

Reinvestment Manual for the School Daycare Service



What is OFF-TRAIL about?

The OFF-TRAIL Preschool-Primary Program was conceived by the Centre RBC d'expertise universitaire en santé mentale and co-constructed by a number of players from the primary school, health and social services, and university sectors. By developing psychosocial skills and creating a healthy, caring environment, this program aims to prevent anxiety disorders and other adjustment problems.

The Goal of this Manual

The objective of this manual is to enable daycare staff to reinvest or reinforce, through enjoyable games, some of the concepts students have learned in the OFF-TRAIL workshops. Thanks to your special relationship with your students, you have an impact on their daily lives. Your involvement in the reinvestment of key program concepts will make a difference! These activities will help you consolidate your students' learning and social skills throughout the school year.



This manual is based on the content of the OFF-TRAIL Preschool-Primary Program.

To find out the sources of the information in the "Did you know?" sections, please refer to the program's Complete Facilitation Guide.

OFF-TRAIL
program website:



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Reinvestment Manual

Kindergarten 4 & 5

Adventure stories overview



Leo and Charlie meet for the first time and develop a close friendship. One day, they take off with their class for a day at Camp OFF-TRAIL. Leo is sad because he misses his parents, while Charlie is excited about discovering the camp. Throughout the bus journey, and upon arriving, the students take part in a variety of enriching activities. However, something unexpected happens: Charlie loses her backpack. Fortunately, she quickly asks her friends for help in finding it. Back from camp, Leo and Charlie exchange thanks and compliments which strengthen their friendship.

The following year, they head off again for Camp OFF-TRAIL, but this time the class bus breaks down in the middle of the forest. The students must then use a radio to call for help. Spending the night in a cabin, they help each other to clean it before continuing their adventure. During the night, an incident occurs: Charlie accidentally steps on a classmate's foot, which makes him angry. This incident becomes an opportunity for Charlie to learn how to resolve conflict. For his part, Leo becomes overexcited by the adventure, and is helped by his teacher to learn some calming strategies. The next day, the students walk to the camp, but a disagreement breaks out between Charlie and Leo, putting their friendship to the test. Together, they must find a way to resolve their conflict and restore harmony.

Through the kindergarten workshops, the students explore various emotions and participate in a variety of activities to discover their interests, get to know themselves better, and promote their well-being. Activities include abdominal (belly) breathing, gentle movements, body scanning, mandala colouring, dance, construction games, and more. The importance of helping others and the impact of our actions and words on others are also covered. In 5-year-old kindergarten, the students also learn to ask for help and how to resolve conflicts constructively.



Did you know?

Self-awareness

Trying out different activities allows students to gradually discover what they like. They also learn to recognize their strengths and their challenges.

Kindness

The more sensitive and caring adults are toward children and other adults, the more children learn to reproduce these attitudes.

In this way, they learn to develop empathy and to understand the impact of their words and actions on others.

Lifestyle habits

Good lifestyle habits contribute to maintaining good physical and mental health. They include sleep, diet and physical activity, as well as the practice of mindfulness and kindness, and relaxation.

Games

Taking part in cooperative games can help students develop strengths such as mutual assistance, self-confidence, respect for others, communication, enjoyment of play, problem-solving, and solidarity.

Respect

By teaching your students that everyone deserves to be treated with respect and kindness, you help them adopt positive attitudes toward others and express their emotions and opinions respectfully.

Conflicts

Conflict is normal and can be beneficial to children's development. By learning to resolve conflicts, they learn to assert themselves, communicate with respect, and listen. When a child is in conflict, you can remind them to use the methods they've learned.

Emotions

Learning to recognize emotions helps students deal with them more effectively. Learning about emotions also contributes to the development of self-esteem, empathy, kindness, and the ability to overcome adversity.

Asking for help

Asking for help can be difficult, since it means accepting that you can't solve everything on your own.

The workshop on asking for help assists students to identify their own resources and develop confidence in themselves and others.



Now it's your turn!

- Post the "Recognizing your emotions" poster in the daycare room as a reminder to talk about emotions with students.
- Make a memory game about emotions with the images of Leo and Charlie, using the "Emotion Cards" handout.
- Mimic a few emotions with your face and ask students to try to recognize them. Switch roles after a few tries.
- Make a theatre with puppets displaying different emotions.
- Have students mimic different emotions using a mirror.
- Create different emotions using modelling clay.
- Do the emotions dance; play different styles of music and ask students to dance to express the emotion they experienced.
- Organize a treasure hunt by hiding images of different emotions in the room.
- Laminate a set of 6 "Emotion Cards" on a key ring for each educator.
- Display the "Belly Breathing Steps" in the daycare room and practice the technique with your group.
- Explore various calming strategies with your group. Here are a few ideas:
 - Take 5 deep breaths;
 - Walk around the room;
 - Draw without lifting the pencil;
 - Listen to a story or a guided meditation.
- Play board games. Here are a few ideas:
 - *Seek & Find: Emotions* | Placote;
 - *Monster School* | Placote;
 - *Mission: Emotions!* | Placote.
- Read a story and ask the students about the emotions experienced by the characters.
- Watch the film *Inside Out* and pause to recognize the emotions.
- Practice a guided meditation using an audio recording (e.g., <https://soundcloud.com/shambhala-publications/exercise-2-the-little-frog>) or a body scan with the audio link (e.g., https://sante-mentale-jeunesse.usherbrooke.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Medit_Body-Scan.mp3)
- Do a yoga session with the students.
- After an activity, ask students to rate their enjoyment of it (not at all, a little, a lot), so that they start to become aware of their individual preferences.
- After an activity, ask students what they're proud of, so they can begin to identify their own strengths.
- Involve students on a regular basis by asking them to help you get things done in your room.
- Encourage group cooperation by playing board games that require teamwork. Here are a few ideas:
 - *Monster Chase* | Placote;
 - *The Little Orchard* | Haba;
 - *Little cooperation* | DJECO.
- Use the *Tell me...* (Gladius) game to encourage students to talk about themselves on a variety of topics (from age 4, with adult participation).
- Incorporate cooperation into team activities such as relay races, construction, crafts or colouring.
- Encourage students to help each other when they encounter difficulties.
- Use the concept of "feather words" (which do good) and "rock words" (which do harm) in your daily routine. When you intervene, ask students whether they used "feather words" or "rock words", and the effect these words had on them and others.
- Print a "Feather and Rock" poster as a visual reminder and ask students to draw "feather words" to line a wall.





