



TOOLBOX

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1, ACTIVITIES

Feel free to pick and choose from the 30 activities, bundle them together, modify content and times ... and add new ones of your own!

They're based on the 5 Keys to Happiness:

Look Inside. Move Outside. Share More. Be Curious. Be Kind.

LOOK INSIDE

Activities which encourage self reflection, focusing, being quiet, self calming



A1 STILL LIKE A FROG

5 Minutes

Purpose

Practice being still using breathing as a focus

Description

Find a quiet space where children can sit in a circle undisturbed. Children listen to intro. Children asked to sit still like a frog and focus on their breathing.

Teacher Notes

Suggested intro: “A frog is capable of enormous leaps, but it can also sit very still as it waits to catch flies. It breathes in and out preserving its energy. Its frog belly rises and falls. It doesn’t make any ‘ribbet’ sounds. Can you sit still and quietly like a frog for 5 minutes and pay attention to your belly rising and falling?”

Practice once for 2 minutes. Encourage children. Try for 5 minutes.
Show children picture of a frog/toy frog. Use a bell to signify start and end of exercise.

Resources

Picture of a frog or toy frog
Bell

A2 BELLY BREATHING

10 Minutes

Purpose

For children to become familiar with relaxed breathing from the belly

Description

Teacher explains different types of breathing, anxious breathing is from the chest, relaxed breathing is from the belly. Invite the children to get into pairs. One of the pair lies down on the floor and gets comfortable and relaxed. The other one gently places a soft/plastic toy on their partner’s belly and watches as it rises and falls whilst their partner breathes. Then they swap places.

Teacher Notes

As children are lying down in a vulnerable position, ensure the environment is safe and that they can relax, and their partners know to be gentle when placing the toy on the belly. Could use relaxing music, and invite children lying down to close their eyes. Ensure that children don’t force their belly up and down, but just allow it to move naturally.

Resources

Soft mats to lie on
Lightweight objects/toys to put on belly

A3 HAPPINESS STONES

10 Minutes

Purpose

To give children a way to focus on happiness and call on happy memories/thoughts whenever they need to

Description

Teacher introduces the theme of happiness and tells the story of The Key to Happiness. Let children each choose a stone. Ask children to recall happy memories whilst holding their stone. Tell children that now they have 'charged' their stone, they can use it to remind them of happy moments whenever they need it. Invite children to draw '2 dots and a line' (smiley face) on their stone and to put it in a safe place.

Teacher Notes

When guiding children to recall happy thoughts/memories, give examples to encourage them, invite them to share if they want to. Explain how they can use their stones going forward (i.e. they can keep charging their happiness stone with happy thoughts; when they need cheering up all they need to do is hold the stone in their hand and it will help remind them of these happy thoughts). Emphasise the point of the story that everyone has the key to happiness inside them.

Resources

Bag of stones
Felt tip pens
The Key to Happiness story (see below)

The Key to Happiness Story

A group of ancient beings were sitting around a sacred circle, trying to decide where to hide the key to the secrets of happiness. "The key is very powerful" said one. "We must put the key to happiness and power in a place where no one will find it", another said. "Let's put the key at the top of the mountain", said a third. "No one will be able to get it there."

"Yes. This is a good idea", everyone agreed. But, as they talked, they realised that one day people might muster the courage and harness the technology to climb to the top of the mountain. The key to happiness and power was not safe there.

"What about putting it at the bottom of the ocean", suggested another elder. "It will be safe there."

"Yes. This is a good idea", everyone agreed. But, talking more, they started to ask what would happen if a flicker of a glimmer of the key got it noticed by a fish, who ate it, only to be caught by a fisherman? So the key to happiness and power was not safe there.

After a long discussion, the youngest of the elders raised his hand. "I know where we can hide the key", he said, shyly. "I know a place where no human will ever imagine looking."

"Please tell us", they replied, having exhausted all ideas.

"The place where humans will never ever imagine looking for the key to the secret of happiness is ... inside themselves."

