



REINVESTMENT GUIDE

Grade 4

INTRODUCTION TO THE REINVESTMENT GUIDE

The overall aim of the program is to reduce anxiety-related risk factors and strengthen protective factors by promoting mental health and developing psychosocial skills. More specifically, the program aims to develop and promote the following psychosocial skills, which are key determinants of health and well-being.

- Know and value yourself.
- Deal with your emotions and stress.
- Ask for help when you need it.
- Assert yourself against social influences.
- Use prosocial behaviour.
- Use lifestyle habits that contribute to well-being.

The workshops conducted in class contribute to the development of these skills. This reinvestment guide is intended for teachers, to assist them in revisiting the content covered.

The “Did you know...” section gives you some theoretical background on the concepts covered during the workshop. This section is designed to provide you with the knowledge you need to run your workshops, and is not intended for students.

The “Challenge” section presents the challenge presented to your students at the end of the workshop. You can pay special attention to carrying out these challenges and encourage students to achieve them.

In the “Enabling Reinvestment” section, you'll find strategies to help you facilitate reinvestment of learning. Implementing these strategies increases the scope of the workshops.

The “Reading Suggestions” section features children's literature that can contribute to the development of the psychosocial skills addressed in the workshops.

WORKSHOP 4.1 – MY INNER ROLLERCOASTER

Discovering your sensations, emotions and thoughts

DID YOU KNOW?

When faced with a stressful situation, our body sends us all kinds of alarm signals through our thoughts, physical sensations and emotions.

Here are some examples of warning signals that can occur in stressful situations:

Thoughts:

- I can't do it;
- I'm no good;
- It's impossible;
- Etc.

Emotions:

- I'm scared;
- I feel nervous, exasperated, irritable;
- I feel lonely;
- Etc.

Physical sensations:

- My hands are clammy;
- My stomach hurts;
- I'm sweaty;
- My heart's pounding;
- Etc.

The more students are able to recognize these different signals, the more they will be able to quickly realize that they are in a stressful situation and find strategies to deal with it. Conversely, the less sensitive students are to these cues, the more likely they are to accumulate a great deal of stress.

(Ciarrochi et al., 2014)

CHALLENGE

Suggest the following challenge:

- Between now and the next OFF-TRAIL workshop, try to classify the sensations, emotions and thoughts you feel the next time you experience stress, using the drawing of Charlie.

ENABLING REINVESTMENT

When a student experiences a stressful situation in class, you can help them identify the physical sensations and emotions they are experiencing using the *Drawing of Charlie* teaching aid. You can also help them identify the thoughts they're adopting. If these thoughts aren't helpful, you can help the student try to see the situation differently. The drawing of Charlie could also be transposed onto a large poster in the classroom.

You can also print out the poster entitled *Possible physical sensations related to stress and anxiety*, which can be found on the [OFF-TRAIL website](#) in the Workshops and tools for students section, and help students identify their physical sensations when experiencing stress.

READING SUGGESTIONS

- Potter, M. (2023). *How Are You Feeling Now?: A Let's Talk picture book to help young children understand their emotions*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Robberecht, T. (2004). *Angry Dragon*. Clarion Books.
- Romain, T., & Verdick, E. (2018). *Stress Can Really Get on Your Nerves*. Free Spirit Publishing.

WORKSHOP 4.2 – COOLING YOUR JETS

Using strategies to calm yourself down

DID YOU KNOW?

Relaxation improves concentration and facilitates learning. Since school is an important place for learning and experimentation that requires a great deal of concentration, the use of relaxation techniques can be beneficial for students.

Yoga is one of many activities that can be easily integrated into the classroom, requiring little equipment and space. A yoga sequence can be brief, easily slipping in between two teaching activities.

Yoga allows you to develop a certain interiority, to recognize sensations, to be present to yourself; thus it facilitates creativity, intuition and relaxation, while stimulating awareness of the present moment. Relaxation is not a waste of time. On the contrary, it gives the brain a break to better absorb what it has learned.

It's worth noting that the teacher's participation in an activity such as yoga is particularly beneficial to the students' engagement and also enables them to be better guided in the execution of the postures.

(Giammarinaro & Lamure, 2015)

CHALLENGE

Suggest the following challenge:

- Between now and the next OFF-TRAIL workshop, use at least one of the strategies presented in today's workshop and in the handout to calm yourself down in your everyday life.

ENABLING REINVESTMENT

To help the students explore and practice different stress-relief strategies, you could set a time each day or each week to practice one in class (for example, after lunch or recess). You can consult the following site for ideas on stress management strategies: <https://health.choc.org/7-stress-relief-techniques-for-kids/>

After trying out several strategies in class, you could invite them to write two winning strategies on Popsicle® sticks and hand them in. At appropriate moments, you could suggest that students choose a technique by picking one of the sticks and practice it together.

READING SUGGESTIONS

- Grant, J. (2023). *Finding Calm in Nature: A Guide for Mindful Kids*. Augsburg Fortress Publishers.
- Harrison, I. (2023). *The Calm Workbook: A Kid's Activity Book for Relaxation and Mindfulness*. Sky Pony.
- Macauley, D. (2019). *I Am A Feeling Body: Body Awareness And Mindfulness For Children*. Author Solutions Inc.
- Williams, R. (2020). *Slow Down: 50 Mindful Moments In Nature*. Magic Cat.

