



OpenView Education

TRAINING THROUGH THEATRE

Mental Health & Wellbeing

Activity Pack

Years 4 - 6

Welcome to your Wellbeing Activity Pack

Thank you for arranging OpenView Education to visit your school. In this pack, you will find learning activities to support our mental health and wellbeing workshops.

These plans are a great way of ensuring that your students get the most from our visit.

If you are playing the videos in this pack on YouTube, please ensure you have the auto-play feature turned off.

All resources can be accessed through the clickable links throughout this pack.

Outcomes:

- ★ Students will learn that acts of kindness can make us and others feel happier.
- ★ Students have an experience of using mindfulness breathing techniques.
- ★ Students identify an *act of kindness* that they can do for someone else at home or at school.

Activity One: Easy Mindfulness

Why mindfulness?

A mindfulness practice simply involves holding our conscious attention on one thing or activity for a period of time. When our mind wanders, we bring the attention back to that one thing. This could be focusing on our breathing, the sounds that we hear in our environment or the food we are eating.

There's been a lot of research into the benefits of mindfulness practices, and more recently research has shown benefits specifically for children and young people.

Regular Mindfulness can improve our ability to focus, help us to manage our emotions and, over time will lead to improvements in our overall *wellbeing and mental health*.

So how can we start to practice mindfulness with children?

Explain to your children or students that mindfulness is resting our attention or focus on one thing at a time, when we notice that our mind has wandered, we gently bring our attention back to the thing we intended to focus on.

Before trying a mindfulness practice with your students:

- **Have realistic expectations:** It is normal and expected that children will fidget and get distracted. Let the children know they cannot fail at mindfulness.
- **Debunk Mindfulness Myths:** Mindfulness is not about trying to stop our thoughts, we're just becoming more aware of our thoughts.
- **Have a sense of humour:** Trying mindfulness for the first time may feel strange for parents, teachers and students. It is okay if there is some laughter or giggles.

1. Breathing Buddies

Ask the students to find a space to lay down on the floor. Then ask them to place their hands on their belly. Say to your students:

'As you breath in and out, watch the rise and fall of your hands on your belly. If your mind wanders off, just return your focus to your hands going up and down.'

2. Listening Meditation

With a listening meditation, the focus of our attention is on the sounds we can hear in our environment. It doesn't matter what these sounds may be, the meditation is simply about paying conscious attention to them.

While sitting, with straight but comfortable posture, ask your students to close their eyes, then guide them in taking three deep breaths, in through the nose and out through the mouth. Then direct them to listen to the sounds they can hear you can ask them:

- *What sounds can you hear right now?*
- *Where are the sounds coming from?*
- *Are they far away or near?*
- *Are they high pitched or low pitched?*

3. Breathing Meditation

For this activity, we will focus on our breath. Ask your students to place one hand on their chest and one hand on their belly. To start, guide them in taking three deep breaths, in through the nose and out through the mouth. Say to your students:

'Feel the breath causing your chest to raise and expand, then feel your breath leave and notice how your hand moves with the breath. Where does the breath feel strongest, in your chest or in your belly? Are the breaths deep or shallow? Notice the pause in-between the breaths. If your attention wanders off, just bring it back to your breath.'

With all of the activities above, remember:

- **Little and often works best:** The real benefits of mindfulness practice come from doing it every day, and making it part of your daily routine. If you do this, you'll start to notice positive changes like increased focus and improved mood in no time at all.
- **Sit like a King/Queen:** When doing sitting mindfulness, encourage students to sit with a relaxed yet tall posture.
- **Hands still and soft:** Encourage students to keep their hands still during mindfulness. Their hands can be resting on their desk, or placed on their lap.

Activity Two: The Power of Kindness

Kindness is something that all ages can understand, and research shows that it can reduce feelings of stress and anxiety, strengthen our friendships, and help people to feel happy and healthy.

Start by explaining to your class that you will be talking about the power of kindness, then watch the video with the link below.

[Watch the Power of Kindness Video.](#)

After watching the video use these discussion points with your class. Using the ideas below, your students can write down two or three Acts of Kindness that they could do at their school.

Discussion Points:

- Can you think of a time when kindness strengthened one of your friendships?
- Can you think of a time when an act of kindness made you happy?
- Can you think of a time when you were worried, and someone was kind to you?

Kindness idea one: Say thank you.

Discussion Points:

- What did you last say thank you for?
- How do you feel when people say thank you to you?
- Is there someone you would like to say thank you to?

Kindness idea two: Offer to help someone.

Discussion Points:

- Is there anyone you would like to offer help to?
- Can you think of a time when someone helped you?
- Can you think of a time when you were helpful?

Kindness idea three: Write a kind letter

Discussion Points:

- Is there someone you would like to write a kind letter to?
- How do you think someone would feel if they received a kind letter?
- Can you think of something to say thank you for in the letter?
-

Activity Three:

Whole Class Act of Kindness

Explain to your class that you are going to do a *whole-class* act of kindness.

Explain that you will work as a team to do something kind for a teacher, or for another class in your school.

Students can create *Kindness Postcards* which they can then deliver to other year groups in the school.

These can have '*Kindness Postcard*' written on the front, and then a kind message on the other side such as: '*Dear Year 2, we think you are great! From Year 4*'

Students can spend some time decorating their *Kindness Postcards*.

Other Examples of *whole-class* acts of kindness include:

- Practicing a song, and then going to sing it for the staff setting up the lunch hall.
- Making cookies for the staff room.
- Creating a *kindness poster* with kind words and phrases on it.

Great job!

If you would like to receive more free lesson plans and resources you can join our mailing list here:



www.openvieweducation.co.uk/sign-up



@openviewd



www.facebook.com/openviewd