A4 FEELING THE WEATHER - FBW

20 Minutes

Purpose

To help children notice, accept and express whatever they are feeling without judgment

Description

Children are invited to walk around the room imagining that they are late for something. Teacher rings a bell to invite them to *pause* then *feel their feet on the ground*. Children walk around again, and teacher rings the bell again. Children asked to *pause*, then *feel their feet on the ground* then *feel their belly and breathing* (they can put their hands on belly). On the last round, when the bell rings, children asked to 1) PAUSE, 2) feel their FEET on the ground, 3) feel their BREATHING, then 4) feel the WEATHER inside, meaning how they are feeling. Invite anyone who wants to share what their weather is like inside.

Teacher Notes

Teacher can use a flip chart with FBW acronym to make it more memorable. Make sure children understand the weather inside is what they're feeling inside and that all weather is needed, acceptable and important. Ask questions to see if they get it. 'How might you be feeling if you have stormy weather inside? How might you be feeling if your weather inside is hot and sunny? If you're feeling really excited, what might your weather inside be? Whatever weather you are feeling is 'fine'. Encourage children to be with whatever weather is there.

Resources

Flip chart or board for acronym
Bell

A5 WEATHER WALL

30 Minutes

Purpose

To reinforce with the children how to relate to their own feelings/weather inside and the feelings/weather inside of other children in their class.

Description

Follow-up activity to the Feeling the Weather (FBW) activity. Print an A4 sheet with the words 'How do you feel today?' Mount a colour paper banner onto an available classroom wall and put the A4 sheet in the centre. Print out some photos of different weather scenes — i.e. Snow, Fog, Windy, Hailstorms, Sunny, Rain, Sunny and Cloudy — and put them up on the wall. Ask the children to write underneath each one what they think the corresponding feeling inside would be if they felt that weather inside — Fear (with Fog), Confused (Windy), Angry (Hailstorms), etc. Then ask children to choose a weather/feeling and draw or paint a picture of what it feels like to them. Display artwork alongside photos.

Teacher Notes

Encourage children to be creative and reinforce message that all weather is important and valid.

Resources

Large sheet of coloured paper
Blank sheets of paper
Pencils
Paint/watercolour
Glue
Available classroom wall

A6 MIND IN A JAR

30 Minutes

Purpose

To teach children that they can calm their minds and bodies with deep breathing

Description

Get the children to create their mind in a jar by filling their jar with water, adding glitter, then decorating their jar with their name, either on the lid or on a sticky label. Once created, ask them to think about a time when they were really mad, angry or worried, gathering feedback. Then get them to shake their jars up and explain that's what their mind is like when they're upset. Their thoughts are swirling about like the glitter in their jar. As they watch the glitter settle, talk about how taking a few deep breaths can help to calm their thoughts and bodies. Ask children to shake up their jar again and practice deep breathing as they watch the glitter settle.

Teacher Notes

Once created the jars can be placed in a 'quiet area' of the classroom, so when children are feeling, anxious, upset, angry, they can go to the quiet place, find their jar, shake it up, then practice breathing as they watch the glitter settle to help calm their minds and bodies.

Resources

Jars with lids
Water
Glitter
Sticky labels for jars
Pens

MOVE OUTSIDE

Activities which encourage non-competitive outdoor exercise



B1 CRAZY RACING

5 Minutes

Purpose

To help children realise exercise can be a fun way of expressing themselves and to allow children to let off steam and be silly

Description

Find an open space outside. Set up a Start and Finish line. Tell children that this is a walking race, but the one who wins is the one with the craziest walk not the fastest.

Teacher Notes

Resources

B2 ANIMAL MOVES

10 Minutes

Purpose

To get children actively moving their bodies, using their imagination and having fun at the same time

Description

Go outside and ask children to move around like monkeys. After 1 minute, ask them to stop. Then ask them to move around like elephants. After 1 minute, ask them to stop. Then ask them to move around like chickens. After 1 minute, ask them to stop. Then ask them to move around like snakes. After 1 minute, ask them to stop. Then ask them to move around like rabbits, etc. Finally, ask them to move around with them choosing one of the animals they just did or invent a new one.

