**Mrs McMenamin Nurture Groups**

Hi to all,

I hope you are all doing well in these uncertain times. I can only imagine how much your children are missing the structure and routine of school life. This is a challenging time for us all. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of any help. Below are some ideas for your children for the next 3 weeks. These are only intended to be a release for your children and not intended to cause any stress or anxiety. Please complete only what you wish.

Over the past year, your child and I have worked on breathing techniques like LASY 8 breathing and SQUARE breathing – get your child to show you how we did this and it may help to relax if feeling stressed or anxious.

We used COSMIC YOGA every week on YouTube and GONOODLE. If possible, get your children to continue to do this- it will help create a sense of structure and routine.

<https://www.youtube.com/user/CosmicKidsYoga>

<https://www.youtube.com/user/GoNoodleGames>

Some ideas for Week 3 and over the Easter break.

**Literacy Activities**

* Complete the “I am… poem”. See template attached
* Continue writing in your diary
* Design a newspaper front page report dated Friday 13th of March – the day after the schools closed
* Write the story THE 3 LITTLE PIGS from the point of view of the wolf- It can be in story form/comic strip form or feel free to record it on a phone or ipad – like we do in class

**Exercise**

Joe Wicks is doing a PE lesson every day on his YouTube channel. I am doing it with my two boys to help energise them every morning. You should try and tune in its very good.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6v-a_dpwhro>



Click on the above link and it will bring up some of our brain gym exercises.

If you can’t get out of the house – try some of these movement ideas

Frog jumps

Bunny hops

Slither like a snake

**Social Games and Mindfulness:**

The mirror image game

Everyone gets a partner. (If there is an odd number, someone can go twice.)

Partners stand in two lines, facing each other, about a metre apart. One is the leader, the other, the mirror. Moving only from the waist up, the leader begins to make simple gestures or movements. The mirror duplicates the leader's movements exactly - just as a mirror would.

This activity is designed to test the development of children's gross and fine motor skills. Some children have trouble with the right-left shift. If the leader raises his right hand, the "mirror" should raise his left, just as the figure in a real mirror would. The goal is to mirror the partner perfectly, so the leader must move carefully so that the mirror won't fall behind. If they are doing a good job, we cannot tell who is the leader and who is the mirror.

The relaxation script

Lie on your back on the floor or a firm surface.

Tense the muscles in your right foot and ankle.

Wriggle your toes.

How does it feel?

Clench the muscles and release them several times.

Notice the difference in sensation between the clenched and unclenched muscles.

Commit it to memory.

 Repeat the exercises with your left foot and ankle.

Tense the calf muscles, first one then the other.

 Repeat several times, alternately clenching and unclenching.

Once again notice the differences in sensation between the tense and the relaxed knees.

Move next to the thigh muscles, and carry out the same exercise.

 Notice how tension in the thighs affects the kneecaps and the knees.

 Work upwards, taking in the muscles of the abdomen, of the chest, and of the back and shoulders, working on each group in turn.

Now work on the biceps, the forearms and the hands. Lastly move to the neck, jaw and the forehead, and the scalp

**Mindful Posing**

One easy way for children to dip their toes into mindfulness is through body poses. To get your kids excited, tell them that doing fun poses can help them feel strong, brave, and happy.

Have the kids go somewhere quiet and familiar, a place they feel safe. Next, tell them to try one of the following poses:

1. The Superman: this pose is practiced by standing with the feet just wider than the hips, fists clenched, and arms reached out to the sky, stretching the body as tall as possible.
2. The Wonder Woman: this pose is struck by standing tall with legs wider than hip-width apart and hands or fists placed on the hips (Karen Young, 2017).

Ask the kids how they feel after a few rounds of trying either of these poses. You may be surprised.

**The Mindful Jar**

This activity can teach children how strong emotions can take hold, and how to find peace when these **[strong emotions](https://positivepsychology.com/positive-emotions-list-examples-definition-psychology/)** feel overwhelming.

* First, get a clear jar (like a Jam Jar) and fill it almost all the way with water. Next, add a big spoonful of glitter glue or glue and dry glitter to the jar. Put the lid back on the jar and shake it to make the glitter swirl.
* Finally, use the following script or take inspiration from it to form your own mini-lesson:

*“Imagine that the glitter is like your thoughts when you’re stressed, mad or upset. See how they whirl around and make it really hard to see clearly? That’s why it’s so easy to make silly decisions when you’re upset – because you’re not thinking clearly. Don’t worry this is normal and it happens in all of us (yep, grownups too).*

[Now put the jar down in front of them.]

*Now watch what happens when you’re still for a couple of moments. Keep watching. See how the glitter starts to settle and the water clears? Your mind works the same way. When you’re calm for a little while, your thoughts start to settle and you start to see things much clearer. Deep breaths during this calming process can help us settle when we feel a lot of emotions.*

This exercise not only helps children learn about how their emotions can cloud their thoughts, but it also facilitates the practice of mindfulness while focusing on the swirling glitter in the jar.

Try having the kids focus on one emotion at a time, such as anger, and discuss how the shaken verse settling glitter is like that emotion.

For any budding chefs out there here is a recipe to try- I really miss our cooking sessions

**Cooking up a crumble!**

Cooking is a great, fun way to practise getting both hands to work together.

This helps to develop and test the children's co-ordination, hand and finger strength and dexterity skills. Feel free to take a picture and email it to me or you can show me your photos back at school.

 For the crumble:

 120g plain flour

 60g caster sugar

 60g unsalted butter at room temperature cut into pieces

 For the fruit compote:

 300g apples

30g unsalted butter

30g demerara butter

Quarter teaspoon ground cinnamon

If this is too difficult for younger children then it is easier to buy prepared fruit. They can definitely help to make the crumble topping. With clean hands, get them to rub the flour and butter together through their thumb and fingers using both hands at the same time, until the mixture looks like bread crumbs. Then add the sugar, gently sift the mixture through the fingers of both hands to mix it in. That's your basic crumble topping ready. Cook at 200° for 25 minutes and enjoy!

ZONES OF REGULATION

Please remember all the hard work you have done on the zones of regulation. If you feel like you are in the blue/red/yellow/green zone – get a marker or a crayon of that colour and write why you feel like that. At the back of the sheet think of your toolkit and what you could do to help you.

You are all brilliant at what you do , remember that!!!

This poem is for you all:

Can you think of title for it? Maybe you could come up with your own poem

I am awesome
I am beautiful
I am smart
I am a good reader
I am so important
I am loved
I enjoy learning
I have many talents
I enjoy challenges
I am good at Math
I always do my best
I am brave
I have lots of friends
I believe in myself
I can do it
I am helpful
I accept myself
I am proud of myself
I am wonderful
My smile is like the Sun
I get better and better
I never give up
I am creative
I am a winner
I am powerful
I am positive
I am limitless
I am unique
I am good at lots of things
I love to try new things

Happy Easter

Mrs. McMenamin