WORKSHOP 4.3 – MAKING SURE WE HELP EACH OTHER

Asking for help

DID YOU KNOW?

A request for help, whether for oneself or to help someone else, must be made when a student is faced with a situation that requires tools or resources that they don't necessarily have, or don't know how to mobilize.

It must also be made when the student wishes to assist someone going through a similar situation.

You can help students better understand what it means to ask for help, to take action, and to know their limits, by informing them about what goes into asking for help.

There are many factors that make it easier for students to ask for help, and others that make it harder. Here are a few examples:

Facilitating factors:

- Know who to contact (resource people);
- Know the guidelines to follow in various situations;
- Know how to assert yourself;
- Know the requirements of the situation and your own limits.

Detrimental factors:

- Embarrassment;
- Fear of betraying a secret;
- Fear of being vulnerable;
- The mistaken belief that asking for help is a sign of weakness or incompetence;
- The desire to do it by yourself.

(Flynn & Lake, 2008; Gouvernement du Québec, 2021)

CHALLENGE

Suggest the following challenge:

- Between now and the next OFF-TRAIL workshop, ask someone you trust for help, at least once, if you need it.

ENABLING REINVESTMENT

To encourage students to reinvest what they've learned, you can help them identify various resources in their school to whom they can turn for help if they need it (teacher, professional, technician, attendant, secretary, principal, etc.). Give them the *Resource people in our school* worksheet (below) and help them complete it. You could also add photos of these people, or invite them to come to class to introduce themselves and explain their role.

Each student can also draw on his or her personal support network (parents, trusted adult, older sibling, etc.).

READING SUGGESTIONS

- Nepveu-Villeneuve, O. (2022). *Olivia Wrapped In Vines*. Orca Book Publishers.
- Noël, M. (2023). *Pineshish, The Blue Jay*. Midtown Press.

WORKSHOP 4.4 – WAS IT WORTH IT?

Asserting yourself against social influences

DID YOU KNOW?

It's perfectly normal for students to let themselves be influenced in the course of their lives, whether by friends, school staff, family members or anyone else who is significant or important to them. Letting yourself be influenced is a normal phase of development.

It's important to understand that observing and imitating the behaviours of those around them allows students to forge an identity and define themselves as individuals. Some influences are innocuous, while others are very beneficial to constructing the self.

However, it can happen that a student allows themselves to be overly influenced by others. Allowing yourself to be influenced too much will sometimes lead you to take actions that don't match your personality or respect your limits.

There are several reasons why a student may be more inclined to let themselves be influenced. For example:

- A lack of self-confidence;
- Difficulty asserting oneself and saying no;
- A desire to avoid conflict;
- A desire to be accepted by others;
- Attention-seeking.

(AlloProf, 2017)

CHALLENGE

Suggest the following challenge:

- Before the next OFF-TRAIL workshop, try to assert yourself by expressing your disagreement the next time someone tries to influence you negatively.

ENABLING REINVESTMENT

To reinvest what's been learned, you could perform some skits with your students to help them assert themselves and resist the negative influence of their peers, or to get out of situations where they might be tempted to let themselves be influenced. You could invite students to anonymously write down situations where they were influenced by others or that they witnessed, and perform skits based on these real-life situations.

When a student is faced with a situation of negative peer influence, you can help them weigh the advantages and disadvantages of letting themselves be influenced, and refer them to the *Resisting the influence of others* worksheet to remind them of the strategies they learned in this workshop.

READING SUGGESTIONS

- Parr, T. (2016). *Be Who You Are*. Little, Brown Books for Young Readers.
- Reynolds, P.H. (2020). *Be You!* Orchard Books.
- Verde, S. (2018). *I Am Human: A Book of Empathy*. Abrams Books for Young Readers.
- Verde, S. (2020). *I Am One: A Book of Action*. Abrams Books for Young Readers.

WORKSHOP 4.5 – A HURRICANE IN MY HEAD

Learning to use mindfulness

DID YOU KNOW?

Practicing mindfulness over the long term improves overall well-being.

The attitudes of openness, curiosity, kindness and non-judgment, among others conveyed in the mindfulness approach, help us to step back from certain situations and disconnect our autopilot. They also enable us to recognize our thoughts, sensations and emotions as harmless, even when they cause discomfort, by regarding them as temporary.

In fact, this is what can lead students to change their self-perception, integrating the idea that just because they don't feel comfortable or competent at that moment doesn't mean it will always be that way. Mindfulness puts self-awareness back into perspective by associating it with a context, rather than an immutable finality.

(Baer, 2003; Dutton, 2008; Kabat-Zinn, 1994)

ENABLING REINVESTMENT

When you observe that a student is experiencing stress, emotional overload or racing thoughts, invite them to pause and use breathing to bring themselves back into the present moment. Then give them the *A hurricane in my head* handout and ask them to colour it in and, after they've calmed down, write the words that come to mind without forcing anything. You can then go back to them and get them to see things differently, more peacefully, with hindsight.

You can also take short breaks with students when they've been inactive so they can get up, stretch (by shaking themselves or doing a few small jumps), clear their minds by taking a few standing breaths, then bring their attention back to the present moment. Repeat these short breaks as needed throughout the day.

READING SUGGESTIONS

- Hanh, T.N. (2008). *Mindful Movements: Ten Exercises for Well-Being*. Parallax Press.