Teacher Notes

If it's raining outside, why not try this with music inside!

Resources

B3 STICK IN THE MUD**10 Minutes****Purpose**

To have fun playing outside and learning to work (help) with others

Description

Find an area outside where there's enough space to run around. Two children are 'on.' They have to chase the children who are not 'on' and tag them. When they have tagged another child who is not on, that person is 'stuck in the mud'. They stand with legs and arms out and they cannot move. The only way to release them is if another person who is not stuck crawls between the legs of the stuck child to free them. This continues for about 5-10 minutes or until everybody is stuck.

Teacher Notes

To increase the difficulty level, use more catchers.

Resources**B4 MINDLESS WALKING VS MINDFUL WALKING****15 Minutes****Purpose**

To learn spacial awareness and to move mindfully

Description

1st exercise: They walk around mindlessly bumping into each other (within reason!).
2nd exercise: They walk around quickly without bumping into each other.

Teacher Notes

Experiment and see about how confining the space makes it more difficult.

Resources**B5 TREASURE HUNT****30 Minutes****Purpose**

To encourage outdoor play and exercise

Description

Create a treasure hunt outside with clues and surprises.

Teacher Notes

Leaving this one up to teachers. Any incites or tips on how you do this would be appreciated!

Resources

SHARE MORE

Activities which encourage connection, teamwork, communication



C1 TREE WISHES

10 Minutes

Purpose

To connect with trees, to others and the natural world

Description

Children draw or write a wish on a tag that they have for others or for the world. They tie it on a tree branch for others to see.

Teacher Notes

An alternative is to create a tree in the classroom that they can tie it on.

Resources

Tags
Hole puncher
String or ribbon
Trees

C2 SHEPHERDS AND SHEEP

10 Minutes

Purpose

To practice teamwork and trust

Description

Children work together in pairs. One is the shepherd and the other is the sheep. The sheep wears a blindfold or covers its eyes. The shepherd steers the sheep into its pen (a square marked out with masking tape) by using changes in pitch or volume only. For example, humming with a rising pitch for 'go left' a falling pitch for 'go right' and a level pitch for 'straight ahead'. Once the sheep is safely in the pen, the pairs swap over but start from a different position in the room/playground.

Teacher Notes

Children can adapt this by using clapping instead of pitch changes.

Resources

Masking tape
Blindfolds

C3 PAPER TOWER

10 Minutes

Purpose

To encourage children to look at differences they can make working well with others rather than on their own

Description

Each child is given 20 paper cups on a table. Give children 1 or 2 minutes to build a tower on their own. Count how many cups in each tower. Then ask children to work in groups of 4 to build a tower of cups. Still giving 2 minutes. Ask children to compare the difference – in cups – and how they felt working together.

Teacher Notes

Teachers can film and show it to the children afterwards so they see the difference working alone and as a team.

Resources

Paper cups
Table

C4 MORE THAN A THREE LEGGED WALK

10 Minutes

Purpose

To promote teamwork

Description

2 children strap one leg together. Then join with another pair etc. Eventually the whole line has to work out how to move together.

Teacher Notes

This is not a race! Moving slowly as a team is what you're looking for.

Resources

Ties for legs

C5 ONE WORD STORY CIRCLE

10 Minutes

Purpose

To encourage language development, imagination and group communication

Description

Children sit in a circle. Explain that they are going to tell a story one word at a time. There's no right or wrong word. Ask for a volunteer to start the story with a word. Then each child in turn adds a word to the story.

Teacher Notes

Encourage creativity. The idea is for them to keep their thoughts free flowing, so that they don't try to guess what is coming or force the story in a particular direction. It stops when the teacher thinks it needs to stop. A variation is to roll a ball around the circle in any order. Each child adds their word as they pass the ball to the next person. This ensures that children are more attentive; although make sure everyone is included.

