

Adventures
in wellbeing

August 2020

ADVENTURES IN WELLBEING

Hello!



Life has changed a lot over the last few months with the coronavirus and the lockdown. Children's Parliament has been listening to children's stories and finding out how you have been doing in these unusual times. We have created Adventures in Wellbeing for you so that you can think about recent times and what's next.

Some children have been telling us about things they have enjoyed, like spending more time with family, learning new things and having more time to play. Others told us about things they have found difficult,

like learning without a teacher, missing their friends, worrying about people they know and being on screens a lot more. Children have talked about feeling lonely, scared, bored and nervous but some have talked about feeling relaxed and happy too.

You might be excited about getting back in your school building, but you might also feel nervous, or maybe a bit of both! This pack is all about helping you to feel as good as possible in your first days, weeks and months back at school.

Remember, all children have the right to be listened to and taken seriously, and you have the right to be happy, healthy and safe. The activities, quotes and messages in this pack come from Members of Children's Parliament (we call them MCPs) who want to make children's rights real for you and other children. Enjoy!

Love,

Children's Parliament



Children's Parliament
Making children's rights real

Being Kind to Ourselves

The Imagineers, (MCPs from Aberdeen) have asked the adults in their city to 'give children lots of tools to help us care for ourselves: breathing, meditation, getting enough sleep, being active, or doing something we love or that keeps us calm.'

"Self-care is something that you always want to do but you don't always have time for."

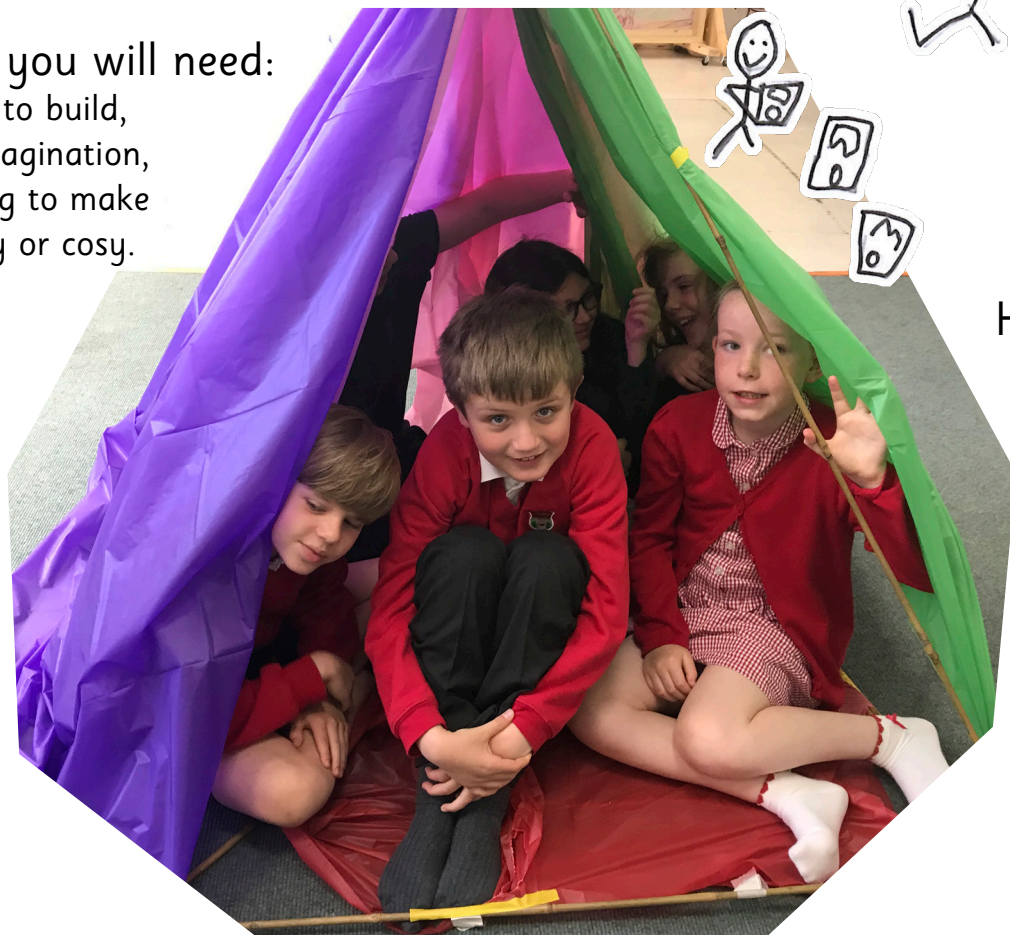
Although it's the responsibility of adults to keep children happy, healthy and safe, lots of you tell us how important it is to be kind and loving to yourselves. To do this, you need to know how to look after yourselves, especially when you're not feeling great. Try these three activities, chosen by MCPs.