Now it's your turn! (continued)



- When a conflict occurs, invite students to name their emotions to help each other understand the impact of their words and behaviours.
- When you read to the students, stimulate the search for problem-solving solutions with them by asking questions such as:
 - What is (the character's) problem?
 - What solutions could they use to solve their problem?
 - Do all the characters in the story have the same understanding of the situation?
 - How did the characters resolve their disagreement/conflict?
- When a student is going through a difficult time, you can discuss it with them, using the following questions as a guide:
 - What are you having trouble with at the moment?
 - What qualities or strengths do you have that could help you?
 - What objects or people could help you?
 - Can you suggest a solution to your problem to me?
- Play cooperative games that encourage seeking help (e.g., treasure hunt, Simon Says).
- Create a teamwork-based activity so that children have to help and encourage each other to complete it.
- Encourage the children to ask another child for help.
- Moderate your involvement with their tasks (e.g., getting dressed).
- Model desired behaviours (e.g., whisper in their ear what to do)
- Use the program's "[Resolving your conflicts](#)" poster as a visual reminder in your room, and guide students to use it step by step when a disagreement occurs among them.
- Run simulations in which you experience a slight disagreement and ask your students to help you resolve it using the 4 steps.
- Ask students to draw the people they can ask for help and why.
- Play Kindness Bingo. Print the "[Kindness Bingo](#)" handout and invite your students to complete all the actions in one period. Like a Bingo game, they can record each gesture as it is performed.

Tell us what you think

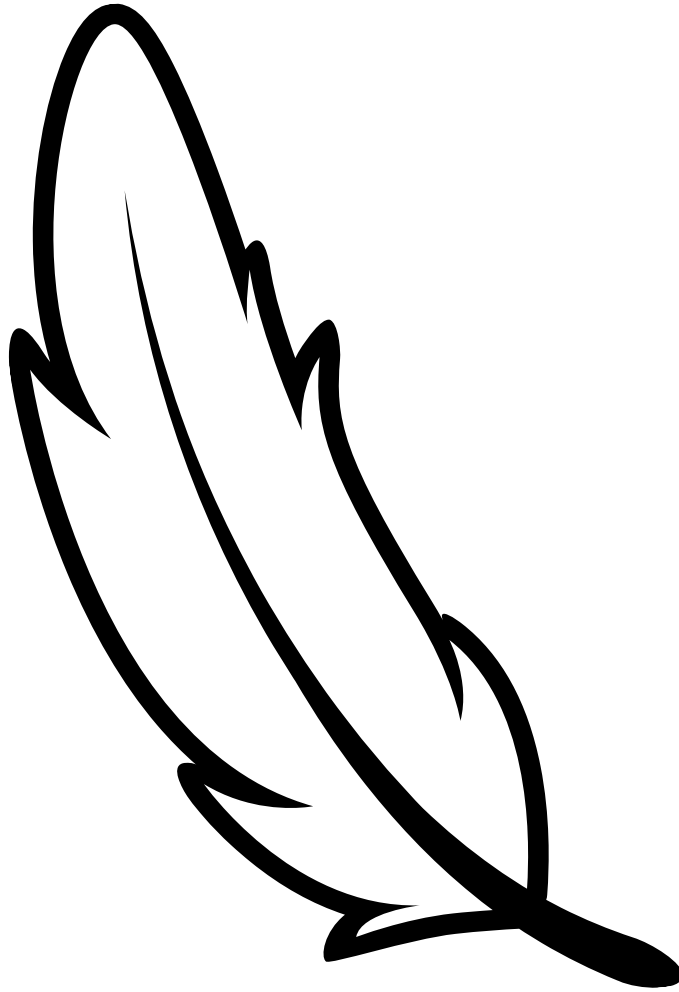
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*This questionnaire is currently available in French only



Words as soft as a feather



We're careful to avoid
rock-hard words



Kindness



BINGO

Invite a friend
to play



Say
"Thank you"



Help a friend



Offer a smile



Reinvestment Manual

Grade 1

Adventure stories overview



In the Grade 1 stories, Leo and Charlie's adventures take place at the OFF-TRAIL summer camp. The students arrive at the camp and learn that they'll have to set up their own tents for the night. They'll have to work together and use their respective strengths to make it happen! They'll experience emotions, challenges and failures, but above all they'll learn to know themselves, experience successes, normalize mistakes, deal with difficulties, and calm themselves down.

The year 1 workshops focus on getting to know yourself and others. The students carry out various cooperative activities. These fun activities (building a cabin, navigating an obstacle course, collaborative drawing, recognizing emotions and making a garland) are used to work on certain themes: qualities, strengths, helping each other, trust, friendship, challenges, mistakes, perseverance, learning, stress, emotions, and calming strategies. In workshop 4, a guided meditation lets the students experience a way to calm themselves down.



Did you know?

Mistakes

Mistakes are positive and help us learn. Everyone makes mistakes. The important thing is to see mistakes as a source of learning, not as a failure. We need to allow students to make mistakes and adjust for them, and guide them toward finding solutions.

Friendships

Friendships are a vital part of everyday life. Peer relationships enable us to develop social skills, understand that everyone is unique, and take the time to get to know people better.

Qualities

When a student learns to identify their qualities, they learn to know themselves better, to know what they do well, and to be open to the qualities of the people around them.

Stress

Stress is the body's normal reaction to danger. It's necessary in many situations, such as when faced with a bear in the forest. In everyday life, the body reacts to stress in exactly the same way as it would to a bear. However, the dangers are really not the same and the sources of stress are different.

Self-confidence

It's perfectly normal to lack confidence when doing something for the first time. Self-confidence is built up little by little, and generally involves gestures and actions on the part of adults toward a child, rather than just words.



Now it's your turn!

- Ask your students what they're proud of.
- Point out your students' strengths and qualities as you observe them.
- Normalize the fact that everyone makes mistakes and it's a learning process.
- Show appreciation for effort and for trying again when you don't get it right the first time.
- Welcome emotions and encourage students to talk about them.
- Embrace fear and help students overcome it by getting them to talk about what they're experiencing.
- Invite students to play with students they don't know to foster new friendships.
- Display various words representing qualities in your room to develop students' vocabulary.
- Display the poster "Physical sensations" in your room.
- Write down students' successes and achievements on slips of paper and place them in a self-confidence box, which they can reopen when they run into difficulties.
- Play cooperative games: e.g., a parachute game, telephone game, draw me a picture, student-built obstacle course.
- Create a cooperation wall with your students, displaying success stories and photos.
- Emotional dice game: build Leo and Charlie's 6-sided "Emotions Dice". Students take turns shuffling the die and sharing a situation where the emotion would be experienced.
- Play board games that develop students' social and emotional skills (e.g., *Seek & Find: Emotions* | Placote, *How does it feel?* | Placote; *Mission: Emotions!* | Placote; memory game using the "Emotion Cards" handout, as well as miming and guessing emotions).
- Do a craft: create characters to represent different emotions.
- Show a film (e.g., *Inside Out*), pausing during viewing to discuss the emotions experienced.