Resources

C6 PARTY GUESTS

15 Minutes

Purpose

To encourage children to be more socially aware

Description

Each child thinks of a true fact that they would like the class to know about themselves. It could be a personal statement about an ability or a dislike. Children introduce themselves to others in pairs and share their personal statements. All pairs walk around the room together introducing their partners and responding to introductions from others. For example: 'This is Moira and she loves swimming.' 'Hello Moira, I'm Jan and this is Ryan. He is really good at drawing cartoons.'

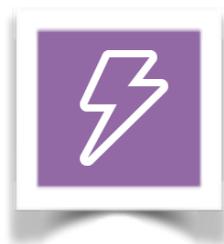
Teacher Notes

The variation to this is that children invent something amazing to say about their partner. For example: 'This is Moira, she just won the Olympic medal for swimming.' This is a good warm up activity to start the day.

Resources

BE CURIOUS

Activities which encourage a growth mindset, exploring, experimenting, making



D1 MAGIC MICROPHONES

5 Minutes

Purpose

To encourage curiosity about other people and the world around them

Description

Children collect, or are given, sticks to become their magic microphones. They use the microphones to interview other people and ask them things that they always wanted to know.

Teacher Notes

It might be a good idea to give children sample questions in case they can't think of any.

Resources

Sticks for microphones

D2 DESCRIBE THE DETAIL

10 Minutes

Purpose

To look beyond the obvious

Description

Divide children into pairs. They write down a list of 10 things that they can observe about the other person.

Teacher Notes

If they find 10 easy, maybe try 15 or 20 things.

Resources

Paper
Pens

D3 UNDERSTAND THE BRAIN

10 Minutes

Purpose

To help children become more aware of their mental processes

Description

There are three learning outcomes:

- 1) Discuss how the brain has 3 main parts that work together: 1. Owl Brain (prefrontal cortex) helps us make decisions. 2. Lizard Brain (amygdala) helps keep us safe 3. Elephant Brain (hippocampus) helps us remember stuff.
 - 2) Your brain is like a muscle. It grows and you get smarter when you try something difficult.
 - 3) Stress can upset the Lizard Brain and then it doesn't pass information to the Owl Brain and then the Owl Brain doesn't pass information to the Elephant Brain.
- After the discussion, see if the children are able to remember the 3 parts of the brain and what they do.

Teacher Notes

Teacher can provide visual examples or let the children use their imagination. Poster recommended that gives background information on how the brain works and fun facts about the brain.

Resources

PDF of poster sent by email

D4 RELIEF RUBBINGS

10 Minutes

Purpose

To develop the powers of observation and creativity

Description

Children go off and find interesting objects that they can create rubbings of using crayon. Once they have created relief rubbings of their objects, they hand them to the teacher who holds them up one by one and the group tries to guess what the object is.

Teacher Notes

Gather in one area some interesting objects. Make sure they write their names on the paper. Hold up each rubbing one by one or children can work in pairs. It's up to the teacher.

Resources

Thin paper
Crayons
Objects like coins, keys, bark, leaves

D5 SKYING**10 Minutes****Purpose**

To observe that the ordinary world is an extraordinary place

Description

Go outdoors. Standing up, children rest a mirror against their chest and look down at the mirror as they walk around. Then talk about the experience. What did they see?

Teacher Notes

They don't have to submit anything. Just about doing it and looking at things differently. Ensure mirrors have no sharp edges or are covered in tape. Walk within a contained space that is visibly clear of obstructions. Might need to demonstrate first.

Resources

Mirrors

D6 ARTISTS PALETTE**15 Minutes****Purpose**

Observe a range of colours in the natural world around them

Description

Go outdoors. They collect a variety of different colours that make up their own individual palette.

Teacher Notes

Use a strip of card, fan shaped card or circle with double-sided tape. If there's a lack of natural resources, innovate.

Resources

Cards

Double-sided tape

D7 THE GUESSING GAME**15 Minutes****Purpose**

To stimulate curiosity and a sense of enquiry

Description

Teacher has an object. Children ask questions. Teacher is able to answer 'Yes' or 'No'. They have to guess what the object is. Do with a series of objects.