Build a den!

We challenge you to build a den in your house! This den is a place of love where you feel happy and safe. What will you use to build it and where will it be? What is inside your den? You could use your bed or a favourite place in your house, use sheets or towels or cushions to make it unique to you.

What you will need:

a place to build,
your imagination,
anything to make
it comfy or cosy.



How to do it:

1. Build your den in whatever way you want. There's no wrong way to build a den!
2. When you are in your den think about: how you felt when you were building it how it makes you feel to be inside your den.
3. Five senses: take a quiet moment in your den to name 5 things you can see, 4 things you can feel, 3 things you can hear, 2 things you smell, and 1 thing you taste.
4. If you feel like it, invite somebody at home that you love into your den to play the five senses game.

Take a breath

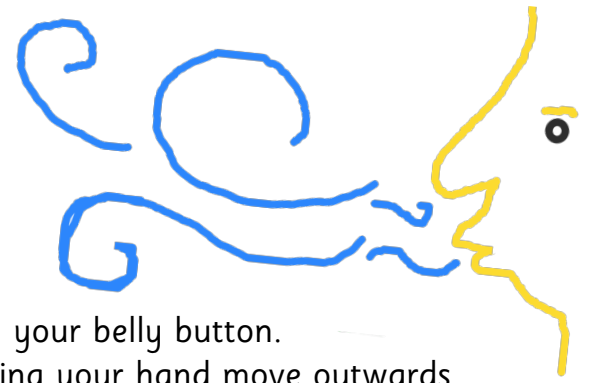
Here is an easy breathing exercise that anybody can try. It can help you to relax if you are feeling stressed or worried. It might also help you get to sleep at bedtime.



What you will need:
somewhere to sit or lie down and relax (this might be in your den or your bed).

How to do it:

1. Rest your hand on your belly button.
2. Take a breath, letting your hand move outwards with your tummy, and hold the breath as you count to 5 in your head.
3. Breathe out slowly, relaxing your shoulders, face and body, and feeling your tummy move inwards, as you count to 5.
4. Repeat 5 more times.



breath in and out

Make Shapes

Yoga is all about moving and breathing, it can calm you when you are feeling stressed or anxious. It's impossible to be bad at yoga - if you are taking nice big breaths then you are doing it right. Try these moves.

What you will need:
some loose, comfy clothes.

How to do it:

1. Butterfly. Sitting up straight on the floor, put the soles of your feet together in front of you. Gently lift your knees up, then press them down to floor like butterfly wings.

2. Cat stretch. On all fours (hands under shoulders, knees under hips). Breathe in and arch your back and raise your head. Now breathe out as you round your back and look at your belly button. Repeat several times - do this slowly and match the movements to your breaths.

3. Standing Warrior. Take a good step back with your right foot. Turn it out but keep your left foot facing forward. Keep looking forward while you raise both your arms to shoulder height (left arm straight and forward, right arm straight and back). Bend the left knee. Keep arms and legs strong. Focus forward. Long breaths. Repeat with your left foot.

4. All is well. Lie down on your back. Arms by your sides palms up. Feet should be apart. Close your eyes and go inside. Make sure all your body feels very relaxed. Just do your normal breathing and when you feel really relaxed and still, say silently to yourself:
"May I be safe and loved
May I be happy and healthy
May I be kind and caring
May I know that all is well"

"MAY I BE SAFE AND LOVED
MAY I BE HAPPY AND HEALTHY
MAY I BE KIND AND CARING
MAY I KNOW THAT ALL IS WELL"



Our Friendships: (re)connecting with other people



“Friends make me happy; friends help you keep happy and positive by being in your life.”

Window Message

People have been putting artwork in their windows to share messages with key workers and other passers-by. Lots of children across Scotland have been telling us how lonely they have been, so MCPs made a poster for children who are feeling isolated. It is full of messages and drawings they would like to share. What positive message would you put in your window for a child who is feeling lonely?

What you will need:
paper, card, vinyl or any other material you can stick to your window; some blue tack or tape, pens, paints or other things to decorate your sign.

How to do it:

1. Think about how a child might feel when they are lonely. What might be happening in their life? What can a child or adult do to make this better for them?
2. Think of a message you would like that lonely child to see. Draw or paint it as big and bold as possible on your card.
3. Where is the best window for your message to sit so people can see it? Check with other people in your house if it's okay to put it there.
4. Look out for people's reactions as they pass by!