Tell us what you think

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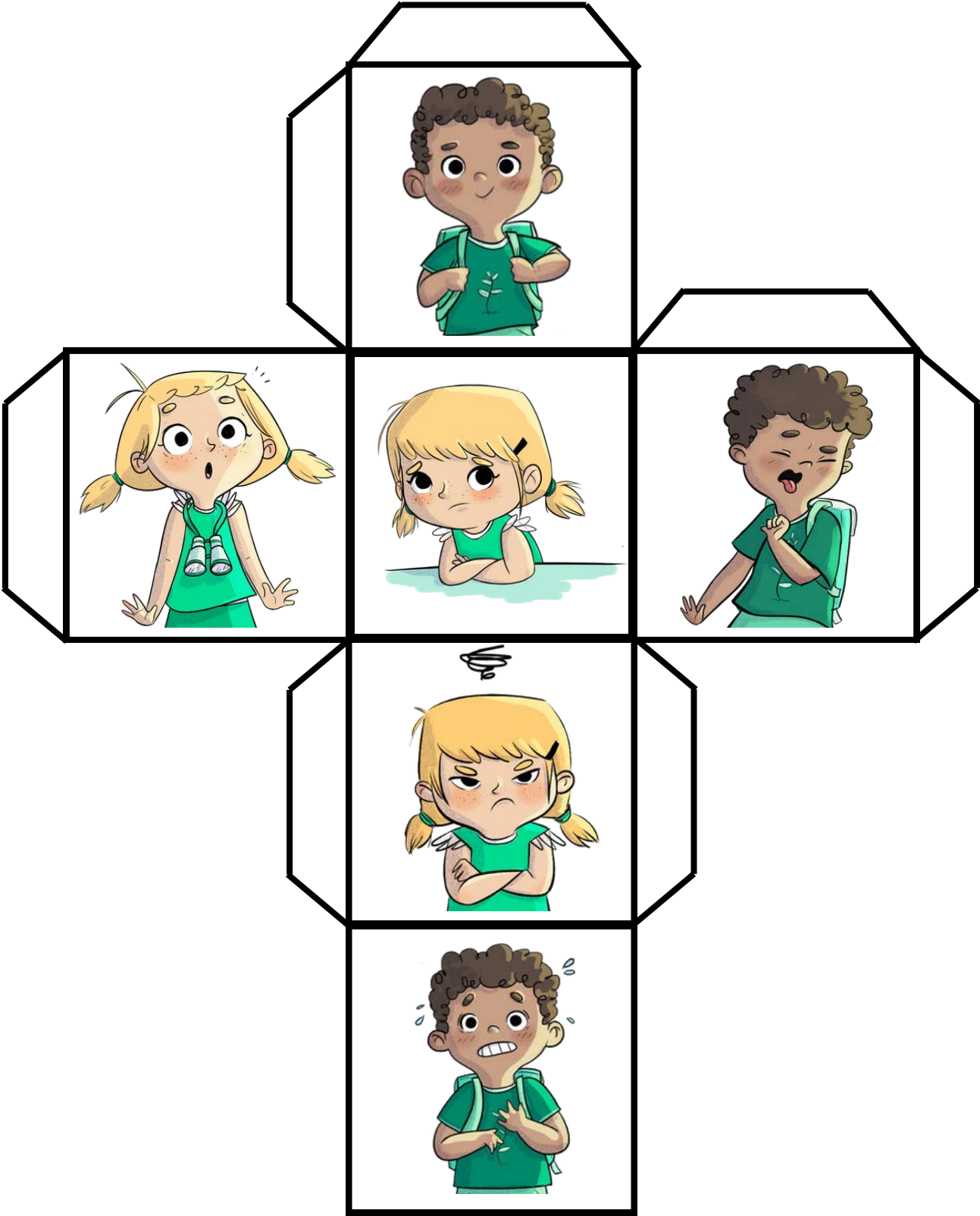


*This questionnaire is currently available in French only



HANDOUT TO PRINT

Emotions Dice



Reinvestment Manual

Grade 2

Adventure stories overview



In the Grade 2 stories, Leo and Charlie's adventures take place at Camp OFF-TRAIL. Today's activity is a rabaska canoe outing on the river. Before leaving, the students share happy and difficult events they've experienced, to get to know each other better and forge bonds. Together, the students will have to launch the rabaska and paddle, despite the rain, fatigue, broken equipment and all the emotions this evokes! Back at camp on dry land, one student gets rejected. Leo and Charlie encourage him to seek adult help to resolve the situation. At the end, everyone plays soccer together.

The grade 2 workshops focus on developing students' social skills. Students take part in three playful cooperative activities (tangled-up human chain, obstacle course, building a tower) and several discussions. The workshops address the following themes: the importance of sharing what you're feeling and experiencing, healthy lifestyle habits, collaboration, communication, helping one another, asking for help, and using various ways to cope with difficulties.



Did you know?

Emotions

Children sometimes find it difficult to communicate what they're going through, especially in negative situations. Encouraging them to talk about positive and negative situations is important to help them put words to what they are experiencing, and to identify the emotions these situations arouse and their impact.

Communication

Students learn a lot by observing others. Here are some suggested effective communication strategies:

- Say how you feel;
- Name your likes /dislikes (e.g., I don't like it when);
- Express clearly what you want;
- Use a calm, respectful tone of voice;
- Listen to the other person;
- Look the other person in the eye;
- Choose the right moment.

Anxiety

Have you ever frozen when faced with a problematic situation? Many people find today's pace of life too fast for them to fully adapt. This can lead to a certain degree of anxiety, often expressing itself in a spiral of inactions.

Lifestyle habits

The way students take care of themselves and their lifestyle habits have a major impact on their overall health, their readiness to learn, their concentration and memory, and their emotional and stress management.

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Cooperation

Learning to cooperate is an important part of children's social development. The ability to work as part of a team and achieve a common goal through collaboration and mutual assistance will stand them in good stead for the rest of their lives, whether in school teamwork or in sports.

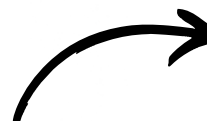


Now it's your turn!