Teacher Notes

Gather together objects in advance.

Resources

Everyday objects like a shoe, bag, apple, etc.

D8 MINDFUL EATING

10 Minutes

Purpose

To encourage curiosity through engagement of the senses

Description

Explain that they are each going to be given an object and are to pretend they are aliens exploring the object for the first time with their senses. Ask them to name the 5 senses. Give each child an eye mask and then place the piece of fruit in their hands. Ask them: How does it feel (texture, weight, shape)? How does it smell? Does the object make a sound? Ask them to place the object on their lips/tongue. How does it feel in their mouth? Ask them to take a small bite. How does it taste? Notice as it travels down to their stomach.

Children remove eye masks.

Explain that when they focus on their senses, they will pay less attention to thoughts that make them worried. They can do this whenever they eat.

Teacher Notes

Be sure to check for any fruit allergies in advance.

Resources

Strawberries or other fruit like oranges, apples, or raisins.
Eye masks.

BE KIND

Activities which encourage caring for oneself, others, the environment



E1 SECRET KINDNESS COMMENTS

5 Minutes

Purpose

To practice kind thoughts about others

Description

Create a wall space where children and teachers can, throughout the day, post kind comments up about other children or teachers.

Teacher Notes

Must make sure that no children are left out. Could use existing wall charts with photos of the class. Could also prepare a series of kind comments and just have children pin them next to people that they want to send kind thoughts to. For example: 'You are helpful', 'You are clever', 'You are funny'.

Resources

Wall space with names/pictures of children
Post-it notes
Pens

E2 SOMEONE KIND

5 Minutes

Purpose

To practice appreciation of others

Description

Children think about someone who has been kind to them in their life. Ask them to draw them and write things they would like to say to them that are kind words to let them know that they appreciate them.

Teacher Notes

Resources

Pens
Paper

E3 CIRCLE MASSAGE

10 Minutes

Purpose

To develop empathy

Description

Children sit in a circle with their backs to each other. Each child asks the person in front of them for permission to give him a massage. Children silently massage each others back, neck and shoulders for 2 minutes. When time's up, everyone thanks the person who gave them a massage.

Teacher Notes

An alternative is that the teacher reads a massage story and the children 'illustrate' it with massage strokes. Sample stories can be found at the link below.

Resources

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J8kvJ1GDFWw>

E4 PASS A SMILE

10 Minutes

Purpose

To practice self control

Description

Children sit in a circle. Everyone tries to look serious. A child is chosen to start off a smile. He sends a smile to the person sitting next to him. This person smiles then zips their lips in order to 'hold' the smile. He then turns to the next person and unzips the smile to pass it on. When the smile has been round the circle once, the group has a go at passing another smile but this time more quickly.

Teacher Notes

A variation to this is that the children can 'throw' a smile across the circle. Everyone has to stay on alert to catch it.

Resources

E5 COMPLIMENTS TENT

10 Minutes

Purpose

To practice receiving compliments from others

Description

Pitch, or create a small tent area, which children can enter and sit in a comfortable place. Other children volunteer to go in one at a time and give a compliment to the child in the tent. The child receiving the compliment just says 'Thank you' after each comment.

Teacher Notes

Give the 'volunteers' ideas on what compliments are, get them to think about qualities, or skills that the child in the tent has, or things that they like about the person in the tent. It might be advisable to have someone supervising to make sure that all remarks are compliments! Also it's important that the child receiving the compliments doesn't get into a discussion, and only says 'Thank you.'

Resources

A tent or covered area where child receiving compliments can sit

E6 GROWING SUNFLOWERS

15 Minutes

Purpose

To learn about how plants grow and how to look after them

Description

Children pick up a bunch of sunflower seeds and put them in a pot with some earth. They water them each day and encourage them to grow.

