

★ Parent & Carer Newsletter ★ Spring 2019

IN THIS EDITION: Safer Internet Day, tips for keeping children safer online, new 'Safer Safety Cards' for social media sites, helping children manage anxiety, children's wellbeing projects in local schools... This newsletter is also available at our website: www.safety-net.org.uk

★ Safer Internet Day: together for a better internet

In case you missed it, February 5th was International Safer Internet Day - organised by the Safer Internet Centre - and this year's slogan **"Together for a better internet"** is a call to action for all of us to play our part in creating a better internet for everyone, and especially for younger users.



Local children's charity, Safety Net has put together a leaflet for parents with some tips to help children stay safe online. You can find a copy on our website at <https://tinyurl.com/y6f89svx>

Our main message is **Keep Talking**. We want adults to ask children and young people about their online world as often as possible. Parents and carers sometimes don't feel confident to do this because they know less about the online world than their children. The important thing is to be interested and listen. Safer Internet Day has produced a conversation starter document to help you. You can find it at: <https://tinyurl.com/ydcjqfqcw>

Check out the back page for more online safety tips and information.



★ School calendar dates competition

In our last edition of Safety Rocks we asked children to send us their pictures for our annual school dates calendar and they did! We had lots of wonderful pictures sent in from parents and by schools on the theme of 'what friendship means to me' and it proved very difficult to pick the 12 that would feature in our calendar. Hopefully you have now received yours and it is in pride of place on your wall or fridge to help you plan your year.

★ Children's mental health & well-being



Helping children deal with anxiety

When children have anxious thoughts or feelings, the natural response from adults is often to try to fix things for them, or minimise their anxieties in the hope that they will go away. However, neither of these approaches helps children learn how to deal with scary situations and develop their own coping skills.

Developing everyday coping skills

★ **1. Stop and take some slow deep breaths** to help calm down.

★ **2. Make time for worries** – set aside some 'worry time' each day for talking about and dealing with worries. Encourage children to draw or write down whatever's bothering them and put them in a 'worry box'. When the time is up shut the worries up in the box and say goodbye to them for the day.

★ **3. Break worries down into mini goals** - for example, if your child is scared of swimming, they could watch others in the pool for a while, then try dangling their legs in the water and so on.

★ **4. Encourage positive thinking** – it's easy to get stuck in worse case scenarios but it can be helpful to remind them of a time when they coped well with a situation and things turned out OK.

★ **5. Practice trying new things** so they get used to being a bit out of their comfort zone.

★ **6. Letting your child know that they have choices**, feel they have some control in a situation and know when it will end will all help children to feel safer in a worrying situation.

★ **7. Be upfront about scary stuff** – if your child is worried about things like death or war, that's very normal, try to answer their questions as honestly as possible for their age and put things in perspective.

★ **8. Children take their cues from adults around them**, so try to be aware of the example you are setting with your own behaviour and have realistic expectations of theirs.

Adapted from <https://healthyfamilies.beyondblue.org.au/age-6-12>

★ The SMILE Project

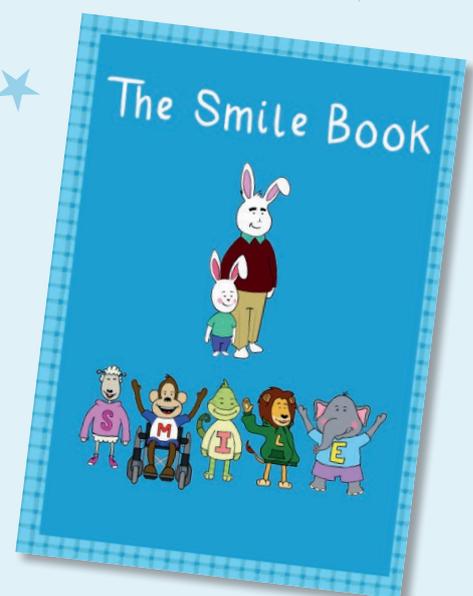
Public Health Schools and School Travel at Brighton and Hove City Council have developed a PSHE lesson pack called 'SMILE' for Reception classes which they are trialling in schools between March and May 2019.

SMILE translates the '5 ways to well-being' into lesson plans, child-friendly ideas and a book which parents, carers and children can use together.

The 6 ways to smile are:

- ★ **Speak**
- ★ **Move**
- ★ **Imagine & play**
- ★ **Learn**
- ★ **Enjoy**
- ★ **Help someone else smile**

You can find a full copy of the resource for parents and carers at: the following link
<https://tinyurl.com/y4zgw63z>



★ ★ The 'Ways to smile with young children activity ideas booklet'.

★ Well-being projects in local schools

'Not Today, Celeste' - a dog's tale about her human's depression

Not Today, Celeste! is a heart-warming story about a small dog, Celeste, and how she feels when her much-loved human, Rupert, develops depression. ("Poorly feelings"). Written by local author, Liza Stevens, the book has also now been made into a puppet show which is being performed by local theatre company Bobble Hat in primary schools this term.