- Take a moment with your group to discuss what each student liked (sunny moment) or disliked (cloudy moment) about their day. You can ask open-ended questions to facilitate communication.
- Ask students what solutions they could use before finding solutions for them.
- Use the student handout on "[Effective communication strategies](#)" in your room as a visual reminder. Set an example by using these strategies yourself.
- Do cooperative activities in your room to foster communication (e.g., group drawing, group mural project, telephone game, Leo and Charlie Say, blindfolded walk, team treasure hunt).
- Organize healthy lifestyle activities (e.g., mini collective garden, blindfolded tasting, sharing favourite recipes, building a common recipe book).
- Help students use the following strategies to cope with stress (Rao & Napper, 2019):
 - Turn to people you trust for help;
 - Take a moment to observe what's going on inside you, your sensations, emotions and thoughts;
 - Get active! Do some physical activity to take your mind off things;
 - Manage stress using strategies such as meditation, relaxation and drawing;
 - Learn to trust in yourself and to try, and accept the risk of making a mistake.
- When a student is experiencing difficulties, remind them that there are a number of ways to help (e.g., using a tool to help themselves, using other materials, asking an adult for help).
- Do a "toolbox" craft activity using an empty tissue box for each student to decorate. Ask students to draw or write down helpful strategies for coping with difficult situations.
- Play board games that develop social and emotional skills. Here are a few ideas:
 - *Tell me...* | Gladius;
 - *Monster Chase* | Scorpion Masqué;
 - *Zombie Kidz Evolution* | Scorpion Masqué;
 - *The Little Orchard* | Haba;
 - *Mount Confidence* | Placote.
- Have students trace their own bodies on a sheet of paper and write down helpful lifestyle habits.

Tell us what you think

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Reinvestment Manual

Grade 3

Adventure stories overview



In the Grade 3 stories, Leo and Charlie's adventures take place at Camp OFF-TRAIL. On a mountain bike ride, Leo, Charlie and the other students will have to face their fears and show their courage in the face of a high suspension bridge, forest animals and the worst-case scenarios they will imagine. Leo and Charlie's friendship will be put to the test. They'll use hurtful words and gestures, spread rumours and try to convince the other person not to respect the rules. Through their conflicts, they'll learn to calm down, listen to each other, assert themselves, find solutions, be a positive influence on each other and reconcile.

The grade 3 workshops introduce the link between emotions, physical sensations and reactions. Assertiveness and social influences are also emphasized. A variety of activities are carried out with students (situational analyses, debates, problem-solving and large-group discussions) to achieve the skills and objectives below. Several calming techniques are also practiced with students.

Did you know?

Ways to calm down

There's no one-size-fits-all strategy for calming down when you're stressed or anxious. That's why it's useful and enjoyable for students to try out several strategies, to build up their toolbox and find the ones that suit them best.

Mindfulness

You can help students cultivate non-judgment, acceptance and curiosity by practicing mindfulness on a regular basis. Mindfulness is about paying attention to what's going on inside you, such as sensations, emotions and thoughts, with an attitude of acceptance and non-judgment.

Emotions

How we feel about a situation, our emotion, has a major influence on how we react to it. Understanding emotions is essential to your child's healthy social integration into the world around them.

Influences

Students can sometimes be influenced by others. If they adopt behaviours that help them in their relationships with others, and the influences they experience are positive, there's nothing to worry about. In contrast, if they are being influenced in a way that doesn't correspond to their values, or if they no longer seem to have the freedom to think and act as they wish, it's best to intervene.

Conflicts

Conflicts are part of everyone's life, and it's normal to experience them. They're necessary to develop fairer relationships, where everyone's rights are valued. A student's conflicts with peers stimulate personality development. Although they are essential, conflicts can have a positive impact if they are properly managed.

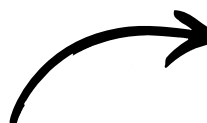


Now it's your turn!

- When a student experiences an emotion, help them put words to how they feel. Also help them make connections between the way they feel (their emotions) and their reactions.
- Play at recognizing the emotions of characters in a film or book.
- When you sense that a student is letting themselves be influenced in a negative way, help them step back, assess the consequences of letting themselves be influenced, and assert themselves.
- Support students in the practice of mindfulness, which enables them to respond calmly, taking a step back from the situation and bringing a perspective of benevolence, acceptance and positivism. You can redo with your group the kindness meditation they practiced in class: https://sante-mentale-jeunesse.usherbrooke.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/HPp1_3.2_kindness-ix.mp3
- ▶ If you feel you need more information on how to lead mindfulness activities, you can view our training videos on this subject in the Workshops and Tools for the School Staff / "[Mindfulness as the heart of your practice](#)"
- Use breathing techniques such as "[Square breathing](#)", deep breathing, or blowing out a fictitious candle.
- Use dance videos to relax (e.g., <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f3XyYOLfTU4>). Ask the students to explain them to you and take the time to practice one with them.
- Role-playing scenarios where you take on the role of the person who influences so that the children can practice asserting themselves! You can reverse the roles!
- Play board games that develop social and emotional skills (e.g., Act it out! | Placote).
- Do a session of stretching or of animal yoga.
- Have a joke contest with the kids.
- Do karaoke.
- Self-massage game.
- Playing lie detector (e.g., trying to influence others to believe us).
- Post the OFF-TRAIL conflict resolution poster in your room (e.g., "[Resolving your conflicts](#)").
- To help students manage their conflicts, remind them of the four steps learned in class and help them carry them out.

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Reinvestment Manual

Grade 4

Adventure stories overview



In the Grade 4 stories, Leo and Charlie return to Camp OFF-TRAIL to have fun and climb the Mysterious Giant Rock! The problem is that Leo hates rock climbing. Charlie will suggest various ways for Leo to relax, and Leo will finally pluck up the courage to face up to his fear. They'll also experience many stressful social situations that will make them experience a lot of emotions. After all their adventures, Charlie finds it hard to fall asleep on her last night as her thoughts are racing, so Leo reminds her to breathe!

In the Grade 4 workshops, students discuss the role that thoughts play on emotions and associated behaviours, and they're taught various ways of calming down and asserting themselves. Various activities are carried out with students (introspection, improvisation skits, debates, group discussions) to achieve the objectives. They also practice several calming techniques: physical exercise, yoga, cardiac coherence, and mindfulness. Discussions are held with students on the grade 4 themes: the link between emotions, physical sensations, thoughts and behaviours; stressful situations, calming strategies, asking for help, peer influence, and assertiveness.

Did you know?

Calming strategies

Everyone experiences stress, it's normal.
There are many strategies to help students (and adults) deal with it and calm down, but there's no magic bullet that works for everyone.
Trying several can help find the one that's right for you!

