”
“Is it safe to go back to school?”
“I am excited to get back to school to see my teachers and friends”
“I am bored at home”

These children and young people may be feeling

Bored
Unmotivated
Angry
Nervous
Worried
Sad
Frustrated
Stressed

These children and young people may experience the following sensations in their bodies...

Tension
Butterflies in tummy
Tiredness

Developed by the DES National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)
Headaches  Change in appetite  Tearful
Poor sleep  Pain in tummy  Too much energy

These unhelpful thoughts, unpleasant feelings and sensations may lead to inappropriate behaviour from withdrawal to anger.

**So what can school staff do to support children and young people who engage in unhelpful thinking?**

- Help them express and normalise their feelings through group or individual discussions. It is ok to be worried, nervous etc. This is a normal reaction to change and many of their peers will be feeling the same way. Knowing they are not alone and that it is normal to feel this way may be helpful.
- Let them know that worrying thoughts usually fade over time as they adjust to the change. Remember, if they continue to be worried this should be discussed with their parents and G.P.
- Take time to discuss and plan practical ways that children and young people can ease their worries. For example, child or young person who is worried about missed work may benefit from a study plan to help them catch up. If they are worried that their friends have moved on, organize paired or group work in class or yard activities in line with social distancing advice, to give a sense of connection with peers.
- During times of stress, unhelpful thoughts can overshadow helpful thoughts which can lead to unpleasant feelings and inappropriate behaviour. For example, thinking ‘I have forgotten everything I’ve learned and I won’t catch up’ instead of ‘we’ve all missed time in school and the teachers will help us catch up.’ If you notice a child or young person engaging in an unhelpful thinking cycle encourage them to challenge these unhelpful thoughts by saying statements like ‘Is that really true?’, ‘What evidence do I have for thinking that?’; ‘Could there be another explanation?’ Challenging unhelpful thoughts gives space to see the situation differently leading to a more measured response. The Thoughts Log worksheet may be a useful tool for children and young people who may engage in an unhelpful cycle.
- As we go about our day, we say things to ourselves about the things that we or others do. This is called self-talk. If we are experiencing anxiety or feel stressed it is likely that we are engaging in negative self-talk. Do your children or young people put themselves down? Do they say things like ‘I am no good at this’, ‘I am going to fail’, ‘no one cares if I go back to school’? Encourage and model positive self-talk statements such as:
➢ “I can do this” ➢ “My teachers will understand”
➢ “I can ask for help” ➢ “My friends like me”
➢ “Everyone is in a similar situation”
➢ “I know this is difficult but I can try my best”

The Self-Talk worksheet could be a useful tool if you have children and young people who engage in negative self-talk.

Tip: Remind students that positive self-talk statements work even if they don’t believe them at the time. “Fake it ‘til you make it!”

• Thoughts and feelings can be experienced in the body. For example when excited we may feel butterflies in the tummy or when distressed we may feel a tightening in the chest. By practicing calming strategies regularly such as breathing, visualisations, and mindfulness we can help children and young people better manage unpleasant physical sensations due to stress or anxiety. These activities can be practiced as whole class, small group or individual exercises. See NEPS relaxation documents here and podcast here.

• Routines at home and in school help us predict our environment which makes us feel safe. Encourage your children and young people to develop/maintain routines as much as possible. Encourage variety in routines such as:
  o Daily exercise
  o Positive social interactions
  o Limited, appropriate use of technology
  o Good sleep hygiene such as bath or shower and limited technology before bed

Encourage the children and young people to participate in developing the rules for the summer programme (in lines with public health guidelines). The Connecting Conversations and the Sample day 1 Classroom Session documents may be useful tools for routine development/maintenance.

• Some children and young people may need more home-school communication to support the transition to the summer programme and back to school. This will allow parents and school staff to be aware of worries or concerns the child/young person has and ensure that all adults are using similar strategies to support them. It may be helpful to identify ways to communicate with parents easily such as a home school diary or email. The Reconnecting with Parents document may be a useful tool to guide the communication with parents.

• If concerned about a child/young person in your summer programme group refer them to school support structures so that you are not working alone.
Managing Thoughts and Feelings - a guide for students

It’s been a long time since we have all been together and we hope you and your family have kept well. We are looking forward to seeing you at the summer programme. It may take a little time for us all to get used to being in school again so here are some tips about how you can manage any thoughts or feelings that are bothering you about coming back to school for the summer programme.

Some of you might be bored or miss your friends and are looking forward to attending the summer programme or returning to school and some might also be a bit nervous and that’s normal too. It's natural to have lots of different thoughts and feelings when starting a new summer programme or returning to school after such a long break.

You might be thinking…

- I can’t wait to see my friends
- It’s not fair I could go nowhere this summer
- I have forgotten everything I learned in school
- I couldn’t join in school activities online now I will be way behind everyone
- I’m bored and want to go back to school

You might be feeling…

- Nervous
- Stressed
- Angry
- Relieved
- Worried
- Excited
- Nothing

Your body might feel…

- Tense
- Butterflies in your tummy
- Tired or can’t sleep
- Headaches
- Full of energy
What to do if your thoughts, feelings or sensations in your body make you feel bad?

- **Notice your thoughts.**
  Are you focusing on the worst parts of school and ignoring the good parts? For example, are you thinking ‘I have forgotten everything I’ve learned and I won’t catch up’, or ‘I have lost touch with my friends, I will have no one to talk to’. If so try to challenge these unhelpful thoughts by saying:
  - ‘Is that really true?’
  - ‘If I have forgotten something can’t I ask my teacher for help?’
  - ‘Is it really true that I will have no one to talk to?’
  When you challenge your unhelpful thoughts you can then replace them with more helpful, calming thoughts that make you feel better e.g. ‘I can ask a teacher for help’, ‘I can be friendly with classmates’.

- **It’s good to talk!**
  It really does help to talk. Choose somebody you trust and tell them how you are feeling. Talking about your feelings can make the feelings less strong.

