



Talking Mental Health

Lesson Plan

Age group: Year 5/6

Timing: 1 hour – 1 ½ hours

Learning Outcomes (LO):

1. Give children consistent and accessible language to talk about mental health and wellbeing.
2. Ensure children know who the trusted adults in their life are and how to ask them for help and support.
3. Ensure children understand the difference between a small, everyday feeling and a big feeling.
4. Give children the skills and techniques to be good listeners.

Creating a safe space, ground rules and signposting

Mental health is an emotive subject area which can take us back to difficult times and stir up strong feelings. At the start of this lesson, communicate to your class any available safe spaces in your school that they can go to, and remind them of the support options listed on your class signposting poster (available as part of this pack).

We strongly recommend that you establish ground rules around respectful listening and confidentiality that are usually used in a PSHE lesson with the class.

Some guidance on this lesson plan

- There are different ways that you could teach this lesson. You could teach the whole plan, perhaps in a dedicated morning or afternoon session, using all of the activities included. Alternatively, you could split the plan based on the three chapters of the animation (1. Mental Health 2. Talking 3. Listening) and teach each of these in three separate and shorter sessions.
- Before teaching this lesson, please refer to the information sheet. This is available as part of this Teacher Toolkit, and freely downloadable at www.annafreud.org. This will provide you with some guidance on talking about mental health with children and young people
- You may like to alert parents and carers that you will be teaching this lesson. To assist with this, a parent and carer leaflet, *Top Tips for Talking for Parents and Carers*, is available as part of this pack and freely available at www.annafreud.org.
- Depending on the needs of your class, you may like to substitute some of the activities outlined in this lesson plan with those in the set of cross-curricular activities. This is also freely downloadable at www.annafreud.org.
- In piloting this lesson plan, we started this lesson with icebreaker activity; 'Fruit Salad Game'. To keep this lesson to a realistic timeframe, we have removed it from this plan, but the activity can be found in the set of Cross-Curricular Activities should you like to include it.
- The PowerPoint presentation designed to accompany the Assembly Plan may be a useful resource when teaching this lesson. The PowerPoint is downloadable at www.annafreud.org, and a printout of the slides is a part of this pack.

Setting up the classroom

- Make sure that the animation has loaded and is ready to play. The animation is freely available to download from www.annafreud.org.
- Some of these activities will require space for the children to work in a large circle, facing each other or with room to move around. You may need to work in a hall or push the tables to the sides of your classroom.

INTRODUCTION	Time	Resources	LO
<p>Introduction:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Today we are going to talk about our mental health. 2. What do we mean when we talk about mental health? 3. Hands up – ideas/words. 4. Give definition to class: “Mental Health is about our feelings, our thinking, our emotions and our moods – things you can’t really see, but that affect our lives in lots of ways.” [For further guidance on a definition of mental health, please see the information sheet for teachers included in this pack] 5. It’s different to our physical health as we can’t always see it in the same way that we can see a broken arm or chicken pox. 	5 mins	Animation loaded and ready to play	1

MENTAL HEALTH	Time	Resources	LO
<p>Show animation section 1: ‘Mental Health’ [ends at 02:50].</p> <p>Discussion:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask class what they noticed in the animation. Recap key points. 2. Clarify ‘small everyday feelings’. Are there any other examples that the class can give? 3. Clarify that these feelings change according to what is happening in our day. 4. Any other examples of things people do to cope with ‘small everyday feelings’? <p>Activity: Feelings Worksheet</p> <p>Aim: To encourage the children to think about small everyday feelings and to identify a recent small feeling they have had, and how they experienced it. This could be a positive or negative small feeling.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use the Feelings Worksheet to think about a recent small feeling you have had. You can describe it in words or pictures. 	5 - 10 mins	Animation	1 3
	10 - 20 mins	Feelings Worksheet; Small Feelings Picture Map	1

LISTENING	Time	Resources	LO
<p>1. Who we talk to and when we decide to talk will be different for everyone. Let's see what Jay will do.</p> <p>Show animation section 3: 'Listening'</p>	2 mins		4
<p>Activity: Listening Lines</p> <p>1. Jay needs someone to listen to her. How can we be good listeners when people want to tell us about how they are feeling?</p> <p>2. Listening line activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stand in two lines, with children facing a partner. • Using the cards, ask children to act out the instruction on the cards for 30 seconds at a time. • Debrief after each one – How did it feel? Were you being listened to? What was the other person doing that stopped them from being a good listener? • Using this information, draw or write down the rules of being a good listener using the good listener worksheet. 	15-20 mins	Listening Line Cards Good Listener Worksheet	4

SUMMARY AND END OF LESSON	Time	Resources	LO
<p>1. What happened for Jay in the end? Hands up.</p> <p>2. Recap key messages of the animation: "If your feelings are getting too big to cope with on your own, talking to someone you trust might really help" [this message is available as a PowerPoint slide within the Assembly PowerPoint, which is downloadable from www.annafreud.org].</p> <p>3. Recap what we have learnt today about the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is mental health? • Talking about mental health • Being a good listener • Who to talk to about our feelings 	5 mins		