Signs of stress

By becoming familiar with the sensations, emotions and thoughts that arise when experiencing stressful situations, students can develop a kind of warning system. The more a child is able to recognize these various signals, the more they will be able to quickly become aware of them when faced with a stressful situation, and find strategies to deal with them.

Mindfulness

The main attitudes cultivated by mindfulness are non-judgment, curiosity, kindness, gratitude, and empathy. These help you step back from uncomfortable situations and turn off your autopilot to be fully available in the present moment.

Asking for help

Asking for help can be difficult for students, since asking for help involves showing humility and overcoming embarrassment. Often, they may decide to "work it out" themselves so as not to disturb.

Social influences

Social influences can be positive and help students forge their identity. They can also be negative, distracting students from safe behaviours. The actions they take, or refuse to take, can be shaped by the social influences they face.



Now it's your turn!

- You can help students integrate mindfulness into their daily lives with a few simple actions. Ask them to:
 - Name three things they were grateful for in their day;
 - Take a moment to pay attention to their sensations and breathing;
 - Name their emotions when they experience something special.
- Incorporate moments of mindfulness practice into daily life or at key moments (e.g., before an activity requiring greater concentration, or when students are particularly excited). There are apps that can help you lead a guided meditation (e.g., Petit BamBou: Mindfulness) or guide students yourself using the OFF-TRAIL *Mindfulness Supplement* tools.
- If you notice rising stress in a student, you can help them identify the physical sensations and emotions they are experiencing by asking the following questions: "What's going on in your body? How do you feel?"
- You can help students assert themselves in the face of negative influences by encouraging them to use these methods: Argue for your choices, suggest alternatives, use humour to get out of awkward situations, associate with peers who have a positive influence, and ask for help.
- Remind students that asking for help is not a sign of weakness. Identify with them the resource people who can help them. Ask for help yourself when you need it.





Now it's your turn! (continued)



- Do some less well-known relaxing activities with the students: learn to knit with needles or a French knitter, do origami or jigsaw puzzles.
- Put together a box of soothing objects.
- Create a relaxation corner for yoga, meditation, and breathing.
- Make a poster of successes achieved by the children in managing stress.
- Do a treasure hunt of emotions.
- Play the devil's advocate game.
- Do a multi-step craft activity where students have to ask another student for help.
- Use the supplementary handout below to create a "Wellness Paper Fortune Teller" with your students.

Tell us what you think



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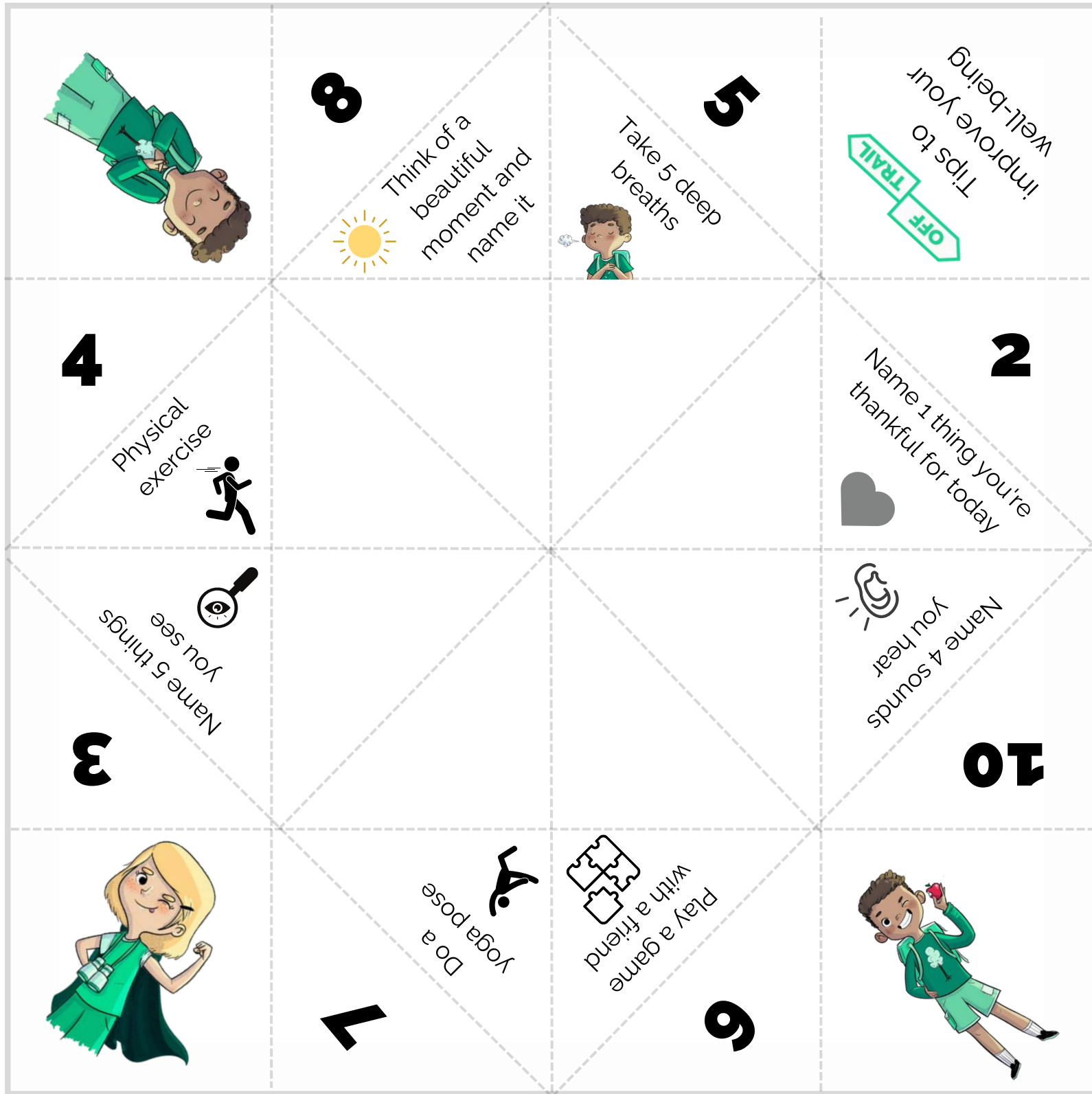
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The Wellness paper fortune teller

Fold in the usual manner to form a paper fortune teller for students who wish to use it.
Here is a tutorial that demonstrates the method if needed:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cBvf7HxR2bs> (start with the printed side down)



Reinvestment Manual

Grade 5

Adventure stories overview



In the Grade 5 stories, Charlie is afraid of being judged by her classmates if she goes back to Camp OFF-TRAIL again. She's finally swayed by Leo, who reminds her how much she loves her time at camp. Leo, Charlie and other students return to camp, but a number of events will bring dark thoughts to our characters: Charlie will think the camp is on fire, Leo will fear coming in last on the swim to Dead Birch Island, Charlie will face gender discrimination at a baseball game, and Leo and Charlie will seek revenge for a trick played by their classmates. Through these trials, Leo and Charlie will have to assert themselves against others, and try to see situations differently.