- **Name it to Tame it**
  Try to name your feelings and this will give them less power. Feelings come and go, you will not feel like this for ever. Remember, if you continue to be worried or your body feels bad you can talk to your G.P.

- **Notice your body.**
  Are you tense anywhere in your body? Breathe into that area and imagine the area softening.

- **Ways to relax**
  Practice calming strategies regularly such as breathing, visualisations, and mindfulness. See NEPS relaxation documents [here](#) and podcast [here](#).

- **Ways to help you take care of yourself**
  Look at the self-care ideas on the next page and select ones that suit you.
50 Ways to Take a Break

- Take a Bath
- Listen to Music
- Take a Nap
- Go to a body of water
- Watch the clouds
- REST your legs up on a wall
- Let out a sigh
- Fly a Kite
- Watch the stars
- Write a Letter
- sit in NATURE
- More twice as slowly
- 2x
- Learn something NEW
- Listen to a guided relaxation
- Read a Book
- Notice Your Body
- Go for a run
- Call a Friend
- Meander around town
- Buy some Flowers
- Find a relaxing Scent
- Take Deep Belly Breaths
- Meditate
- Write in a journal
- Walk Outside
- Take a bike ride
- Examine an everyday object with fresh eyes
- Drive somewhere NEW
- Go to a park
- Create your own coffee break
- pet a furry creature
- View some ART
- Eat a meal in SILENCE
- Turn off all electronics
- Go to a Farmers Market
- Forgive Someone
- Engage in small acts of KINDNESS
- COLOR with crayons
- Make some MUSIC
- Climb a Tree
- Let go of something
- Put on some music and DANCE
- Write a quick poem
- Read poetry
- paint on a surface other than paper
- Do some gentle stretches
- Give Thanks
Anxiety and Stress-a guide to school staff.

Introduction
All children and young people have experienced a period of disruption to their schooling during school closures due to Covid 19. While many will have coped well during the lockdown and the extended period out of school, some may have found it stressful and anxiety-provoking at times. Some may also have faced the traumatic loss of loved ones, or may have experienced the stress of financial struggles at home. Everyone responds to stress and anxiety in different ways and each person will have their own unique coping mechanisms.

As schools begin to re-open with summer programmes, it is understandable that some children and young people may feel apprehensive, and others may experience elevated levels of anxiety. Children and young people will need to adapt to the changes in the environment and new routines that are in place to keep them and their teachers safe and well. Some children and young people may not have consistently engaged with online learning and have been a long time away from formal learning. Teachers will need to prioritise emotional wellbeing as part of orientation back to school during the summer programme. Teachers modelling ‘staying calm’, and offering gentle reassurance to children and young people will be important. As always, the positive relationships that teachers build with their children and young people will be a protective factor in supporting emotional wellbeing.

During this time it is especially important that teachers monitor children and young people who may be at risk of feeling anxious. Older students can be encouraged to pay attention to and take proactive steps to promote their wellbeing and self-care by following the guidance of wellbeing promotion. Where a child or young person continues to experience elevated feelings of anxiety during the summer programme or as they return to school, the following information may be helpful.

What is Stress and Anxiety?
Stress occurs when we have to adjust to change, it is part of life. It is a temporary response to feeling under pressure when faced with change. The change can be big or small, bad or good such as being late for a bus, going on a first date, starting a new school year etc. Not all stress is bad therefore, in fact stress can motivate us to achieve something or cope with a challenging situation. It can also make us more alert and help
us to perform better. Anxiety is a response to a vague or unclear sense of danger such as ‘something bad about to happen’ or ‘I don’t know what to expect and am sure I won’t be able to cope’. It can be hard to pinpoint what is making us feel anxious. Learning to manage stress and anxiety is good for our wellbeing.

**Symptoms of Stress and Anxiety**

Stress and anxiety can affect how we think, feel, and behave. When faced with a real or perceived change or threat our thoughts tell us we are in danger which causes adrenaline to be released. Adrenaline is useful in a real emergency because it gives us extra physical strength to prepare for the response to threat – fight, or flight. But adrenaline has nowhere to go when the child or young person is sitting in a classroom and it can cause strange symptoms such as a dry mouth, sweating, breathing heavily, quicker heartbeat, cold hands and feet, racing thoughts, dizziness, a pain in the tummy, or feeling sick. When a child or young person feels like this their concentration is poor and they may need a quiet space for privacy while calming down. While these symptoms are uncomfortable they are a normal response to a stressful situation. Children and young people’s tolerance of stress varies also with some finding some change more stressful than others.

Common responses to anxiety and stress are attacking, running away, freezing and reassurance seeking.

**Supporting Anxious or Stressed Children and Young People**

- Support familiarity with changes in the school setting by providing photographs or videos of the new school and classroom layout.
- Provide clear information about new rules or measures e.g. social distancing, use of materials etc.
- Discuss with parents/guardians or young person what their needs/concerns are so that these can be supported.
- Maintain familiar routines as far as possible. Discuss with the children and young people how routines have changed since COVID 19. Visual reminders of new routines and rules may be beneficial.
- Allow a safe space for the child or young person to ask questions and to discuss his/her experiences and concerns. It can be reassuring for students to hear that others had similar experiences to their own. Communicate to the child/young person that it is normal and expected to feel some level of anxiety about the changes to their routine and environment.
- Ensure that calming strategies such as deep breathing, mindfulness, exercise become part of a daily routine.
- It may be helpful for some children and young people to agree a protocol of what
they can do at times when they are feeling overwhelmed with anxiety in school (e.g. Requesting a break, access to a safe space within the school with a trusted adult or engaging in an anxiety-reducing strategy or relaxation (see below). It may also be helpful to have an agreed sign or signal that the child or young person can use to let the teacher know that they are feeling anxious or stressed and need to follow the protocol.

- Encourage sharing and exploring positive ideas together around what helps individuals ‘feel happy’ and ‘feel calm’. This can help reduce fears and promote a sense of agency.

