

# Feeling Good – Letting the Sun Shine in Our Lives

## Aim

To help children understand the nature of stress and to suggest means of coping with it. (A lesson for younger KS2 children.)

## Learning outcomes

Pupils should be taught to:

- talk...about their opinions, and explain their views, on issues that affect them;
- recognise their worth as individuals by identifying positive things about themselves and their achievements...and setting personal goals;
- what makes a healthy lifestyle...what affects mental health.

## Resources

- Large piece of black card, with large circle or smiley sun drawn in the centre.
- Two bright felt-tipped pens.
- A pack of yellow post-it notes.

## Duration

- 35–45 minutes.

## Background

- Ask the children what is required for a healthy life.
- Note their suggestions on a board or flipchart. They may mention such things as:
  - a good diet;
  - a warm home;
  - people to care for them.
- Point out that we also need interesting things to do. Invite ideas, so that it becomes apparent that what interests some children does not interest others. If we don't have interesting things to do, we become bored and restless.
- When we are bored, we are often not very happy because our minds are not being stretched nor our bodies occupied. Our happiest moments are often those when we are presented with a challenge which is within our reach.
- Discuss when things are exciting (because they are new and challenging) and when that boundary is over-stepped and the exciting task becomes worrying.
- What worries some will not worry others. A scary TV programme can be exciting but go too far and become worrying and give us bad dreams.
- Tell the children that we know what is good for our bodies – food, warmth, shelter. Do we know what is good for our minds?
- Ask the children:
  - for suggestions for a healthy mind. Do the things we need for a healthy mind have to be bought?
  - to think silently about exciting and interesting times they have experienced that did not involve spending money.
- Choose children to describe those times. Look for common factors and list them on the board or flip chart. Point out that when we are bored, everything seems grey and dismal and dark.
- Show the children the dark card with the circle in the centre.

## Activity

- Display the large piece of black card with a large circle or smiley sun drawn in the centre.
- Invite the class to contribute ideas which let the sun shine in on our lives. Thank them for suggestions and ask them to summarise their statements, i.e. 'Kind friends'. Ask two children to write these statements onto post-it notes and then attach them inside the black circle. Space the notes out so that the circle is filled.
- Discuss what makes everyone happy. Ask how the sun can be spoilt. Take off a 'smiley' post-it note every time the children make a suggestion. How can the sun be repaired?
- Discuss tolerance, empathising, being able to say sorry and 'putting things right', encouraging the class to repair the sun. Put the post-it notes back when the children agree on ideas.
- Display the sun in the classroom and talk about how it works, as a reminder of the importance of good relationships.

## + Further suggestions

### Food for thought

- Discuss what might be in a recipe for happiness and contentment.
- Look at a recipe for a well-known dish and note the way it is set out and the quantities of ingredients. Discuss the vocabulary of recipes and provide a word bank, e.g. kilogram, litre, half, quarter, sprinkle, blend, whisk, grate etc.
- Brainstorm the types of things or occasions that provide happiness or relieve stress.
- Suggest a recipe for a Happy Cake:
  - a kilogram of kind words;
  - two helpful hands;
  - stir together with a tub of tolerance;
  - crack 3 jokes and whisk into the mixture;
  - blend in a large spoonful of forgiveness;
  - sprinkle with chuckles etc. etc.
- Ask children to work either individually or in small groups to provide recipes which they can then write out for a recipe book or display on paper plates for the wall.

# Easing Stress

## Aim

To encourage a relaxed frame of mind by discussing and illustrating techniques for easing worry and anxiety. (A lesson for younger KS2 children.)

## Learning outcomes

Children should be taught to:

- talk...about their opinions, and explain their views, on issues that affect them;
- [recognise] what makes a healthy lifestyle...what affects mental health.

## Resources

- Paper.
- Prompt Sheet, *Water Lily Template*.
- Felt-tipped pens.
- Shallow bowl of water.
- Any other aids to relaxation, e.g. soothing music, cushions, candles etc.

## Duration

- 25–35 minutes.

## Background

- Tell the children about ways that some adults like to relieve stress, i.e. yoga and forms of exercise and posture designed to promote physical and mental well-being, listening to relaxation tapes etc.
- Explain the significance of water as an aid to tranquility. Some people find that taking a bath is relaxing, others go to a swimming bath, spa or the seaside. Some people think that water has healing, therapeutic qualities. Remind the children that they may have seen fishtanks in the dentist's waiting room; these are used to relax patients before they go into the dentist's chair.
- Talk about other symbols of peace, e.g. the dove and the lily.

- Put the children into groups. Ask each group to cut out a water lily shape and write a word or shape that symbolises stress for them on each of the petals. Ask the children to give you the water lilies. Turn these over, write a happy or peaceful word in the centre, then fold the petals over it to conceal the word.
- Float the water lilies in the bowl of water and ask the children to watch while the petals slowly open to reveal the happy/peaceful word.



- Organize the children into groups and ask them to make their own relaxation tapes to listen to while they watch the water lilies open.

# Easing Stress

## Water Lily Template

Prompt Sheet