Grade 5 workshops dive deeper into analyzing thoughts and ways to assert yourself when facing social influences. The students carry out various activities (the candy persuasion game, visualization of a thief in the night, individual and sub-group analysis, the rotten fruit impact technique, the label game) to achieve the skills and objectives below. The students will listen to different styles of mindfulness music as a calming technique. They engage in group discussions and analyze the themes of the level: social influences, self-affirmation, the influence of thoughts on our emotions, physical sensations and behaviours, helpful vs. harmful thoughts, prejudice, rejection, actions to take in the face of discrimination, and calming strategies.

Did you know?

Sources of influence

Students are exposed to many sources of influence in their lives, whether from peers, social media or even you as school staff members. By learning to develop their own opinions, they help others get to know them better, which facilitates communication.

Interpreting a situation

How students interpret a situation has a major impact on how they feel and react. To control stress and anxiety, students can learn to see things differently.

Questioning your thoughts

Anxious children tend to let their thoughts overwhelm them. Our heads are full of thoughts, some positive, some negative. That's normal! However, it can be important to question our negative thoughts and encourage our positive ones.

Prejudice

To be prejudiced is to formulate a thoughtless, categorical judgment about a person or group of people without really knowing them. Because prejudices are transmitted to us by everything around us (our social environment), we need to become aware of them and, above all, work on ourselves to get rid of them.

Music

Certain types of music (soft or classical) can be good stress management tools. Music can help lower heart rate, stress hormones, and blood pressure.

Now it's your turn!

- To help students develop their own opinions, you can explore with them the advantages (e.g., acting based on one's own values, respecting one's own interests, adopting safe behaviours) and disadvantages (e.g., being rejected by the group, being teased) of asserting oneself.
- Discuss the fact that fear of rejection can lead to behaviours that go against one's own will.
- List the advantages and disadvantages of letting yourself be influenced.
- Help students question themselves in order to see things differently, using the following questions:
 - Are you 100% sure it's going to happen this way?
 - Can you imagine another possible scenario?
 - If your friend were in the same situation, how would they react?





Now it's your turn! (continued)



- Help students identify their thoughts, sensations, emotions and reactions using the printable handout "[The Influence of Your Thoughts](#)".
- Use the "[Possible Physical Sensations Linked to Stress and Anxiety](#)." poster to help students identify their physical sensations when they experience stress.
- Ask the students to make an inventory of the negative or harmful thoughts they tend to use; a kind of brainstorming on negative phrases they occasionally use or have heard before. In small groups, ask students to take each harmful thought and change it into a helpful one.
- Create a poster with these helpful phrases and hang it on a classroom wall. You could refer students to it and help them transform their thoughts.
- Use music at appropriate moments to promote a return to calm.
- Suggest that students create their own list of music to help them calm down.
- Listen to the silence and ask students to note the different sounds of the environment.
- The King of Silence game; designate a student who must go and find a sound-making object under the king's throne and return to his place without the king hearing him. The king must then point to the player.
- Practice critical debates with students.
- The choice game; present students with cards having several choices and discuss the impact of each.
- An emotion wheel or emotion cards; take turns picking emotions and naming a related experience. Use the "[What are you feeling right now?](#)" poster for inspiration.
- The thoughts box: pick negative thoughts and invite the students to transform them into helpful thoughts.
- The human chain of compliments: invite students to give each other a compliment.
- Use cooperative games with the students.

Tell us what you think



*This questionnaire is
currently available in
French only

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Reinvestment Manual

Grade 6

Adventure stories overview



In the Grade 6 stories, Leo, Charlie and their class go to Camp OFF-TRAIL for one last year. To mark the end of primary school, the camp organizes a hike up Québec's second-highest mountain. As they prepare for this great expedition, Leo and Charlie become increasingly anxious and are convinced they won't be able to make the climb. They even plan ways to avoid the activity, but eventually draw on their courage to move out of their comfort zone. During the hike, the group encounters difficulties and has to draw on everyone's strengths to keep going. The students are very proud to reach the summit, and take a moment with their teachers to draw parallels between climbing up and down a mountain and adapting to changes, particularly those linked to the transition to high school.

The grade 6 workshops focus on sources of stress, the difference between stress and anxiety, the impact of avoidance on anxiety, and ways to expand your comfort zone. Various student activities (discussions, classifying situations, visualizations, quizzes, planning a school improvement project, oral presentations, sub-group analyses) are designed to achieve the objectives below and, overall, prepare the young people for their transition to high school. The students are guided in experimenting with two ways to calm themselves: cardiac coherence and mindful meditation. Group discussions allow students to share about and to analyze the themes of the level: stress, anxiety, avoidance, comfort zone, strengths, adapting to change, and calming strategies.

Did you know?

Support

Supporting students in the healthy management of their stress enables them to develop the skills they need to cope independently with stressful situations. This support includes identifying stressful situations. Over time, recognizing the sources of stress gradually leads to the search for solutions.

The Primary-Secondary Transition

The transition to high school is usually a stressful time of many changes. To help students get through this period more easily, it's important to help them acquire stress management techniques, formulate clear and realistic objectives for them to meet, provide encouragement, and help them recognize their strengths.

Coping Skills

For students, the transition from primary to secondary school represents a major change that challenges their ability to adapt. You can help by offering support, creating a climate of openness, discussing upcoming changes in advance, and formulating clear, realistic expectations.

In this way, you'll promote stress tolerance, autonomy, and self-awareness.

Strengths

Recognizing and valuing your strengths can improve your well-being and reduce stress. Helping students identify their strengths and understand how to use them can help them develop these skills and prepare them for more difficult challenges.

Stress and anxiety

Stress is normal and plays an important role in students' ability to cope with certain situations. Anxiety is worrying about something that hasn't happened and imagining the worst. Anxiety is the fear of fear itself. To avoid it, students may retreat into their comfort zones. However, the more students avoid fear, the more their comfort zone shrinks and their fear zone expands. Facing fear, on the other hand, helps expand their comfort zone and reduce anxiety. They'll discover a world of new possibilities. Refer to the [Fact sheet on stress and anxiety](#) to find out more about stress and anxiety.



Now it's your turn!

