

5 Ways to Wellbeing

At St. Mary's we want our children to be the best they can be. We want them to thrive and cope with all that life brings them.

Throughout the year we look for opportunities to help children to experience the 5 ways to wellbeing - ideally they would experience these 5 ways **every** day.



Give

Participation in social and community life has attracted a lot of attention in the field of wellbeing research.

Individuals who report a greater interest in helping others are more likely to rate themselves as happy.

Research into actions for promoting happiness has shown that committing an act of kindness once a week over a six-week period is associated with an increase in wellbeing.

- Give a smile
- Give time to talk about their day
- In school we plan to have regular opportunities to donate to charities

Be active

Exercise is essential for promoting well-being.

Regular physical activity is associated with lower rates of depression and anxiety across all age groups.

It doesn't need to be particularly intense for you to feel good - slower-paced activities, such as walking, can have the benefit of encouraging social interactions as well providing some level of exercise.

Today, why not get physical? Here are a few ideas:

- Take the stairs not the lift
- Go for a walk after tea
- Walk to school - perhaps with friends of your children – so you can 'connect' as well
- Get off the bus one stop earlier than usual and walk the final part of your journey to school
- Organise a sporting activity at the weekend
- Have a kick-about in a local park
- Do some 'easy exercise', like stretching, before you leave for school in the morning

Keep Learning

Continued learning through life enhances self-esteem and encourages social interaction and a more active life.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the opportunity to engage in work or educational activities helps to lift people out of depression.

The practice of setting goals, which is related to adult learning in particular, has been strongly associated with higher levels of wellbeing.

Why not learn something new today? Here are a few more ideas:

- Ask your children what they have been learning
- Read a book with your child, watch the news and discuss appropriate items
- Play a board game or do a crossword game or puzzle with you child
- Research something you've always wondered about and share it with your child
- Cook a meal together
- Take up a new hobby that you can share
- Learn a new word.

Connect

There is strong evidence that indicates that feeling close to, and valued by other people is a fundamental human need and one that contributes to functioning well in the world.

It's clear that social relationships are critical for promoting wellbeing and for acting as a buffer against mental ill health for people of all ages.

With this in mind, try to connect with your child and others around you in a meaningful way – your child will learn from you!

- Always be ready to greet your child when they are coming out of school – leave your mobile in your pocket!
- Speak to someone new
- Turn the television off during mealtimes – make this a time for talking and spending quality time together
- Ask how someone's weekend was and really listen when they tell you
- Put five minutes aside to find out how someone really is

Take notice

Reminding yourself to 'take notice' can strengthen and broaden awareness.

Studies have shown that being aware of what is taking place in the present directly enhances your well-being and savouring 'the moment' can help to reaffirm your life priorities.

Heightened awareness also enhances your self-understanding and allows you to make positive choices based on your own values and motivations.

Take some time to enjoy the moment and the environment around you. Here are a few ideas:

- Get a plant for your home
- Have a 'clear the clutter' day
- Take notice of how your children and friends are feeling or acting
- Take a different route on your journey to or from school
- Do some gardening with your child, and appreciate the beauty of nature

Mrs Clinton is our Wellbeing Lead in school – please contact her if you would like any support or more information in wellbeing.