Friendship

Children tell us about the importance of relationships and have said that one of the most difficult parts of lockdown has been not being able to meet other people, or take part in clubs and social activities.

“Before lockdown the best thing about school was seeing my friends and being able to play with them and talk to them”

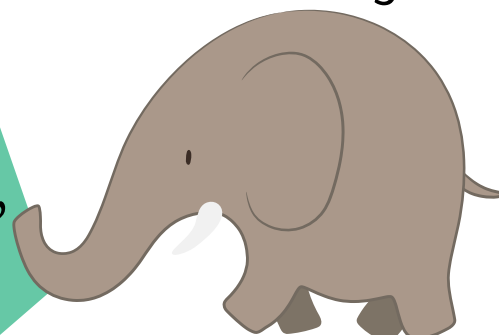


“Children need love so they aren't lonely.”

TALKING TO FRIENDS AND FAMILY ABOUT OUR WORRIES CAN HELP US FEEL BETTER



“My friends make me feel safe and that I belong. It feels like a better environment when I am with them.”



The Love Hug

Before beginning the Love Hug activity below, sit in a quiet, comfortable space on the floor, and close your eyes if you wish.

Think of a recent moment when a family member or friend was kind to you or where you did something fun together or when they made you feel proud. Replay it in your mind.

Ask yourself:

- **Why have you chosen this moment?**
- **How did you feel in your body?**
- **How did you feel in your mind?**

Write down the positive words that describe how you felt.

What you will need:

a sheet of paper, scissors,
paints/colouring pens

How to do it:

1. On your paper, draw the outline of a large heart with arms. On the heart, write all the positive words you wrote down.
2. Colour-in and decorate your heart.
3. Cut right round the heart and arms.
4. Fold the arms into the heart for a hug.
5. Post your love hug through the letter box of someone you love or forward them a photograph of your hug.

OR

6. Keep your love hug somewhere safe and when you are feeling not so good and in need of a positive boost, you can get it out and give yourself a hug!



“After quarantine, everybody should keep on being kind. People have been a lot kinder during quarantine and I want it to stay like this.”



“I would like people to remember how much kinder they were and try to keep that up, like letting older people go in front of them, being a little bit more polite. It's all the little things that people can do but don't often do.”



Being Creative

“We can express ourselves by drawing something and be calm.”



Children tell us they want time to be creative. It helps them learn and makes learning fun. It can also help make them feel calm and proud of what they have achieved.

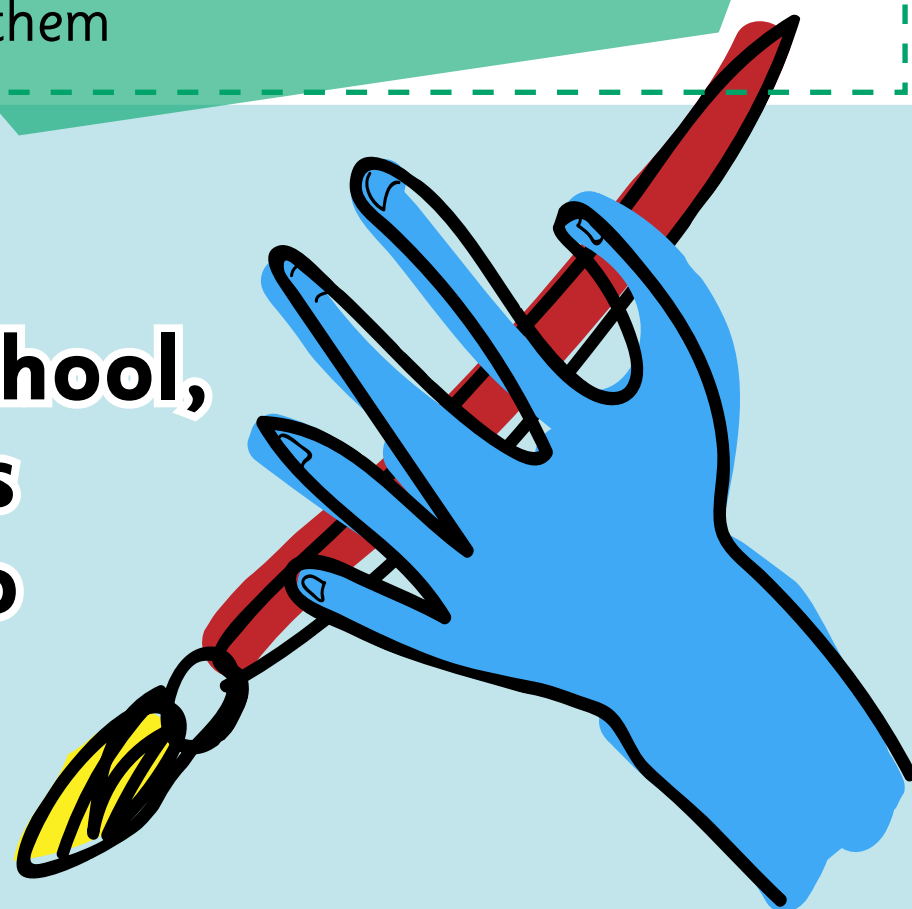
During lockdown lots of children have told us that their teachers sent them challenges to do and they loved it! With the help of some MCPs we have put together this list of creative daily challenges for you to try.