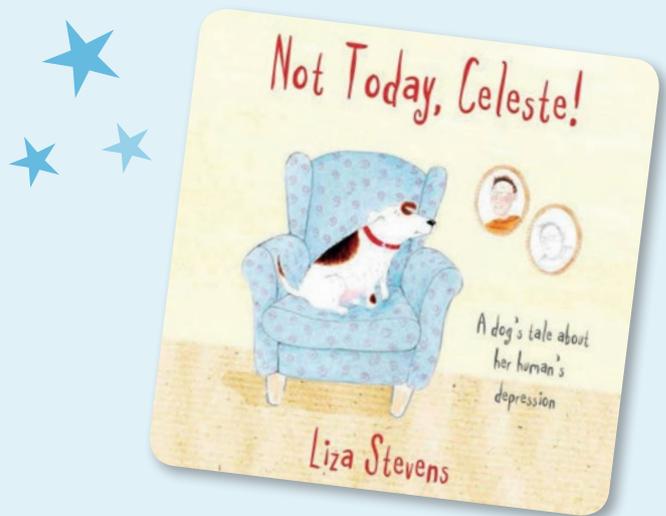
The theme of the show is mental health and wellbeing, and in particular, supporting children living with loved ones who have mental health difficulties. The show has already been performed in some schools in Brighton and Hove and was really well received by staff and children. This term parents and carers have also been able to watch the show and stay for a cuppa and a chat afterwards about any issues from the play that have affected them or their family.

If you would like more information about the show please visit www.nottodayceleste.co.uk.

Story books can be a great way of talking with children about difficult and worrying issues,

The Public health in schools team have produced a useful list of suggested children's books, which can be found at our website:

<https://tinyurl.com/y3fsopp9>



Helping children understand adult depression

- ★ This happens to other people too, you are not alone.
- ★ Let them know you still love them unconditionally.
- ★ It is ok for you to talk about depression and ask questions.
- ★ There is nothing for you to be afraid of.
- ★ Depression can get better with treatment, like a broken leg.
- ★ You have done nothing wrong. This is not your fault and you can't fix it.
- ★ Sometimes depression makes people seem angry, it's just because they are poorly.
- ★ It's ok for you to have fun and smile.
- ★ I am always happy to listen to you.
- ★ You should not be afraid to ask for help and talk about your own feelings.

(From Dr Pooky Knightsmith & Mentalhealth.net)



★ Online safety page



★ New: FREE Safety Cards for social media sites

H2B (How to be Safer) is an online hub designed to provide parents and carers with information and advice that is easy to access and simple to understand. You can use the short videos and step-by-step prompt cards to ensure you and your children have a safer online experience.

H2b has just released some really useful 'Safer Safety Cards' for popular social media sites which you can download at:

<https://ineqe.com/h2bsaferservice/#safety-cards>

Tik Tok Formerly known as Musical.ly & Live.ly, TikTok is a free social media platform used to create and share short videos. TikTok rules require the user to be 13 or older to use it. Users are able to create videos of themselves lip-syncing, and watch other users' streams & videos, so there is a risk of them being exposed to inappropriate content.

During an eight-day investigation into the app, Channel 4 News viewed 45 hours of live streams which revealed nearly half of the streams viewed contained inappropriate content, directed to children as young as nine.

Top Tips to keep children safe in TikTok

- ★ Check out the App for yourself before letting the children in your care use it, particularly if they are under the recommended age for using it (13 years old).
- ★ Beware that other users may be live streaming content that contains inappropriate lyrics.
- ★ Have a discussion with your children about what behaviour is acceptable to live-stream.
- ★ Make sure they have the correct privacy settings, H2b has a video you can watch of how to do this at <https://h2bsafetycentre.com/privacy-tiktok/>
- ★ Ensure they don't buy any in-app purchases without consent!

From H2b Safety Centre: <https://h2bsafetycentre.com/>

★ Checking out the social media sites your children are visiting

Go to the Common Sense website. If you want to get clued up on the social media sites and games that your children are spending time on and find out if they are age appropriate and safe. You can also read parent and child reviews of different sites and find the age rating given by Common Sense based on their expert reviews.

www.commonsensemedia.org/

★ New parental controls for YouTube

YouTube has just launched a new range of parental controls to limit the channels that children can watch to those approved by humans rather than computer programmes. It is likely that many other online companies will follow suit. The parental control information can be found at:

<https://protectyoungminds.org/2018/05/22/youtube-kids-parental-controls-guide/>

★ **We would love to hear from you!** If you have a question suggestion or article, please email us at newsletter@safety-net.org.uk. For an online edition, visit safety-net.org.uk or brightonandhovelscb.org.uk