

Teacher's Guide

Supporting the wellbeing of primary school children

Creative expressions



Writing, drawing, colouring in or other similar exercise can be used by a student to support a student's general mood and wellbeing.

Support a student to focus on a creative project

This may help the student to manage feelings of stress. Focusing on a creative activity can remove attention from a student's worries or concerns and interrupts over thinking. Once this stress is defused, the student may be more open to process thoughts, emotions and assess behaviour.

Encourage expression of thoughts and feelings

Use writing and drawing activities for those students whose verbal expression skills are limited. A creative project can increase a student's self-esteem and the likelihood of continuing to express thoughts and feelings from the act of creating something.

Expressing gratitude

To strengthen optimism, prosocial behaviour and supportive relationships. Students can write and/or draw a card to someone important to them. This card should have a simple message of appreciation e.g. 'Thank you for listening to me, or helping me...'

Writing or drawing in a diary

Writing or drawing about things that students were grateful for in school that day, this can include important people and events through to everyday things we take for granted. Journaling about positive emotions, feelings and the people who are there for support can promote enhanced school belonging, well-being, promote emotion regulation and resource realisation, as well as build resilience and reduce worries and rumination.

Encourage sharing positive thoughts and feelings

Encourage students to share three good things that happened during the day. The three good things could be relatively small or large in importance, for example, "I answered a really hard question in class today" or "When I got up today, the sun was shining". Ask students to take five minutes to think about and write down their own three good things. Each student can share their three good things with five randomly selected students in the class. Discuss as a group whether there were any similarities and differences between the students' answers. Select appropriate responses and ask students to think;

- If they did anything to help the good thing happen.
- How did this make the student feel?
- What could they do or be helped with that may make this good thing happen again?

If the behaviour persists despite trying a number of interventions, discuss the student's situation with a supervisor or member of the learning and wellbeing support staff at your school.

<https://www.islhd.health.nsw.gov.au/services-clinics/school-link-teachers-guide>