If you have a printed copy of this pack, cut along the dotted lines so that each challenge is on a separate strip of paper. Fold each challenge up so you can't see which one is which and put them in a jar, a box, a hat or a bag! You can pull one out each day, or if you feel bored.

If you are looking at the pack on a screen, close your eyes and put your finger down on the screen to see which challenge you need to do today!

1. Close your eyes and draw a picture of yourself
2. Draw something outside of your window without taking your pen off the page.
3. Make something tiny
4. Make something you can wear
5. Go outside and make something with sticks you find there
6. Find a rock with character. Decorate it to give it a face
7. Tell someone your favourite thing about them

“It's enjoyable to express yourself with paint. At school, you get told what colours to use but here you get to choose what colours you want to use!”

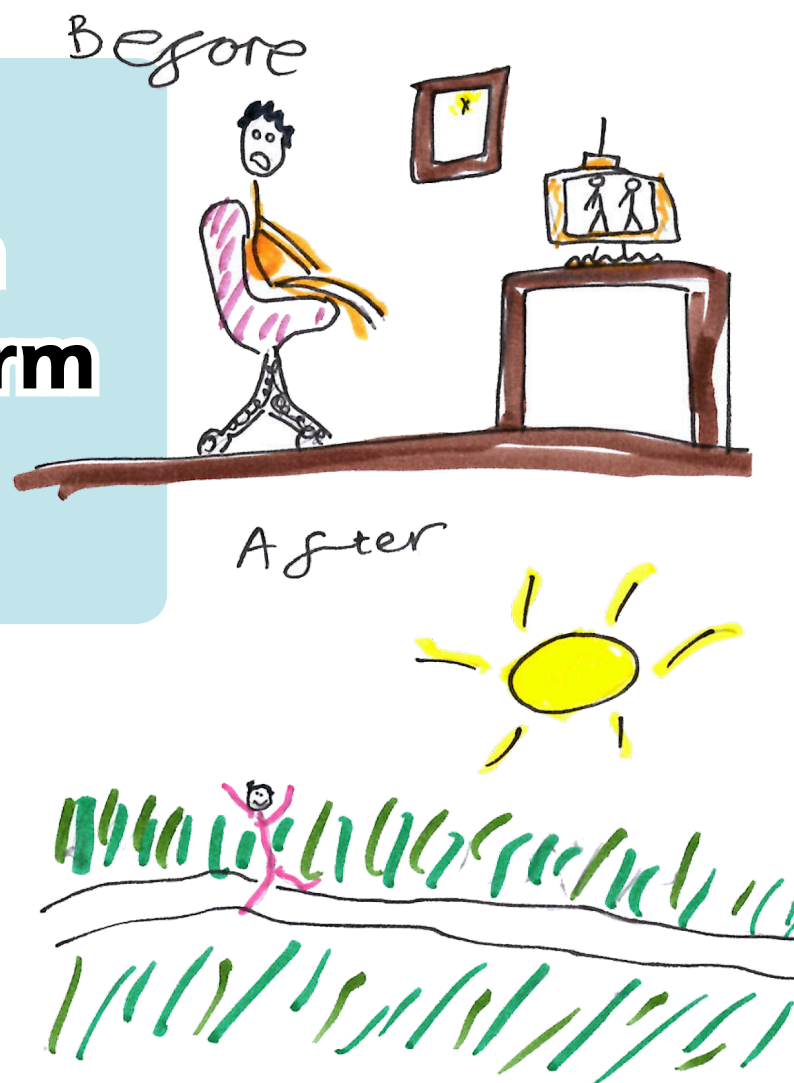


Getting Outside

Children always tell us how important it is to have time outside to walk, to play, to relax, and even to learn. Some children have told us that they're getting outside more than ever during lockdown, but other children have told us that they have hardly been outside at all. When you get a chance to be outside, here are some fun activities you can try.

“Let us go outside when there is a storm in our head.”

