

Wednesday, 30 September 2020

Dear All,

### **A time for change**

We hope that 'back to school' has gone well for you all and that your lovely children are starting to feel more settled into the routine of returning to school, albeit in a slightly different way to what they are used to. Here at the charity, we have been floating in the background offering whatever help and support we can as the new term has begun, and we will continue to be there to help you and your pupils get through these next few weeks and months as simply and seamlessly as possible. More on that to come!

First of all, though, a little bit of housekeeping! Some of you may be aware that over the summer we changed our name from 'the mind map charity' to **Making Me**. We are exactly the same in every way, it's simply our name that has changed. We have also been helped by the most amazing software company Phew! who are very busy designing our new website which we hope to launch very soon. I will be sure to send you details as soon as possible.



### **Back to basics**

In the meantime, I thought it might be helpful to offer a reminder of the very simple framework that we suggest at Making Me to help support mental and emotional wellbeing – both that of the children in our care as well as our own.

Our maxim is **SEE, HEAR, HOLD**.

Seeing we do by taking the couple of minutes needed to just notice what might be going on for our children – are they quieter than normal, or just the opposite, bouncy and over excited? Are they engaging in playtime and school work or hanging back and lacking confidence?



Hearing follows closely on the heels of seeing and occurs when we engage children in a short conversation about why they might be feeling the way they are. It involves taking the time to enter the world of the child, without necessarily trying to fix things for them, but just showing them that we hear and understand how life feels for them right now.



Holding involves introducing a sense of boundary and safety to our children, whether that's with general principles such as consistency, predictability and regularity or through more particular principles such as reminding those children who are struggling of their ability to be resilient and encouraging them in ways to practice this. The overriding message we need to share with children in order to 'hold' them is: "I am the adult in your world, I've got this!"

The resources we have introduced into your schools are designed to enable you to implement this framework easily and effectively: the Feelings Flowers will help you to see the children in your care, the KIPSY stories will equip children with an emotional vocabulary which will enable

you to hear them, and the Shield of Resilience is a way of us 'getting this' – by equipping children with a resource to build and sustain their mental and emotional wellbeing.

### **How we can continue to help you**

As I mentioned earlier, whilst we recognise that you have limits on what you can do and how many people you can have in school, we would nonetheless like to offer you some additional support should you feel it would be helpful.

- We have revised our Shield of Resilience workshops to focus more specifically on how we can equip ourselves to be resilient and we are happy to deliver these to your current year 3 pupils or repeat them with your older year groups;
- We are revising a parent workshop to look more specifically at supporting children who are struggling with worry and anxiety, and we can deliver this in person or virtually over Teams;
- We are happy to attend a twilight staff meeting in which we can go over some of the principles around supporting children's wellbeing and reinforce some of the strategies we offer.

We continue to offer all of our workshops for free and recognising that you have a considerable number of balls in the air at the moment and that fundraising is not something that you can turn your minds to at the moment – so please don't worry, we will worry about fundraising another time. If you would like to find out a little bit more about any of the above, or if you just have a few questions that you think we might be able to help you with, please do not hesitate to contact us at [schools@makingme.org.uk](mailto:schools@makingme.org.uk)

### **In the meantime...**

For those of you who received our letters during lockdown, you will recall that I rarely missed an opportunity to get on my soap box and remind you all of the need for self-care. **Self-care is not selfish**, and as the coronavirus situation continues and the impact of the restrictions continue to be felt, I again want to reinforce the need to take the time to check in with yourself. As I suggested, our see, hear, hold maxim can be used as much for yourself as it can for the children in your care – taking five minutes to reflect, 'am I seeing and recognising my needs' 'am I responding to what my body is telling me', 'am I putting some boundaries in place in order to ensure that I get the sleep/exercise/friendship that I need?' will go a long way in enabling you to sustain yourself for the journey ahead.



Thank you again for taking the time to read our short newsletter. As I have already mentioned, we are 100% here to do what we can to try and help and support you as you help and support the children and families in your school, through this next leg of the journey, so please do not hesitate to contact us if you think there is anything more we can do.

With our very best wishes,

**Liz and the team**