- For ongoing issues of anxiety it is helpful to support the child or young person to identify triggers. They might keep a log of the following:

  * When and where do I feel anxious?
  * What makes the feelings worse?
  * What helps reduce the feelings?

  Younger children may need adult support to identify when they are feeling anxious e.g. “It looks like you might be feeling a bit worried now. Let’s take a calm break”.

- Positive self-talk. As we go about our day, we say things to ourselves about the things that we or others do. This is called self-talk. If we are experiencing anxiety it is likely that we are engaging in negative self-talk. However not all children/young people who engage in negative self-talk are anxious. Do your children or young people put themselves down? Do they say things like ‘I am no good at this’, ‘I am going to fail’, ‘no one cares if I go back to school’? Encourage and model positive self-talk statements such as:

  I can try my best effort instead of giving up.
  I can find my feet in my new classroom.
  New routines are here to keep us all healthy.
  I have managed before, I know I can do it again.
See Self-talk worksheet if you wish to explore this further with your children/young people.

- **Relaxation.** There are lots of relaxation techniques and different things work for different people. Practicing relaxation creates the opposite effects to stress and anxiety. It lowers the heart rate, reduces blood pressure and sweat gland activity. By trying some different techniques children and young people can find what works for them. See [Government information on Covid-19](#).

  - Yoga
  - Mindfulness
  - Deep Breathing
  - Body Focus
  - Meditation
  - Muscular Relaxation
  - Visualisation

- **Distraction can help some children and young people to take their mind off things that are concerning them.** Ways to distract can include focussing on what is going on around them – for example if they are out walking and feeling anxious, count how many blue cars or people wearing red they see etc. Keeping active - Going for walks, doing exercises at home, cycling. Finding ways to engage their mind e.g. spell words, counting backwards, saying the words of a song, reading a book or trying a puzzle

- **Encourage children to take control of worries.** While worrying is normal on occasion it can become a vicious cycle and is habit forming. For children and young people who engage in this cycle it can be useful to support them to dedicate 10 minutes at some point in the day to write down everything they are worried about. The worries may seem less scary when written down. If they start worrying again, they can check if the worry is already written down. If it is not, they can jot it down. Alternatively, if a worry comes into their mind, they can choose not to fight it but rather notice it, name it, then let it go. By doing this they are refusing to give power to their worries, but this takes practice. Younger children could write a worry or dictate to an adult before scrunching up the paper, feeding it to a ‘worry monster’ or stomping on the paper etc.
• Problem Solving

This can help to reduce worries and alleviate anxiety.

1. Write down what the problem is.
2. Think of all the possible solutions to the problem.
3. Look at the pros and cons of each solution.
4. Pick the solution that is best and try it.
5. After implementing it, ask yourself ‘Did it work’?
6. If it did not, move on to the next solution.

Where to Get Support

• If you are concerned about a child or young person’s ability to manage the normal stresses of life or if you feel they have too much stress in their life you may need to refer the child/young person to school support systems which will develop a care plan for the child/young person. This care plan will involve the parents and may involve referral to community services.
• If the child/young person is already involved in mental health services, it may be useful to contact the service with parental permission to seek advice on school based strategies.
• If you have child protection concerns refer immediately to the principal/designated liaison person.
• Older students may wish to access to HSE online programme that gives lots of useful information and strategies to manage stress.
• For list of services providing supports for young adults, see Supports for younger people
• NEPS Relaxation techniques (podcast) NEPS Relaxation techniques (text)
Managing Stress and Anxiety – a guide for students

It’s time to return to school and take part in the summer programme. It’s been a long time since we have all been together and we hope you and your family have kept well. We are looking forward to seeing you again. Some of you may have taken part in online schooling and others may have found that a challenge and may be feeling a bit anxious about returning to school after a long break, so here are some tips about how you can manage any stressful or anxious thoughts or feelings as you prepare to return to school.

What is stress and anxiety?

Stress occurs when we have to adjust to change, it is part of life. The change can be big or small, bad, or good such as being late for a bus, going on a first date, starting a new school year. Not all stress is bad therefore, but it is how we respond to stress that influences the impact of stress on our life. Anxiety is a response to a vague or unclear sense of danger such as ‘something bad about to happen’ or ‘I don’t know what to expect and am sure I won’t be able to cope’. It can be hard to pinpoint what is making us feel anxious. Learning to manage stress and anxiety is good for our wellbeing.

What are the signs of stress and anxiety?

Stress and anxiety can affect how we think, feel, and behave. When faced with a real or imagined change or threat our thoughts tell us we are in danger, and our body gets ready to attack, run away, or freeze. We can have a dry mouth, sweat, breath heavily, quicker heartbeat, cold hands and feet, racing thoughts, dizziness, a pain in our tummy, or feel sick. These symptoms are a normal reaction to a stressful situation.

How do you react when you are stressed or anxious?

Notice your thoughts. Don’t try too hard to push away anxious thoughts as this will make them become stronger. Notice and accept your anxious thoughts because they are a normal response to stressful situations. Did you know we can learn to manage our thoughts?

Notice your body. We can feel stress and anxiety in our body. Some people feel a pain in the tummy, or feel sick, some feel hot in the face or head, some feel the heart beating faster or feel sweaty. You may have a mix of these or different feelings. Did you know that this is our body’s way of telling us we need to calm down?
Notice how you **behave** in a stressful situation. Do you attack, use sharp comments, avoid or freeze? Try to notice how you react. Did you know while these are common responses to anxiety they don't always work?

Are you one of these?

- Do I attack like a shark?
- Do I make sharp comments?
- Do I zoom away like in a speeding car?
- Do I retreat into my own shell?

*Adapted from Karen Treisman (2019)*

**Here are some tips to manage stress and anxiety**

- **It’s good to talk!**
  It really does help to talk. Choose somebody you trust and tell them how you are feeling. Talking about your feelings can make the feelings less strong.

