



openly discussing emotions together. Children can often feel it is bad or wrong to experience certain feelings.

Parents can talk to children about the emotions they felt when they were in school. Throughout the school year it is a nice idea to spend time at the end of each day where each family member talks about the emotions that they experienced that day. Always reassure your child that there are no bad or wrong emotions. Although some emotions can be uncomfortable we can learn how to manage that emotion and ask for help.

You can also encourage your child to express their emotions creatively by; drawing, art or craft. I often give children “everything’s ok diaries” and tell them that this is a place for them to write, draw or colour whatever thoughts and feelings they have, I assure the child that whatever they put in this diary is ok and just for them. This is something that a child can do for ten minutes every day after school.

Mindfulness is a skill that we can teach children from 3 years of age and is a great tool that children can use to cope with difficult thoughts, emotions and situations. I would encourage parents to teach children

how to practice mindful breathing and set aside 1 minute each day for the family to practice mindful breathing together, a great time to practice is in the morning before heading off for school.

You can ask your child to put their hand on their belly and to feel their belly move when they breathe. Remind your child that now is a time to relax their mind and to notice what their breathing feels like. Assure your child that if their mind wanders to another thought, they can bring their attention back to feeling their breathing again. Start off with 5 breaths and increase to 10 breaths and then to 30 seconds and 60 seconds . As your child gets used to practicing you can increase the time.

You can encourage your child to practice a few mindful breaths anytime they feel like

their mind is busy or when they would like to feel more calm. The great thing about mindful breathing is that they can practice it at their desk in school, before a match, or on the school yard and nobody else needs to know.

Encouraging children to be kind to themselves and to think in a self compassionate way is a great way to promote inner wellbeing and resilience. You can explain to children that they don’t have to be the best at everything and that it is ok if they find some things difficult.

I always tell children that there is nobody better or worse than them, that each person is different and important and that there is no need to compare themselves to others, the most important thing is to believe in themselves and to always try their best.



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