Teacher Notes

Resources

Sunflower seeds
Small pots
Earth
Water

E7 HAPPY BIRDFEEDERS

30 Minutes

Purpose

To help children learn about the proliferation of wildlife around school, about looking after this wildlife and the natural world around them

Description

Children cut a hole in the side of a drinks bottle, yoghurt pot or milk carton large enough to allow a free flow of seeds, but in such a way that it won't all fall out on the ground in the slightest puff of wind, and won't get wet if it rains. They make a few small holes in the bottom of their feeder to allow any rainwater to drain away. They fill it with bird seed. They hang it with wire, or strong string from a tree or line. They keep it stocked every few days/week.

Teacher Notes

Let the children know that to keep birds happy and nice and full, they need to remember to keep their feeders full of food. The birds will come to rely on them and will go hungry if they forget. Might be helpful to prepare a sample bird feeder in advance to show the children how to assemble. Not for children allergic to nuts. Ensure children are careful using scissors. If their feeders start to wear out or the food in it goes mouldy, they can recycle it and make another one. Let them know by recycling they're helping the environment too.

Resources

Plastic drinks bottles, yoghurt pots or milk cartons (make sure they're clean)
Wire or string
Bird seed
Scissors

2, MATERIALS

A range of cool, colourful resources to inspire children to participate in
INSIDE OUT activities.