- **Name it to Tame it**
  Try to name your feelings and this will give them less power. Feelings come and go, you will not feel like this for ever.

- **Use your Breath**
  One example of using your breath is hand breathing. Using your index finger, trace along each finger of the other hand. As you trace up along the finger, take a deep in-breath, as you trace down along the finger, take a deep out-breath. See how you feel after these five deep, slow breaths. Have you heard of any other breathing exercises?

- **Mindfulness**
  Mindfulness is about paying attention to the present, moment by moment. You can do it any time of the day and with any activity, for example; mindful eating,
mindful walking, mindful washing of hands etc. Regular practice of mindfulness has been shown to reduce feelings of stress and anxiety. Your teacher can give you other examples. If your mind is too ‘full’ being mindful can really help!

➢ Managing stressful thoughts.
Leaves floating on a stream is one activity you might try. Sit in a quiet room and take a few minutes to do this exercise. Close your eyes and accept each thought that floats into your mind without judgement. Imagine placing each thought on a leaf and then imagine that leaf floating gently away on a stream.

There are many smartphone applications that provide guided mindfulness exercises.

➢ Do you know your triggers?
It can be helpful to make the link between our thoughts, feelings and actions when we are feeling anxious or stressed. This helps us learn about our personal triggers. Triggers are things or situations that make us stressed or anxious. Triggers are unique to each individual.
Positive Self-Talk

As we go about our day, we say things to ourselves about the things that we or others do. This is called self-talk. When we are anxious the self-talk is more negative, which makes us feel and behave worse. Notice your self-talk. If it is negative try to practice using positive, hopeful and calming self-talk statements such as:

Your teacher will have a self-talk worksheet if you wish to explore this further.

Gratitude

Remember that lots of people only show the ‘best bits’ of their lives on social media so it’s easy to fall into the trap of thinking that ‘everyone is happier than me’. Remember that nobody feels happy all of the time. One tip that might help us feel more positive is to write down three things you are grateful for every evening before you go to bed. These can be very small things. This can be difficult at first but with practice gets easier.

“One small POSITIVE THOUGHT can change your whole day”
➢ **Distraction**

It may help to take your mind off things by distracting yourself.
- Focus on what is going on around you – for example if you are out walking and feeling anxious, count how many blue cars or people wearing red you see etc.
- Keep active - Go for walks, do exercises at home, cycle.
- Find ways to occupy your mind e.g. spell words, count backwards, say the words of a song, read a book or try a puzzle

➢ **Self-Care**

Try to get a good night’s sleep, eat well, and do some exercise. Stay in touch with family and friends. Don’t forget to relax!

➢ **Do something kind for someone else**

It really does makes us feel better to do something nice for someone, make a cup of tea, say thank you, smile!

**Where you can get help?**

If anxiety is affecting your day-to-day life, you are not alone. There is help.
Links to resources

NEPS relaxation techniques (text) - [https://www.education.ie/covid19/wellbeing/](https://www.education.ie/covid19/wellbeing/)

NEPS relaxation techniques (podcast) - [https://soundcloud.com/user-719669409/relaxation-techniques-30-03-2020](https://soundcloud.com/user-719669409/relaxation-techniques-30-03-2020)

HSE stress control programme - [https://stresscontrol.org/](https://stresscontrol.org/)

Spunout website - [https://spunout.ie/](https://spunout.ie/)

Jigsaw website – [https://www.jigsaw.ie/](https://www.jigsaw.ie/)

Panic Attacks: Guidance for School Staff

(please note that this document is unlikely to be needed on an everyday basis. It will however be useful for teachers when they are working with children who have panic attacks. If you are supporting a child or young person who is upset or anxious then the documents Anxiety and Stress -A guide for school staff and Supporting Children and Young People to Manage Their Thoughts and Feelings- A guide for school staff are likely to be more suitable.)

Anxiety is a response to a sense of danger or threat which is often vague or unspecified, making the source of anxiety difficult to pin point. Anxiety can present in differing forms and at different levels of intensity. It has the ability to affect our whole being and can affect our thoughts, feelings and actions. We all experience some feelings of anxiety at different times in life. In small or manageable levels it can keep us focused and keep us safe. But feeling anxious a lot can be a bad thing and we can also get used to feeling anxious, so it can become a way of being. Panic attacks can happen if we feel really anxious and haven't yet been helped to learn ways to calm ourselves. Panic attacks can be frightening but we can learn to control them. They can last from a few seconds to 10 minutes. A panic attack cannot harm you. It is important that that those around a person having a panic attack remain calm and understand that it will pass.

What is a Panic Attack?
A panic attack is a sudden occurrence of physiological arousal that can happen with or without a known trigger or in response to a challenging experience. Panic attacks therefore can occur unexpectedly for both the child or young person and those around them.

What causes a Panic Attack?
When faced with a real or perceived threat, our thoughts tell us we are in danger which causes adrenaline to be released. Adrenaline is useful in a real emergency because it gives us extra physical strength to prepare for the response to threat – fight, flight, or freeze. A panic attack happens when, although there is no threat or danger, your body is responding as if there is, resulting in a surge of physiological arousal leading
to symptoms such as a dry mouth, sweating, breathing heavily, quicker heartbeat, cold hands and feet, racing thoughts, dizziness, a pain in the tummy, feeling sick or muscle spasms. This physiological arousal can feel overwhelming.

