

Examples for content that could be used in school newsletters



**Key:**  
**Bolded and Underlined words are wellbeing THEMES**

**Just bolded words are topics to support the THEME**

- Our tip, get your library on board! Read books that support awareness of character strengths, emotions, resilience etc. Check out our [recommended book list](#) for further ideas.
- The below blurbs have been taken from various schools, excerpts of our *Flip to Flourish* guide book and our [blog](#)

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#### Introducing Grow Your Mind:

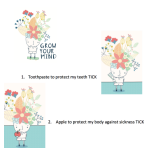
Our school has started using a program that promotes whole school flourishing called Grow Your Mind. During our first session we explored all the ways we look after our physical health daily. Brushing our teeth, eating fruit and vegetables, drinking water etc. Then we explored how we look after our minds on a daily basis. This was harder to do initially! Children were then asked to point to their toes, their heart, their prefrontal cortex...! And so the journey has begun of brain awareness. Listen out for your child talking about shrinking their Guard Dog, or growing their Wise Owl, their Elephant and their Sifting Sooty.

Grow Your Mind mental health tip #1:

To shrink your Guard Dog (aka your amygdala):

1. Take 3 anchor breaths
2. Try finger breathing
3. Think of one thing or person you are thankful for

#### Looking after your mind:



3. Gratitude journal to protect my mind....?

Gratitude what? It doesn't have to be a journal. Just spending 1 minute a day thinking of the good things you have in your life is enough to start building up your resilience for whatever life throws you. So how do you grow gratitude? Tips: 1. Start a class gratitude jar 2. Keep a gratitude journal at home 3. Try mindful eating, savouring each mouthful and appreciating where it has come from 4. Start thanking the people who treat you well Why? Scientists have studied what makes people happy and what makes them bounce back after hard times. The common theme: gratitude. Which as we discussed in all of our classes this week, is a fancy word for being thankful.

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#### On Kindness:

"Be kind, everyone you meet is fighting a battle you know nothing about" Unknown



Wellbeing tip:

#1 Be kind. It won't cost you a cent.

#2 Before your Guard Dog reacts, take a breath. Maybe the person who is bugging you is just having a tough day.

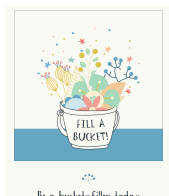
More on Kindness



By now you may have heard your children talk about their Guard Dog. At Grow Your Mind we have created animal helpers to represent key parts of the brain. Our Guard Dog represents the amygdala, a really useful though slightly over reactive part of our brain!

This week children explored how being kind and tolerant is a really simple way to shrink our Guard Dog. There is an important step before showing kindness and tolerance to others though. We need to feel connected to people around us. Saying hi, being friendly, laughing with others, are all ways to boost your connection. When we feel connected to others we can start being kind to ourselves and to the people and animals around us. Please ask your children to share with you their well wishes for the planet and for the people they love. There were some absolutely beautiful comments made.

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It is super simple. You feel good about yourself when you are kind to others.

Wellbeing tip:

#1 Plan three kind things you will do for others today

#### On friendliness:



Say 'hi' to someone as you pass them at school, offer to help someone, really thank someone, look into a person's eyes. These are all micro moments of connection. When we positively connect with others, we are more able to be kind and to be tolerant. Such important strengths to practice at school! How friendly is our school? Do you say hi to other parents, teachers and students as you pass them by?

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#### On focus:



We have a lot of distractions around us. Try noticing when your thoughts are drifting away from what you are meant to be doing.

Wellbeing tip:  
Really cannot focus, but want to?



#1: Name one thing you can taste, smell, hear, see and touch. This will bring you back into the present moment and allow you to regain your focus.

**Focus:**  
The focus this week in Grow Your Mind was all about... focus! So, what does a famous musician, a sports star and a tight rope walker all have in common? They have a strong reticular activating system (RAS).

At Grow Your Mind we call this part of the brain the Sifting Sooty. Named after the real Sooty Shearwater who has the most incredible focus in the animal kingdom. Flying up to 500km a day, you would want to have a strong RAS!

#### On optimism:

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Challenge your thinking

Every time you catch yourself saying something negative, ask yourself, "Is there a 'dolphin way' to look at this problem?" More often than not, there will be a more positive way to view things! Life is full of ups and downs - sometimes it's fair, sometimes it isn't. Try and think if the thoughts you are having are helpful or not helpful, then challenge them! For example, a SHARK thought would be: "Oh no, it's handwriting again. I hate handwriting, it is so boring." Is this thought really going to help you with what you need to do? How else could you look at it? What would a DOLPHIN thought be? "It's handwriting again. I am not so crazy about it, but I guess the more I practise, the easier it will be."

#### On nerves and facing fears:



Grow Your Mind is all about shrinking your Guard Dog - and not just for those times when you are angry. Sometimes when we are nervous our Guard Dog stops us from trying, just in case we fail. Well, Amy Cuddy (Harvard University) has researched the power of holding a power pose! Get your kids to show you one!

Wellbeing tip:

#1 Practice the poses, next time you feel nervous try holding one and see if it helps!

#### On emotional regulation and nerves:

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#### Anchor breathing:



Feeling nervous? Wound up? Over excited? Possibly can't focus. Find your 'anchor spot', a place on your body where you can feel yourself breathing. Boats use anchors to keep them in one spot in the water. Waves push the boat up and down and side to side, but still the boat remains where it is. When we notice our breath, we are finding our anchor spot, which grounds us and reminds us that we are here in this moment. As you breathe in, say to yourself, "in". As you breathe out, say to yourself, "out". You can do this at the start of class, during your break, or at the end of class - any time, all you need is two minutes. You are practicing mindful breathing - a good thing to do while you are calm.

#### On Internal Weather:



How is the weather today? Sunny? Rainy? Windy? Freezing? Will it be the same tomorrow? Probably not. And neither will our mood. Our emotions come and go. Sometimes it is super easy to let our strong emotions like anxiety or anger be the boss of us, instead of the other way round. One way to be the boss of our emotions (which means we make an active choice in the best way to respond) is to tap into our internal weather. How do you do this?

1. Stop and breathe. What am I feeling and where in my body am I feeling?
2. If there is a storm raging what can I do to calm it down a little?
3. Take three deep breaths and remind yourself this moment won't last!

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#### On Growth Mindset:

The power of YET!



Grow Your Mind has been exploring growth mindset with K6. Children investigated what it felt like to say the things they could not do and then to say them again with a YET at the end. This is teaching your brain that intelligence is not fixed and that we are all capable of growing and learning. Children shared stories of times they made a mistake and how this mistake actually helped them master a new skill. Each classroom has their own 'Flip to Flourish' filled with images that promote ways to look after your mind. These three images were the focus of this week's emotional well-being learning.

#1 Treat mistakes as a chance to learn and grow

#2 Start adding YET to the things you tell yourself you cannot do

#### Growth mindset tree:



Stick with it today

The harder you try without giving up, the more you will learn. When you do something hard, you are training your brain to be fit and strong. You are telling yourself that you can keep stretching and growing your brain throughout your life. Almost as if it were elastic.

Nobody wants to make mistakes, but everyone does. How you react to them makes a big difference to whether you learn from them or not. If we problem solve why the mistake happened, then the brain will be more alert the next time you try.

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