- To help students manage their stress, you can ask them how they feel, validate their emotions, remind them of the suggested strategies for calming down, and support them in trying them out. To learn more about ways to help your students, visit the [Centre RBC Toolkit](#)* (currently available in French only).
- Set up a small, quiet "calm corner".
- Run an activity in which you ask your students to write positive phrases or calming tips on coloured cards.
- Listen to meditations with the students (e.g., the supplementary activities available on the OFF-TRAIL website, or on YouTube).
- Provide a daily calming down time (e.g., on arrival at the daycare).
- Suggest that students use a strategy of their choice (meditation, self-massage, breathing, drawing, reading, etc.) to calm themselves down.
- Do a yoga activity with the students.
- Do karaoke. Singing stretches the diaphragm, allowing you to breathe more easily. This relaxes the body.





Now it's your turn! (continued)



- Have the students run or move (push-ups, burpees, squats or whatever!) on the spot for 1 minute to burn off excess energy.
- Encourage them to face their fears at their own pace.
- Suggest calming strategies (e.g., meditation, breathing, physical activities, art, contact with nature).
- List their strengths and think of ways to use them. For example, if a student is targeting perseverance, they might complete a task that they generally find more difficult.
- Make a graffiti-style mural with everyone's strengths. Build on your students' qualities and strengths through this work.
- Make a compliment jar with the students. Each student can write on pieces of paper the strengths they recognize in themselves. They can also contribute to other students' jars. You can also add compliments and qualities to their jars.
- Do a small-group thank-you activity! The students take turns thanking someone in the group.
- Try out different strategies for coping with stress. For example: humour, communication, meditation, seeing the positive, listening to your body, sports, having fun.

Here are some activity ideas for various strategies:

HUMOUR

You can organize a joke-telling or miming contest, or watch a funny video with your students. Laughter helps the brain release stress-reducing hormones!

COMMUNICATION

Ask the students to make a list of people with whom they feel comfortable talking about their problems.

MEDITATION & RELAXATION

You can use meditations available on the web. They can also experiment with different ways of relaxing (e.g., listening to music, going for a walk)

SEEING THE POSITIVE

You can do an activity using rose-coloured glasses to illustrate the positive. You can make a list of the positive things that happen on a daily basis. Suggest that students reread it often.

ENTERTAINMENT

Explore with students what keeps them entertained (e.g., dancing, singing, watching a film, going to the park, cycling, etc).

Tell us what you think

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*This questionnaire is currently available in French only



Reinvestment Manual for the School Daycare Service

To dive deeper

✦ Currently available in French only



- ✦ Duclos, G. (2011). *Attention, enfant sous tension! Le stress chez l'enfant*. Éditions du CHU Sainte-Justine.
- Foxman, P. (2011). *Worried Child: Recognizing Anxiety in Children and Helping Them Heal*. Hunter House.
- Halloran, J. (2018). *Social Skills for Kids: Over 75 Fun Games and Activities for Building Better Relationships, Problem Solving and Improving Communication*. PESI.
- Halloran, J. (2020). *Coping skills for teens workbook: 60 helpful ways to deal with stress, anxiety and anger*. Encourage Play.
- ✦ Hamel, S. (2022). *Le ti-pou d'Amérique : Mieux le comprendre pour mieux intervenir* (1st ed.). Saint-Jean.
- ✦ Leroux, S. (2016). *Aider l'enfant anxieux: Guide pratique pour parents et enfants*. Éditions du CHU Sainte-Justine.
- Lupien, S. (2023). *For the love of stress*. Éditions Va Savoir.

More tools for you



The Centre RBC Toolkit* contains a number of tools to help you support students in dealing with their well-being, stress and anxiety.

*Website currently available in French only



Tell us what you think



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*This questionnaire is currently available in French only



Mindfulness

as the heart of your practice



**FREE
of Charge**
For all school staff
member

***A series of 4 online presentations,
designed to be completed in 2.5 hours***

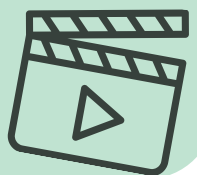
Workshop objectives:

- Explain what the mindfulness approach is, how it works and what goes into it;
- Understand the connections between the benefits of the approach and its practice;
- Gradually apply mindfulness in their personal and professional practice.

*****CURRENTLY AVAILABLE IN FRENCH ONLY*****

Discover the four presentation modules:

- ▶▶ Module 1: Qu'est-ce que la pleine conscience?
- ▶▶ Module 2: Comment ça fonctionne?
- ▶▶ Module 3: À quoi ça sert?
- ▶▶ Module 4: Boîte à outils et activités à expérimenter



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Sadness



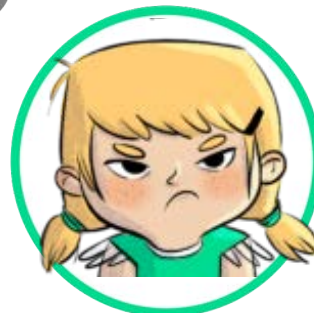
Fear



Joy



Surprise



Anger



Disgust

**Recognizing
your emotions**



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Emotion Cards in colour



ANGER



JOY



SADNESS



FEAR



DISGUST



SURPRISE



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HANDOUT TO PRINT
Emotion Cards in black and white



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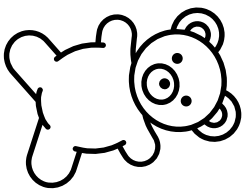
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Belly breathing



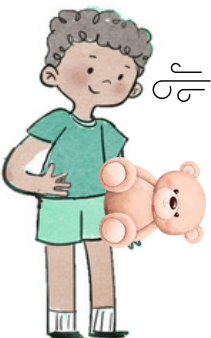
Choose a
stuffy.



Lie on your back in a
quiet corner.



Place the stuffy
on your belly.



Breathe in:
lift your stuffy toward the
ceiling, by letting air in
through your nose to
inflate your belly.



Breathe out:
lower your stuffy toward
you, letting the air out
through your nose to
deflate your belly.



HANDOUT TO PRINT

Effective communication strategies

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TRAIL



Say how you feel.

State your likes and dislikes, e.g.,
“I don't like it when...”



Say clearly what you want.

Use a calm, respectful tone of voice.



Listen to others.

Look others in the eye.



Choose the right moment to say things.

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Resolving your conflicts in four steps:

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Step 1
Calm down



Step 2
Listen and
express
yourself



Step 3
Find solutions
with the other
person



Step 4
Choose a solution
together and
apply it



If necessary, repeat the 4 steps or ask an adult for help
(Fakih, 2019; Motoi, 1995; Motoi & Villeneuve, 2006; Thauvette, 2020)



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Resolving your conflicts in four steps:



Step 1 Calm down

Get comfortable in a quiet location.
Breathe, move, draw,
write or listen to a meditation.