Panic Attacks develop as follows:

**Internal or external trigger**  
*(an event or a negative thought)*

**Slight increase in body symptoms**  
*(palpitations, sweating, shortness of breath)*

**Focus on symptoms**  
*(heart beating faster, difficulty breathing)*

**Catastrophic Interpretation**  
*(“I can’t breathe”; “I am having a heart attack”)*

**What are the Signs of a Panic Attack?**

The symptoms of a panic attack affect the way we think, feel and act, see below:

**Cognitive Signs**  
*(The way we think)*

- Difficulty concentrating  
- Difficulty making decisions
- Forgetfulness  
- Disoriented or irrational thoughts
Excessive worrying
Think negatively or catastrophically

**Physical Signs**
*(How the body reacts)*

- Dizziness
- Sound distortion
- Dry mouth, difficulty swallowing
- Headaches
- Skin rashes or flare ups
- Chest/stomach pains
- Tingling sensation, pins and needs (particularly in hands)
- Blurred vision
- Nausea
- Sweating or trembling
- Diarrhoea
- Butterflies in stomach
- Loss of appetite

**Behavioural Signs**
*(Things we do)*

- Avoiding places
- Constantly seeking reassurance
- Difficulty sleeping/nightmares
- Avoiding people and social situations
- Excessive drinking/smoking/eating
- Increased irritability

Panic attacks can last from a few seconds to 10 minutes. Some people experiencing a panic attack may feel that they are going mad, going deaf, going blind, can’t breathe or that they are having a heart attack. Others may not be able to tell you anything, but their behaviour or presentation may change suddenly and dramatically. They may try to leave the classroom so that their peers do not see them as they may have become embarrassed.

**How to Manage a Panic Attack?**

When supporting children and young children who experience panic attacks it is important that parents share with you any strategies from mental health professionals that are appropriate for the school context. Supporting a child or young person who is experiencing panic attacks is three-fold. The first element is preventative strategies, the second, support during a panic attack and the third, is seeking support for the child/
young person and for yourself.

Preventative Strategies:

- Introduce relaxation strategies designed to promote calm and reduce stress and anxiety into the school day. See [here](#) as a guide. You may have your own techniques that you and your class like. Little and often really does work. It is important that children and young people practice these techniques when calm so that they can call on them when feeling anxious. It may be helpful to ask them to identify which ones work well for them.

- Teach children and young people about the link between our thoughts, feelings and behaviour. Visuals, such as the pyramid below, may help to explain to children and young people how our thoughts affect how we feel and how we act/behave. Noticing the relationship between thoughts, feelings and behaviour and help children and young people notice signs of distress in their bodies and this can prompt them to use calming strategies. (See Supporting Children and Young people to Manage Thoughts and Feelings—a Guide to school staff for more information on the link between thoughts feelings and behaviour).

- In consultation with parents, mental health professionals, the child/young person and school staff, as appropriate, try to find what triggers panic attacks in the child or young person that you support. It is important to note that triggers are unique to each person. If a child or young person identifies a trigger which
may seem silly or insignificant to you, remember that it is an issue that is causing a high level of anxiety for them. Remember also that some people experience anxiety and panic attacks without a known trigger.

During a panic attack

- Try to remain calm. The child or young person will need the adults around them to be calm and in control. You may not feel calm, but it will be important to model calmness as this will reduce the child/young person’s anxiety levels.
- Use as little language as possible. It is unlikely that the child or young person will be able to process language as their brain is concentrating on keeping them safe, because even if there is no threat their body thinks that there is. Use short, clear sentences and repeat if necessary. It may be useful to prepare in advance a script you can say to the child or young person when experiencing a panic attack. This may reduce your own anxiety about a potential panic attack.
- Plan a procedure with the child or young person, to move her/him to a quieter space when having a panic attack so that they feel safe and have privacy. If the child or young person is feeling conscious that their peers are watching, it may take them longer to calm down.
- Offer the child or young person a paper bag to breathe into. This will help them to regulate their breathing.
- Reassure them and name what is happening “You are having a panic attack, it will pass, and you will be ok”.
- Repeat calming and supportive statements – “This will pass; It’s only anxiety; I am here with you; It can’t harm you” etc.
- Practice deep breathing or muscle relaxation with them, leading the activity. Breathe in slowly, count to three and breathe out slowly. Do this until you see the child or young person start to calm down.
- Lead an activity with them that requires focused attention like a simple repetitive activity such as counting backwards from twenty.
- It may be useful to help distract them by asking them to walk or stretch with you.
• Help them to focus on a calm place. You may be able to read a short paragraph on visualising a beach or a forest. An example of a visualisations script can be found here.

Getting Support
• Helping to support a child or young person who experiences panic attacks in school can also create anxiety in staff. Ensure that parents/guardian are aware and refer the child/young person to within school supports so that you also have support.
• In collaboration with the appropriate within school supports and the parents/guardians, a referral to community services will be considered if it has not already been done. If the child or young person has been referred to external agencies, with parents/guardians permission, it would be important to liaise with these services to seek advice on how best to support that child/young person in the school context.
• The within school support structures will co-ordinate a plan for all staff supporting the child/young person when they experience a panic attack. The plan may involve known strategies that work for the child/young person, known triggers as well as what the child/young person may find helpful while they are experiencing a panic attack. It is important that the voice of the child/young person is heard within this plan, particularly with reference to what works for them during a panic attack. For example, it may seem intuitive to reach out to touch a child or young person who is in distress on the shoulder, to reassure them that you are there, but this may be more distressing for some children/young people.
• Remember these strategies for calming and managing panic attacks will take time to master, both for you and the child/young person. Stick with it. It will be important to remind the child/young person that they are not alone. Talking through some of the thoughts and feelings they are experiencing, with someone they trust, may help to ease their anxiety. Some school staff may feel comfortable having this discussion with a child/young person while others may
not. It may be helpful to compile a list of school staff whom the child/young person could speak to if they wish to do so.

For a list of services providing supports for young adults, see [Supports for younger people](#)
Panic Attacks: A guide for students

This document should only be issued to a student when a staff member is available to offer direct and immediate support and guidance.

Also note that this document is unlikely to be needed on an everyday basis. If you are upset or anxious then the documents Managing Stress and Anxiety – a guide for students and Managing thoughts and feelings - a guide for students may be more suitable

Panic Attacks

Anxiety is a response to a sense of danger such as ‘something bad about to happen’ or ‘I don’t know what to expect and am sure I won’t be able to cope’. The reason why we are anxious can therefore be hard to find sometimes. Everybody feels anxious from time to time. A little bit of anxiety is normal. It can help us to stay safe and to focus and get things done. But feeling anxious a lot can be a bad thing and we can also get used to feeling anxious, so it can become a way of being. Panic attacks can happen if we feel really anxious and haven’t yet been helped to learn ways to calm ourselves. Panic attacks can be frightening but we can learn to control them. They can last from a few seconds to 10 minutes. A panic attack cannot harm you. Stay calm and breathe and it WILL pass.

