

Well-being: Mindfulness and Mental Health



During these times of uncertainty, it would not be unusual to experience higher levels than normal of stress and anxiety. Our mental health is as important as our physical health and whilst lots of us are aware of where to look to keep our bodies in good shape, it is equally beneficial to know how to keep our minds nice and healthy too. Luckily, there are lots of apps and online organisations who are here for us, to support us in times of isolation and keep our heads happy.

The following are links/websites that offer brilliant, free well-being activities for children (and adults, in some cases):

Insight Timer <https://insighttimer.com/>

(guided meditations, stories, sleep meditations, music, staying at home activities)

Head Space for Kids <https://www.headspace.com/meditation/kids>

(guided meditations, stories, sleep meditations, music, staying at home activities)

Calm <https://www.calm.com/>

(guided meditations, stories, sleep meditations, music, staying at home activities)

Smiling Mind <https://www.smilingmind.com.au/>

(guided meditations, stories, sleep meditations, music, staying at home activities)

Cosmic Klds <https://www.cosmickids.com/>

(yoga, mindfulness, dance, stories)

Mindfulness In Schools Project <https://mindfulnessinschools.org/>
(fantastic organisation offering daily sitting groups - great sense of community)

The School Run <https://www.theschoolrun.com/mindfulness-in-schools>
(helpful tips on how to incorporate mindfulness into your day, excellent recommendations)

In addition, there are lots of audiobooks available on <http://www.audible.co.uk> and this website <http://www.qcards.com.au/the-bear-cards> has terrific, downloadable activities to explore feelings and emotions with children. I use these in my school clubs and they are brilliant!

For general advice and support with mental health and well-being for children and adults, the lgfl website has a bunch of useful links -

<http://healthyminds.lgfl.org.uk/>

<http://healthyminds.lgfl.org.uk/documents/NEW%20Handy%20Websites%20Handout.pdf>

This will take you to an online leaflet signposting various websites and apps to support mental health and well-being.

And for adults in your household, I highly recommend **Inner Space**

<https://www.innerspace.org.uk/>

This non-profit organisation are based in Covent Garden but have centres all around the world. They hold daily meditations, talks, seminars and courses across London - all free of charge! They are now hosting these online and everything is easily accessible. Some upcoming talks include the following:

Think More Positively

Dealing With Anxiety

Improve Your Self-Esteem

Restless Mind to Restful Mind

And many more!

Mindful Music

Some of the children have been attending a special music club during their lunch hour on a Thursday. These sessions explore mindfulness meditation through music,

sound and singing. The sessions are incredibly relaxing and give the children the opportunity to calm, re-centre and refocus themselves, as well as being able to identify and communicate their feelings with each other. If you would like to have a go at recreating these sessions, please take a look at an example session plan below. Most of the songs can be found on YouTube and sessions could be easily adapted to be delivered in your own home.

Music Mindfulness Program for Lancasterian Primary School

General calming activities

5 deep breaths in through the nose and out through the mouth Lifting the air in front of you and putting it down again as you breathe in and out. Close your eyes as you breathe and be in the space all around you. Breathe in through the nose and out to the sound shhhhhhh for as long as you can. Breathe in through the nose and out to the sound ssssssss for even longer.

Listening Activities

Everyone hum the same note. 5 sensible people to change the note one at a time. Make a rainstorm as a class: Start with rubbing hands, then gentle tapping, then clapping, then stamping and back down again slowly (Do with eyes closed and really listen to imagine it is real). What's that quiet sound?: Everyone closes their eyes and one chosen person makes three sounds with objects in the room. People put their hand up to suggest what the sounds were. How many people behind me: One person closes their eyes and a number of other children appointed to stand behind them. They have to guess how many people moved. Sound bowl - Listening until the sound has completely disappeared.

Songs Acapella

Yemaya of the Ocean
The River is Flowing
Blue Lake and Rocky Shore
The Water Song

With guitar Basket of Plums songbook (all about nature)

Calm Music to listen to

Classical/chillout
Spiegel im Spiegel Bach Prelude no. 1 in C
Debussy Reverie
Saint Saens The Swan
Leroy Anderson A Trumpeters Lullaby
Tarrega Recuerdos de la Alhambra

Jazz All Blue
Folk and World

Activities on listening to music

Give it a title

Which instruments can you hear?

Where in the world is it from?

How does it make you feel?

General Themes

The environment and looking after the planet Songs of peace World music - recognising different country's styles Different instruments recognition

Enjoy!

Thank you and Take Care

Holly Thompson

MIndfulness Lead