

Thrive 365

Dragonfly: Impact Education



Did you know?

Children's Mental Health Week this week has focused on the theme of 'Growing Together'. This is important because sometimes, in a system where we are always striving to do better and achieve more, we can forget to look back and appreciate how far we've come!

Thinking about our progress can build our sense of self-efficacy (our belief in our own capacity to do hard things!). Many studies have linked high levels of self-efficacy with positive mental wellbeing. However, more recent research suggests that there are five clusters of self-efficacy and it is emotional self-efficacy that is the key variable [1].

[1] Andretta, J.R & McKay, M. T (2020) accessed at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.105374>

1 Write a letter

Encourage children to think about their emotional growth by asking them to remember a situation when they began by feeling anxious or self-conscious and now feel more comfortable, for example when they started at the school, or started in a new class, or on a new sports team.

Next, they can write a letter to their past self explaining how they overcame or managed the difficult feelings at the start and how those feelings have changed over time. For example, maybe they used to have a knot in their stomach and had to take deep breaths, or be very brave to walk in. They can then reassure their past self that they can do hard things and it gets easier!

2 Set a challenge

Learning something new or creative can help to build resilience. Encourage pupils to set themselves a challenge to find one thing they are interested in and learn something new related to it.

For example, if a pupil is passionate about gaming, they might want to look at creating something on Adobe Premier Rush; if they are interested in films, they might want to learn about how special effects are created or download an app to make their own short animations.

Encourage them to set a time limit and then help them to reflect on what was hard about the learning, if/when they felt like giving up and what they did to help them keep going.

3 Make a playlist

Sometimes, we need a prompt to remind us what we are capable of, and music can be a great mood changer.

Ask pupils to make playlists for different scenarios [2] - they can use songs or music that remind them of times they've believed in themselves or been successful. They might make one playlist for doing homework, another for helping them to feel energised and motivated in the morning, and another to help them relax or get to sleep.

They might also choose to create a playlist for someone else - a close friend or family member.

[2] <https://www.thechildrenstrust.org.uk/brain-injury-information/latest/childrens-mental-health-week-2022>

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