How will I know if I am having a Panic Attack?

We all have our own way of responding when anxious. However, when having a panic attack our thoughts, feelings and actions become more intense.
THOUGHTS. You may think:

“I don’t want to go anywhere”

“I don’t want to see those people”

“Am I doing this right?”

“I think I’m dying”,

“Everyone will think I’m stupid”

BODY FEELINGS. You may:

Find it hard to breathe
Have chest or stomach pains
Have tingling in your hands or feet
Feel like you are choking
Have a skin rash
Have a headache

Find your heart beating very quickly
Have really tense muscles
Start to sweat or tremble
Feel dizzy
Feel sick
Have diarrhoea

ACTIONS. You may:

Want to hide
Not know what to do
Not be able to speak
Stay rigid

Not know what to say
Want to run away
Want to push people away

How to Manage a Panic Attack.

Things you can do

• Practice things to help you relax. Find what works well for you.
• Practice taking deep breaths.
• Try to figure out what causes you to feel anxious. Pay attention to what you are thinking when you begin to feel anxious.
• Talk to someone about your feelings.
• Let others know what helps you during a panic attack e.g. “a hand on my shoulder lets me know that there are people with me” or “I do not like if someone touches me”.

During a Panic Attack
• Don’t run away.
• Ask or signal for help.
• Try using a paper bag to breathe into - this will help you to breathe.
• Tell yourself what is happening. You can say “I am having a panic attack, it will pass”.
• Say things that will help you to be calm – “This will pass”; “I will be ok”.
• Take deep breaths. Do this until you calm down.
• Try to count backwards or sing a song in your head.
• Try to move around. Walking or stretching may help.
• Think of a place or a thing that makes you feel happy or safe.

Remember this takes practice. Stick with it. Take the time to practice when you are not feeling anxious.

You are not alone. Talking with someone you trust will help. If you have panic attacks, talk to an adult you trust and/or visit your doctor.
Relaxation Techniques

Muscular Relaxation
Tense and relax different muscle groups in your body. As your body relaxes, so will your mind. You can combine deep breathing with progressive muscle relaxation for an additional level of stress relief.

Tense-Hold-Relax
- Right foot, then left foot
- Right calf, then left calf
- Right thigh, then left thigh
- Hips and buttocks
- Tummy
- Chest
- Back
- Right arm and hand, then left arm and hand
- Neck and shoulders
- Face

Deep Breathing Exercises
Breathing exercises help reduce feelings of physical tension. The key to deep breathing is to breathe deeply from the tummy, getting as much fresh air as possible into your lungs. When you take deep breaths from the tummy, rather than shallow breaths from your upper chest, you inhale more oxygen. The more oxygen you get, the less tense, short of breath, and anxious you feel.

Example 1:
- Sit in a comfortable position with your arms and legs uncrossed.
- Inhale slowly through your nose or mouth (one-thousand one, one thousand, two, one-thousand three), and fill your lungs.
- Silently and gently say to yourself, “I’m filling my body with calm”.
• Exhale slowly through your mouth (one-thousand one, one-thousand two, one-thousand three), and comfortably empty your lungs.
• Silently and gently say to yourself, “I’m letting the tension drain away.”
• Repeat five times slowly.

Example 2:
• Sit comfortably with your back straight. Put one hand on your chest and the other on your tummy.
• Breathe in through your nose. The hand on your tummy should rise. The hand on your chest should move very little.
• Exhale through your mouth, pushing out as much air as you can while contracting your abdominal muscles.
• The hand on your tummy should move in as you exhale, but your other hand should move very little.
• Continue to breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth.
• Try to inhale enough so that your lower tummy rises and falls. Count slowly as you exhale.

Visualisation
Close your eyes and use your imagination to imagine that you are walking down a soft wide path towards the ocean. As you walk you feel calm and safe – breathing in and out – calmly and deeply.

You can hear the waves rolling onto the beach. You can smell the ocean. You can feel a beautiful cooling breeze on your face. As you continue along the path - breathing in and out – slowly and deeply – you feel the sand beneath your feet – it’s soft and warm. The sun is shining and the sea is blue and glistening. The sound of the waves rolling onto the beach feels comforting and relaxing. And as you look out at the sea you can match your breathing to the pattern of the waves – slowly in and deeply out– relaxed and happy. You can feel the sun’s warmth filling the whole of your body as you gaze towards the water which is bright and blue and green. The beach is golden, long and
wide and there is no-one here but you. This is your beach – your place – your time.

Breathing in, filling your body with warmth and relaxation and breathing out – letting go of any stress. As you continue to breathe slowly and deeply, lower yourself onto the sand. Sitting here quietly you can watch the waves lapping onto the beach – the water is clear and bright and as you watch you continue to feel the warm relaxing feeling flowing over you – and you feel safe and happy and content.

There is no-one here but you – this is your beach – this is your place – this is your time. Sitting here in the warm, soft sand, soaking up the sunshine you feel strong and calm and you feel ready to return. Breathing in and out …slowly and deeply.

**Body Focus**
Take a deep breath and close your eyes for a few moments. Sense where your body is in contact with the environment around you (chair, floor etc.). Sense where your weight is resting. Now take another deep breath and move your body in some way to get more comfortable and relaxed. Are there any parts of your body that feel very tense or sore? If you find one, take a deep breath and try to imagine that place loosening up. Then gently and slowly move that part of the body just a little bit to let it loosen and relax.