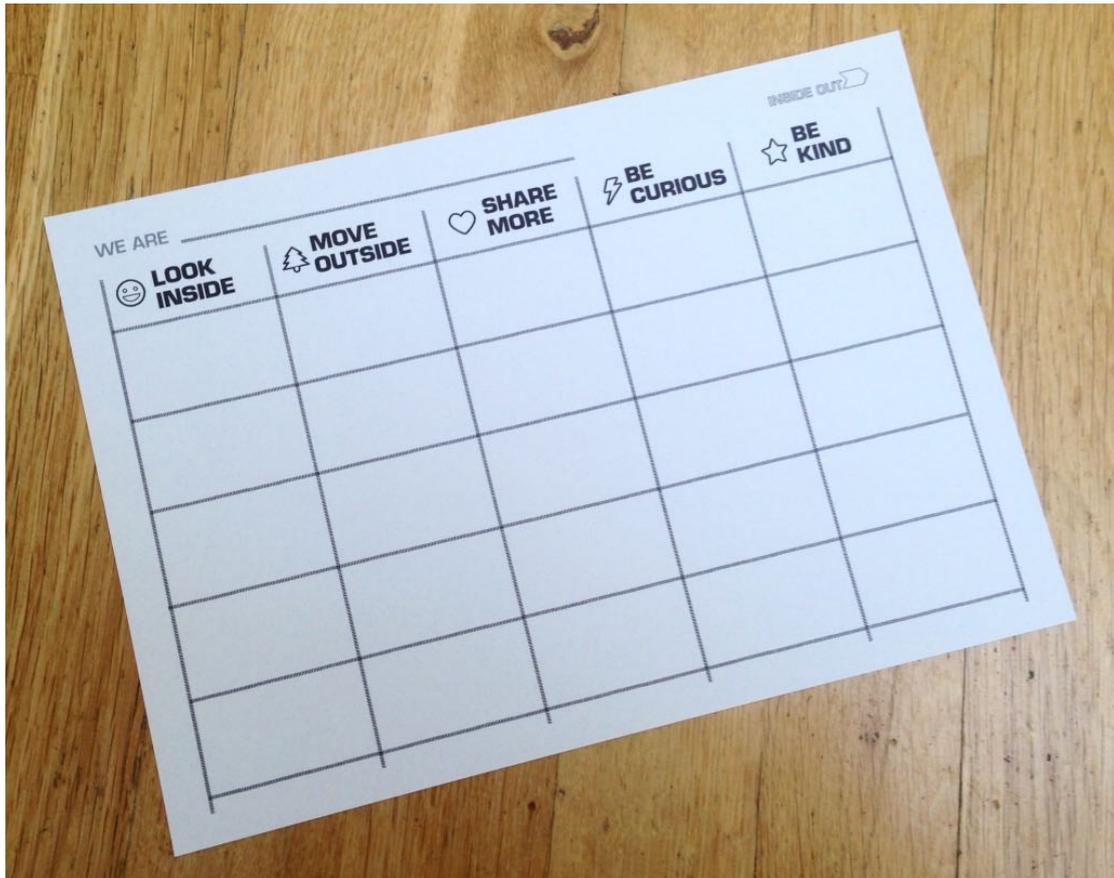
CLASS PROGRESS POSTER

Flexible and fun for a whole class to work on and enjoy together.
Focus on one Happiness Key for an hour, a day, a week, or a term.

Or mix and match activities from a variety of Happiness Keys.

The combos are endless!

Reference the '10 ways you can use INSIDE OUT at school' in the pocket of your Toolbox activity guide for more ideas.



(in Toolbox / quantity: 1 poster)

CLASS PROGRESS STICKERS

Cool, jumbo-sized stickers to be used with the Class Progress Poster. Creative way to motivate the whole class in the 5 Keys to Happiness. It's up to teachers under what conditions they do or don't give the class stickers.



(in Toolbox / quantity: 25 stickers in 5 different designs)

HAPPINESS KEY FOCUS POSTERS

Posters with a particular focus
to hang up inside or outside the classroom.
Can be handy when working on
Individual Progress Cards or Class Progress Poster.



(in Toolbox / quantity: 5 posters)

CHALLENGE CARDS

Challenges to go with the 5 Happiness Keys. Interactive way to give the Keys more meaning for children.

Just like the ones at Checkendon, except this time, teachers and children come up with challenges.

Fun to re-use with different challenges ... and on their own too!



(in Toolbox / quantity: 25 cards with 5 per set)

HAPPINESS KEYS

INSIDE OUTers loved hunting for these with matching colour keys and finding challenges on the back. Great way to introduce other children to the 5 Keys to Happiness. Divide children in pairs or larger groups. Hide them inside ... or out!



(in Toolbox / quantity: 1 set of 5 Happiness Keys with velcroed envelopes and twine for hanging; 1 set of 5 matching colour keys)

3, PROMOTIONS

Bright, bold visual aids to spread the word about INSIDE OUT in and out of the classroom ... and to spark discussions with children, teachers and parents.

POSTERS

Posters with a presence to catch the eyes of children, staff and parents and to get them talking about the 5 Keys to Happiness.



(in Toolbox / quantity: 5 posters)

COMPUTER WALLPAPERS

Simple, fun and hard to miss. These computer wallpapers help to create a steady awareness of INSIDE OUT in the classroom. They serve as prompts and reminders to children and teachers to use their Toolbox and engage in activities that will help them feel good about themselves.



(JPEG files sent by email / quantity: 5 wallpapers)

Getting to Know and Love Your Brain

To react or to think it out ... that is the question. The way you use three key players in your brain determines how you'll respond to everything that happens around you. As you learn how to help your brain tell the difference between true emergencies and stressful situations, you'll get better at handling every situation and have more time to enjoy life!

Prefrontal Cortex

(pree-FRUN-tuhl KOR-teks)

The prefrontal cortex, or PFC, is your ace for making thoughtful decisions, doing careful calculations, talking through a problem, and staying focused on what you're doing. Here's the catch: the PFC gets information only when the amygdala is calm. The PFC passes on to the hippocampus anything that is worth remembering.

Amygdala

(uh-MIG-duh-luh)

The amygdala is programmed to keep you safe at all costs. It regulates and blocks information from going to your prefrontal cortex (PFC), so you can react in a flash. The problem is, it can't tell a stressful situation from a true emergency and it can cause you to react without thinking. Mindful practice can help keep the amygdala in check so that you can think clearly.

