WELLBEING for Little Minds

Autumn Term

SIMPLE IDEAS TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD'S WELLBEING AT HOME

FOCUS: MANAGING BIG FEELINGS

HELPING CHILDREN UNDERSTAND, EXPRESS AND REGULATE THEIR EMOTIONS.

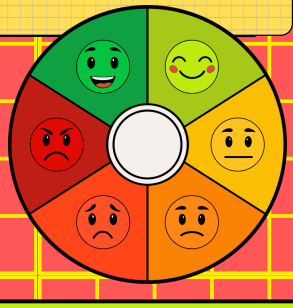
This half term, we're focusing on managing big feelings. All children experience strong emotions, from anger and frustration to sadness, worry and excitement. Learning to recognise and understand these feelings is an important part of growing up. With patience, reassurance and support, children can gradually develop the skills they need to manage their emotions.

Big Feelings

Big feelings are emotions that can sometimes feel overwhelming. Children are still developing the skills needed to recognise, express and regulate their emotions.
When feelings become too intense, children may struggle to explain what is wrong or respond calmly. This can lead to tears, shouting, withdrawal or behaviour that adults find challenging.

Why Big Feelings happen

Children need support to express emotions safely.



Children experience strong emotions for many reasons:

- Developing brains: The skills needed to manage emotions are still developing.
- Limited emotional vocabulary: Children may struggle to explain how they feel.
- Unmet needs: Hunger, tiredness, sensory overload or feeling overwhelmed can make emotions harder to manage.
- Unexpected changes: Disappointment, uncertainty and changes to plans can trigger strong reactions.

Remember: All feelings are valid, but not all behaviours are acceptable.

One Small Change That Makes a Difference

Instead of asking:

"Why are you behaving like this?"

Try:
"Something feels really difficult right now. I'm here to help."

A calm, supportive response can help children feel understood and begin to settle.

Name the feeling

Help children find words for their emotions.
Try: "You seem frustrated because that didn't work out."

Validate the emotion

Show children that their feelings matter, even when you need to set a boundary.
Try: "It's OK to feel angry, but I won't let you hit."

Notice body signals

Talk about how emotions feel physically, such as a racing heart, butterflies in the tummy or tight shoulders.

Choose the right moment

Avoid lengthy explanations when a child is overwhelmed. Help them feel safe and settled first, then talk things through afterwards.

Recognising the signs

Big feelings don't always look the same. Some children become loud and expressive, while others become quiet or withdrawn.

What you might notice	What it might mean
Shouting or crying	Feeling frustrated or overwhelmed
Becoming unusually quiet	Feeling worried, upset or overloaded
Clenched fists or tense muscles	Anger or frustration building
Refusing simple requests	Struggling to cope in that moment

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