**Mindfulness Exercise**
Mindfulness is the process of bringing one’s attention to the present moment. This is a simple mindfulness technique:
- Choose an object (it can be anything) from your immediate environment
- Focus on watching it for a minute or two
- Don’t do anything except notice the thing you are looking at
- Simply relax into a harmony for as long as your concentration allows
- Look at it as if you are seeing it for the first time
- Visually explore every aspect of its shape
• Allow yourself to connect with its energy and its role and purpose

Apple Picker Stretch
Imagine you are under the branches of an apple tree. Standing with both arms up in the air and gently bouncing on tip toes, reach up as high as you can and grab at the imaginary apples with one hand then the other. Then gently drop your hands and bend over towards the floor as far as you can with knees slightly bent. Then sway gently from side to side for a few moments before slowly rising up, one vertebra at a time, with the neck and head coming up very last. (Remember to keep breathing).

(Revised 31/3/20)
CHILDREN’S UNDERSTANDING AND REACTION TO DEATH
ACCORDING TO AGE
(This may be used with various groups and individuals)

Children’s understanding and reaction to death will depend on their age and their developmental stage. The following are guides only as children will differ in their reactions and grasp of events for a range of reasons other than age alone.

AGES 0 – 2 YEARS
- Infants do not understand the meaning of death
- They may display anxiety when separated from a loved one
- They may appear upset, subdued and uninterested in their surroundings

AGES 2 – 5 YEARS
- No understanding of the permanency of death
- May search for the missing person from a loved one
- May feel responsible for the death in some way
- May become apathetic and depressed
- May regress to an earlier stage of development e.g. thumb sucking, bedwetting, tantrums or may become clingy
- May develop fears of going to sleep
- May worry that other loved ones may die

HOW YOU CAN HELP
- Continuity of normal routine e.g. mealtimes and bedtime
- Offer physical comfort
- Explain the death in clear, simple language, using words like “dead” and “died” - Do not use terms like “gone to sleep” or “passed away”
- You may need to repeat the same information again and again
- Permit them to ask questions and be consistent in your answers
- Reassure them that they had nothing to do with the death and of the wellbeing of other family members.

AGES 5 – 9 YEARS
- Beginning to realise the permanency of death, but their idea of life after death is still vague
- May have concerns about how the deceased is feeling or what he/she is thinking in the grave
- May have a lot of questions about aspects of the death e.g. how the person died, what they looked like, the funeral, heaven, coffin, etc.
- The reaction of their peers is important, they may feel ‘different’ to them
- Their peers may be awkward about the death and avoid contact
- They may become the target of bullying.
HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Encourage the child to talk and cry about the deceased if they wish to, otherwise respect their silence
- Answer questions and provide as much factual information about the death as possible
- Reassure them that thinking and feeling ceases after death
- Be vigilant in relation to bullying.

AGES 9 – 12 YEARS

- Understand the finality and universality of death
- Awareness of their own mortality and may worry about their own death
- May display psychosomatic symptoms i.e. physical complaints like tummy aches
- May wish to stay at home close to parents
- May display anger

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Dispel fears about their own health or the health of other loved ones by offering reassurance
- Encourage them to go to school
- Allow them to express their anger, offering appropriate ways to do so.

ADOLESCENTS

- Fully understand the finality, universality and inevitability of death. Their experience of death is similar to adults
- May have a range of feelings: guilt, regret, anger, loneliness etc.
- Death adds to the already confused array of emotions experienced by adolescents
- May appear to not care about the death
- May seek support outside of the family.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Offer them time to listen
- Allow them to express their grief in their own way
- Be prepared for mood swings
- Don’t feel left out if they seem to value their friends more than their parents
- Children’s use of social media should be monitored and supported by parents.

If parents are grieving themselves, they may be emotionally unable to support their other children. In this instance, another supportive adult in the child’s life, e.g. other family members, friends, neighbours may need to offer emotional support.

It should be remembered that for children with special educational needs, their understanding of what has happened will be in line with their developmental age.
STAGES OF GRIEF
(This may be used with various groups and individuals)

Grief is a normal, healthy and predictable response to loss. Although there are distinct phases in the grieving process, people go through these stages in different sequences and at different paces. Generally the grieving process in adults is thought to take about two years, while with children and adolescents it may be over a more extended time-frame with different issues arising as they go through developmental milestones.

**Denial, numbness, shock (up to 6 weeks)**
- Death of the person may be denied
- Emerging feelings may be suppressed
- Refusal to talk about the death
- Bereaved keeps very busy to avoid thinking about the death
- Bereaved may show signs of confusion and forget everyday routines
- Children in shock may display either silent withdrawal or outbursts of crying.

**Acute grief/searching and longing for deceased (6 weeks to 4 months)**
- Acute sadness – crying
- Physical pangs of pain including loss of appetite and disturbed sleep
- Emotional pain accompanied by dejection, hopelessness, lack of concentration
- Fears of life after death, nightmares, ghosts
- Disorganisation
- Strong guilt feelings and questioning of self and others, particularly in the case of a sudden death
- Feelings of anger at the departed for leaving them
- Bereaved may reject offers to comfort them.

**Adaptation to life without the deceased (6 months to 18 months)**
- People begin to adjust to their lives without the person who is gone Sense of isolation
- Fearful of forgetting the deceased
- Less crying and irritability
- Exacerbation of existing personality problems. Children with low self-esteem may be at a greater risk of emotional/behavioural difficulties.