Step 2 Listen and express yourself

Listen to the other person.
Give them time to talk.
In turn, speak about "I".
Say clearly how you feel.
Explain to the other what you need.



Step 3 Find solutions with the other person

Speak your ideas for a solution.
Listen to the other person's
suggestions.



Step 4 Choose a solution together and apply it

Together, determine the
advantages and disadvantages of
each solution.
Choose the one that appeals to
everyone, or compromise.



If necessary, repeat the 4 steps or ask an adult for help

(Fakih, 2019; Motoi, 1995; Motoi & Villeneuve, 2006; Thauvette, 2020)



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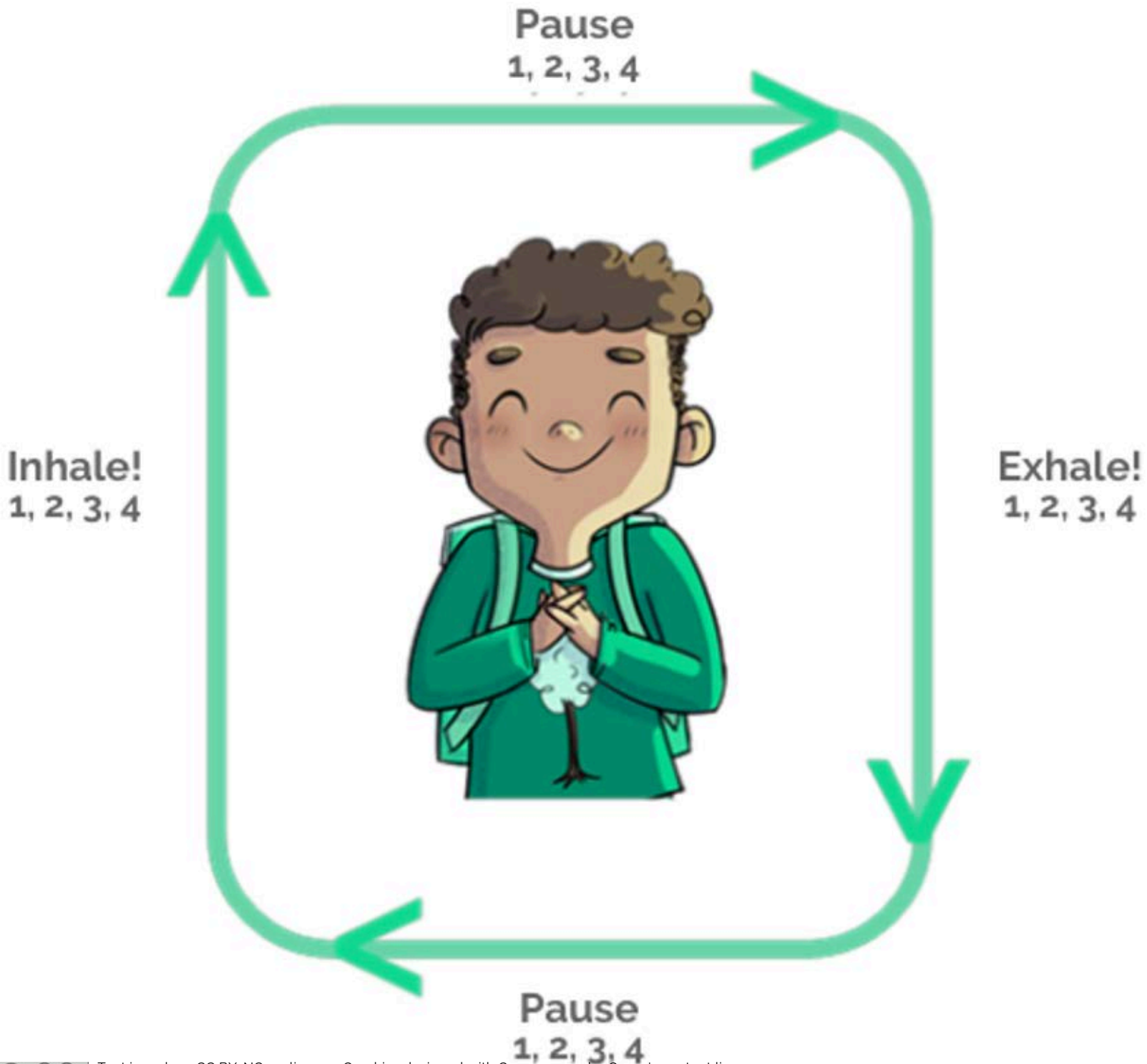
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Square breathing

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Possible physical sensations linked to stress and anxiety

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Headache



Dizziness



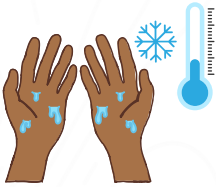
Sweating



Tight muscles



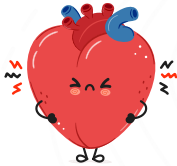
Clammy or cold hands



Lump in the throat



Pounding heart



Nausea



Stomach ache



Trembling



You may also experience other physical sensations

(Berthiaume, 2017)



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What are you feeling right now?



Frustration



Pride



Joy



Confidence



Anger



Courage



Optimism



Impatience



Enthusiasm



Discouragement



Calm



Excitement



Shame



Disgust



Embarrassment



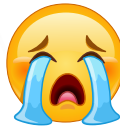
Surprise



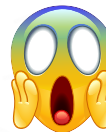
Astonishment



Rejection



Sadness



Peur



Uncertainty



Disappointment



Worry



Panic



It's also possible that you're experiencing several emotions and feelings all at once!



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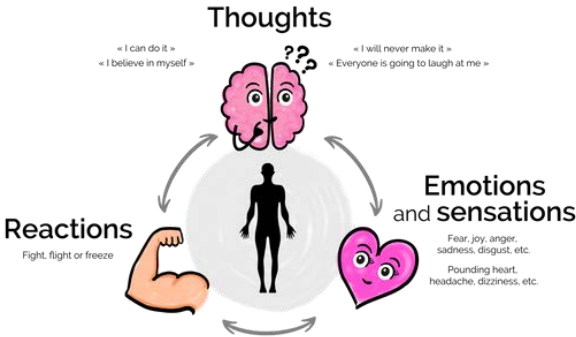
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The influence of your thoughts



What is the situation?

In this situation, what are your thoughts (what you say to yourself)?

--	--	--

Is there another way of looking at this situation?



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