“After lockdown, I would like... people to get out more instead of staying in the house all day.”



Outdoor activities

What can you see?

Next time you are outside, sit quietly for a moment to notice all the things around you. Think of 5 things that have grown or changed since lockdown began. You might notice that the seasons have changed, and the trees look different.

Has the grass grown?

Has your hair grown too?

Is there anything else you notice?

Grow Your Own Cress Head Friend!

We have heard from children that they love learning about plants and how to take care of them, so why not try this fun activity:

What you will need:

some cress seeds, a small container, like a toilet roll tube cut in half or small yoghurt pot, a section of an egg box, or even an eggshell. Cotton wool. Decorations.

Seeing things differently

Exploring the great outdoors is amazing – looking at the birds and the bees and the trees. Make a looking device that helps you see the world in a different way and explore outside through your new eyes.

What you will need:

your imagination, a sheet of cardboard (maybe some old packaging or an empty cereal box) or a sheet of paper, coloured cellophane sheets, glue dots and some pens or pencils. (If you don't have cellophane sheets, get some Sellotape or see-through packaging and pale felt pens.)

How to do it:

1. Cut some different shaped holes out of your sheet of cardboard or paper, these will be the windows on your looking device.
2. Cut the coloured cellophane sheets and cover the windows, (or use the sellotape or see-through packaging). you can stick these on with glue dots. Done! (If you have used Sellotape or packaging, use pale felt pens to colour your windows.) Explore the outdoors through your new eyes.
3. Ask yourself these questions:
 - What if the grass was blue?
 - What if the sky was green?
 - Can I see anything I've never noticed?
 - Write a poem about what you found outside with your looking device. Was it nice? What did you see up in the trees?

How to do it:

1. Decorate your pot with a face using whatever you like - eyes, feathers, Pom poms, pipe cleaners
2. Rip up the cotton wool so it is fluffy and fill your pot to the top. Put your pot on a small plate.
3. Sprinkle cress seeds on top and sprinkle on a bit of water to make the cotton wool moist.

4. Put in a sunny spot in your home. Feed your cress head every day with a little bit of water and watch his hair grow!
5. When he has sprouted green leaves, give him a very short haircut and add the cress to a salad or sandwich (lovely with egg mayonnaise).

Have fun!

Celebrating Me

When you are back at school you will be going into a new class, or for some of you, even a new school. MCPs have told us that children want to feel cared for, proud, special and happy at school. They suggest that adults do this by praising, including, and supporting children to get better at things they are struggling with. During lockdown children have told us that they feel like they are missing out on celebrating the end of the year or the end of their time at primary school. We want you to make a rosette that you can wear to celebrate your achievements!

“Celebrate our achievements and how far we have come already.”

Celebration Rosette

Think about what achievement you would like to celebrate. Is there anything you have done during lockdown that couldn't be celebrated? Or achievements at school that haven't received the attention they deserve?

What you will need:
coloured paper, tape, a safety pin.

“My advice. Don't think you have to fit in. Be yourself. Do and act the way you want to. Don't let any one change that.”

Check out

At Children's Parliament we like to finish up with a quiet moment to check how everyone is doing. Do your own check out at home.

1. Close your eyes and take a couple of deep breaths.
2. Think of one thing you're feeling positive about. It could be something that is going well for you, something good that happened this week, a funny memory, something in this pack you have enjoyed, or something you are looking forward to in the future.
3. Focus on the thing you chose and think about how it makes you feel. Maybe you feel happy, calm, warm or excited. Maybe you feel something else.
4. Sit for as long as you like and when you're ready slowly open your eyes.

How to do it:

1. Cut out two paper circles – you can draw round a mug to make them accurate – and write your achievement on one of the circles.
2. Make 8 strips of paper about 18cm long.
3. Stick the strips of coloured paper all round the blank paper circle. Each strip is then doubled back on itself to create a loop (see picture, in 'What you need' above).
4. Stick your decorated circle over the front to create a neat rosette. Add extra paper strips to the back hang down like draping ribbons.
5. Tape a safety pin to the back.
6. Now, wear your rosette proudly!

Hurray! We salute and congratulate you!
WELL DONE FOR BEING GREAT!
- from the Children's Parliament team

**"KIND THOUGHTS,
KIND WORDS, KIND
ACTIONS, TO OTHER
PEOPLE AND TO
OURSELVES"**



Don't forget the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) gives all children the right to be happy, healthy and safe. This includes the right to rest and play; the right to education; the right to good health; the right to have friends and the right to be heard ... and many more.

"Don't change who you are because the way you are is the best you! Be yourself. Be real!"



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Making children's rights real
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