**Normalisation of life**
- Getting on with life
- Returned sense of humour and play
- Able to participate emotionally in new relationships
- Changed relationship with the deceased – able to think of the deceased without pain
  Reduction in physical/emotional symptoms
HOW TO COPE WHEN SOMETHING TERRIBLE HAPPENS

- Reach out – people do care
- Talk to your friends, family and teachers - talking is the most healing medicine
- Remember you are normal and having normal reactions – don’t label yourself as crazy or mad
- It is acceptable to cry
- It is acceptable to smile
- If your feelings and reactions seem different from those of your friends, remember everyone reacts differently
- When the stress level is high there is a temptation to try to numb the feelings perhaps with alcohol and drugs, this complicates matters rather than bringing relief
- Some people find that writing or drawing is helpful. What about writing a note or letter to the family of the person who died or the person themselves?
- Spend time with people who have a positive influence on you
- Make as many daily decisions as possible. This will give you a feeling of control over your life, e.g. if someone asks you what you want to eat – answer them, even if you’re not sure
- Recurring thoughts, dreams or flashbacks are normal – don’t try to fight them – they’ll decrease over time and become less painful
- Make a special effort to take care of yourself during this time. Try to get some extra sleep, eat nutritious foods and get some exercise, even if it is just a walk
- Sticking to your “normal” routine helps. Structure your time – keep busy
- Take time out – go for a cycle or kick a football
- Provide some balance to the negative things that have gone on by doing something special or fun for yourself. Think about something that makes you feel good. Then make it happen – like going to the cinema, listening to music, calling a friend, etc. Laughter is good medicine. Watch a funny movie or play a silly game with younger children to lighten your spirits
- Use of social media can help but do not rely on it as your only source support

Above all, realise that what you are experiencing is normal following a traumatic event. Be understanding of yourself and others.
WAYS TO HELP YOUR CHILD THROUGH THIS DIFFICULT TIME

Children do not need to be taught how to grieve. They will do it naturally and in healthy ways if we allow them and if we provide a safe atmosphere, permission and example to do so.

- Listen carefully. Let them tell their story. Tell them that the reactions they are having are normal.
- Pay extra attention, spend extra time with them, be more nurturing and comforting.
- Reassure them that they are safe.
- Don’t tell them that they are “lucky it wasn’t worse”. People are not consoled by such statements. Instead, tell them that you are sorry such an event has occurred and you want to understand and help them.
- Do not be surprised by changes in behaviour or personality. They will return to their usual selves in time.
- Don’t take their anger or other feelings personally. Help them to understand the relationship between anger and trauma. Help them find safe ways to express their feelings e.g. by drawing, taking exercise, or talking.
- Help them to understand that defiance, aggression and risk behaviour is a way to avoid feeling the pain, hurt and or fear they are feeling.
- When going out, let them know where you are going and when you will be back. If you are out for a long time, telephone and reassure them.
- Tolerate regressive behaviour such as nail biting, thumb sucking, or the need for a night light Share your own experience of being frightened of something and getting through it.
- If they are feeling guilt or shame, emphasise that they did not choose for this to happen and that they are not to blame. Even if they were angry with the person who died, or had been mean to them, this did not make it happen.
- Work with the school support services and other available services.
- As well as advising your child about appropriate use of social media, monitor their use, particularly during this vulnerable time. Useful website: www.webwise.ie
Further Reading/References


Additional Resources for Wellbeing

Education.ie contains the NEPS resources for responding to critical incidents. NEPS Critical Incidents

Gov.ie has a dedicated COVID-19 section. The ‘In this together’ campaign webpage has a number of resources for Staying active, coping at home, healthy eating and looking after our mental health. See gov.ie in this together.

PDST.ie has many resources that are relevant for this work. We have highlighted some below which may be of particular relevance in the context of this year's post school closure COVID 19 summer camps/programmes. Introduction to Teacher Wellbeing is a practical resource booklet that will support teachers to develop self-care activities and protect their own wellbeing. The flyer contains simple self-care practices for a healthy mind, body and soul. PDST Teacher Wellbeing Workbook PDST Self-Care Flyer

'Breathe - Self-Regulation and Relaxation Techniques for Children' features a range of calming breathing techniques, written activities and guided visualisations that children can use to bring about a sense of peace and comfort in any situation. The resource is suitable for children of all ages and class levels. Teachers just need to make sure that the resource they use is age appropriate. The resources in this pack are directed towards calming and regulation. PDST Relaxation and self-regulation tools

NCSE.ie also has an excellent array of resources for teachers and parents. The one highlighted below may be of particular interest to teachers working in the summer programme. https://ncse.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Lets-Get-Regulated-Information-for-Teenagers.pdf This resource pack has activities for coping and relaxing which are aimed at promoting efficacy and regulation. It explores ways young people can support themselves to stay regulated under three different categories.

1. Self-Care: Taking Care of You
2. Taking Time to Chill
3. Doing Something You Enjoy
The Department of Youth and Family Affairs (DYCA) have developed a website dedicated to the importance of the voice of the young person in their school. [https://www.ourvoicesourschools.ie/](https://www.ourvoicesourschools.ie/)

Our Voices Our Schools is the outcome of a decision made by Comhairle na nÓg National Executive 2016 – 17 to focus specifically on equality in the school setting. There are sections on Getting Started, Whole School, In the classroom, Young people leading and Further reading. There are many excellent resources but the guide ‘Activating Voice in Your classroom’ from the In the classroom section is particularly relevant to the summer programme ethos.

[https://www.asphaltgreen.org/blog/rep-it-out-games-for-social-distancing](https://www.asphaltgreen.org/blog/rep-it-out-games-for-social-distancing). At this link you can find a number of games suitable for use as ice breakers that are in line with social distancing guidelines.
**Youtube clips for activities**

Below is a selection of video clips that can be used with some of the suggested activities. Teachers can review these and select those which they think are suitable for their summer programme.

Explaining mindfulness to children: according to Kong Fu Panda  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k082dEqWj7A.

Kids meditation square breathing (Focus and Calm)  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YFdZXwE6fRE

One moment meditation: how to meditate in a moment  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YiC*ktpev30

Mission possible: positive self-talk (Ginther Elementary School)  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8AQQqJEwkJw

Joanne O Riordáin  
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9u3gXyXUJk8

Be that one good adult: Jigsaw YMH  
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cUNiit7YqPM

What is your hope?  
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dICU5uHMdTMdTM

Practicing gratitude: Jigsaw YMH  
https://jigsawonline.ie/young-people/practicing-gratitude/