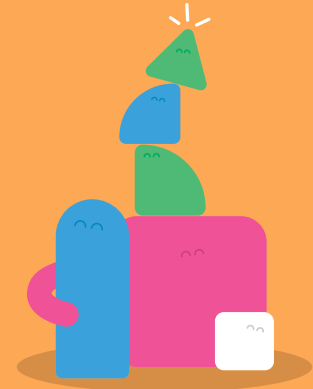


1ST & 2ND CLASS

Parent Support Sheets – Lesson 2: Keeping Me Well



Lesson Summary:

The aim of this lesson is to gain an understanding of feeling safe, including when something feels okay and not okay, and continuing to help children to recognise what they need to feel well. In this lesson, children realise what their 'inner superhero' is and how to recognise unique attributes in themselves and others. We look at improving wellbeing and resilience by building self-esteem.

Try It At Home Activity: 'You're a Superhero!'

In this lesson, children were asked to draw themselves as a superhero, identifying what makes them feel special and what they are good at (i.e. their superpower!). In class, they walked around and looked at one another's drawings and offered suggestions as to what kinds of superpowers could be added to each other's drawings.

In this 'Try It At Home' activity, it's time for them to show you their drawing. Show interest in their picture, and explore with them why they drew what they drew. You could ask them:

- Why did you draw yourself as that type of superhero?
- Tell me about your special powers. Feel free to add any positive traits you know about your child.

Next, your child has been asked to draw you as a superhero and to label your superpowers!

Finally, feel free to have a nice discussion with your child about the similarities and differences between you and your child's superpowers.



Scan here for
'Try it at Home'
activities!

Dr. Malie's Top Tips:

- It is important that children develop a **positive sense of self**. As a parent, you have a great influence over the self-esteem of your child: "The way we talk to our children becomes their inner voice." (Peggy O'Mara). Self-esteem is all about how you feel about yourself and your abilities. It includes self-confidence, self-respect and an ability to be self-reliant. The more positive a child's self-esteem, the better they will be at dealing with life, and the more confident, happy, proud, and motivated they will be. They will make friends easier and be more giving.
- Here are 5 tips for building your child's self-esteem and encouraging them:
 1. **Say "I love you" and mean it every day** and show them plenty of affection in your greetings and goodbyes. There is also real power in telling your child "I like you" and taking the time to let them know what it is you really like about them.
 2. **Spend time with your child on the things they enjoy** and show real interest in them and the things that are important to them. It gives them the message "You are worth my time. You are a valuable person".

- 3. Try to focus on the positive aspects of your child's behaviour**, and find ways to offer realistic and honest praise as often as you can. Keep criticism to a minimum – it doesn't produce positive behaviour. If you want more of certain behaviour, praise your child for it. Honest praise is the quickest way to build your child's self-esteem. Try to be firm on routines and boundaries as they help a child feel safe.
- 4. Recognise your child's special talents** and help them to build on them, and remind them that not everyone is good at everything. Supporting your child in their passions is another way to celebrate their uniqueness and individuality.
- 5. Be a good role model.** Start by building your own self-confidence and thinking of ways to nurture your own wellbeing. Model self-compassion (e.g. "That was hard and I tried my best."). The more positive the parents' self-esteem, the more positive your child's will be, as you are a mirror to their feelings about themselves.

The way we talk about ourselves as parents in front of our children is very important. Children pick up instantly how we might be critical of aspects of ourselves or our lives (e.g. our appearance, our ability to cope with challenges and unexpected situations in life). It's very difficult to model a suitable response to children at all times (after all nobody is perfect), but it's just something to consider.

Resources:

To learn more about celebrating our uniqueness and diversity, see the following sources:

- Practical ideas from Reggie Joiner: <https://theparentcue.org/celebrate-uniqueness-2/>
- Additional ideas from Wendy Wisner and Amy Morrin: <https://www.verywellfamily.com/celebrate-childs-uniqueness-5071090>
- For key steps to raising inclusive kids by Ashley Cullins: <https://biglifejournal.com/blogs/blog/raising-inclusive-kids>

For help with parental self-care, check out these sources:

- A Lust for Life's online article on parental self-care: <https://www.alustforlife.com/tools/mental-health/why-parental-self-care-is-essential-for-childrens-emotional-wellbeing>
- RTÉ Today Show video piece on parental self-care: <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=308146103160351>