Hippocampus

(huh-puh-KAM-puhs)

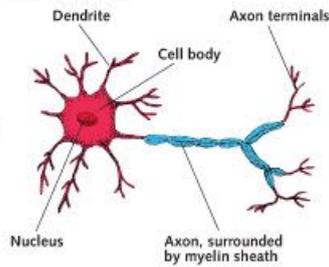
What are your favorite memories? The most useful facts you know? The hippocampus creates, stores, and processes all important facts and memories the PFC passes on to it—such as texting shortcuts, your class schedule, and the deep, warm smell of freshly baked biscuits or bread.

Breathing

Want to keep your amygdala in check when you get stressed out? Breathe deeply. Deep, full breathing calms your amygdala and helps you think and remember clearly.

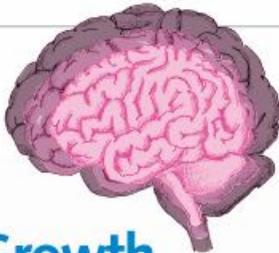
A neuron at work

Your brain has a network of neurons, or brain cells, 100 billion strong to help you think, feel, and remember. Each neuron has three important parts. Dendrites receive information—everything you sense and perceive. The nucleus regulates information signals that are sent or received. The axon sends information to other nerve cells through its terminals. Myelin is the protective coating around the axon.



The green brain?

Your brain has a special energy-efficient feature: myelin. Myelin is to an axon what plastic coating is to electrical wires. Like insulation on a wire, myelin helps the electrical impulses travel quickly and directly through the axon without losing any energy.



Growth spurts!

The brain grows rapidly at two times in our lives:

1. From before birth to 3 years old, all the neurons are rapidly growing and creating a network.
2. You're living through the second growth spurt, which peaks at 11 years old in girls and 12 years old in boys. This is when neurons are branching out and making connections.

"Use it or lose it!"

At about age 12, our brains start pruning away all the unused branches to make our brains more efficient.

Sleep and freeze!

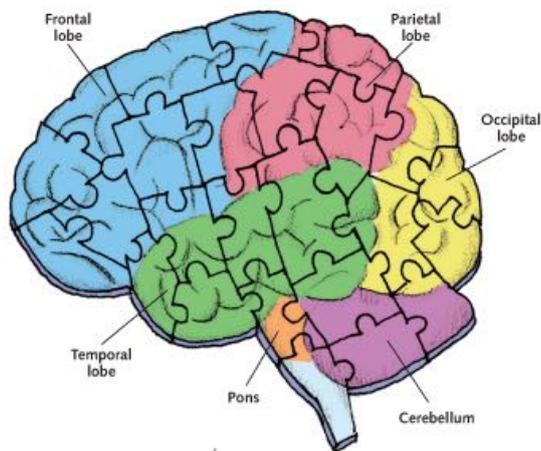
Do you have action-packed dreams or nightmares? Aren't you glad you don't act them out in your sleep? When you fall asleep, your brain releases a hormone that paralyzes you so that you don't move around a lot and hurt yourself.



SCHOLASTIC

Amazing Facts About Your Brain

Do you enjoy collecting facts to store in your hippocampus? Here's more brain food for that spongy, wrinkly organ inside your skull that loves to solve riddles, puzzles, and problems.



Powering your brain

Each day your brain generates enough energy to light a light bulb—between 10 and 23 watts! How do you keep it powered up to do all that work?

- **Get your Z's.** Getting between 8.5 and 11 hours of sleep each night helps your PFC absorb information and send it to the hippocampus. Being well rested helps your amygdala, too—studies show that alert people have fewer accidents.



- **Eat brain food.** Fuel for thinking includes food high in protein (meat, eggs, beans), omega-3 fatty acids (fish, nuts), antioxidants (berries, broccoli, spinach, whole grains), and vitamin B (clams, lamb, beef), and low in trans fats—so, limit fried foods and fatty sweets!

- **Chat it up.** Staying socially connected with friends and volunteering or playing sports are ways to keep your brain engaged and happy.



- **Protect it.** Brains are hard to fix. To dramatically reduce your chances of concussions or brain injury, wear a seatbelt whenever you ride in a car and a helmet in any high-speed or impact sports. Why take the risk?

