



Growing Great Minds Together

Risk-taking, Resilience, Relationships, Resourceful, Reflective

Children's Mental Health Week - Growing Together

Human beings change and grow – we do it all the time and in many different ways. Physical growth is easy to see as we grow from babies to children, teenagers to adults. But growing emotionally is also an important part of our development. As parents or carers, you are an important role model for your child. Your child does not need you to be perfect - in fact seeing you make some mistakes can be really useful! What is important is that you are able to show them that you – and they – can continue to develop and grow even when things are hard. In fact, sometimes, this is when we learn and grow the most.

Here are some tips on how you can support your child's emotional growth.

1: Talk about when your child was younger.

Most children enjoy hearing their parents tell stories about when they were younger. Recall stories that highlight how your child has developed and changed over the years. For example, how you enjoyed teaching them to learn to ride a bike, or swim. Or how proud you were when they took part in a school assembly – even though they were nervous. If you are an adoptive parent, foster or kinship carer, you will still have lots of memories to share from when you first came together as a family.

2: Notice when your child has developed and grown.

It is important to recognise and praise emotional growth. This could be letting them know how proud you are when they have learnt to walk away rather than fight with a sibling, or how they have learnt to ask others to play when they used to be too shy to do so.

3: Encourage your child to try new things.

This could be new foods, a new activity or a new experience. Praise their willingness to 'give things a go' rather than whether they were 'good' at it. This will give them confidence to continue to develop and grow.

4: Listen to your child's hopes and dreams for the future.

Encourage your child to see that everything they are doing right now is a tiny step towards who they might want to become in the future. For example, your child helping another child is an important step towards them becoming a counsellor, a doctor, a nurse or a teacher etc.

5: Support your child to learn from tough situations.

It can be really hard when your child is not getting on with friends or is disappointed with how something has worked out. Acknowledge the difficult feelings, but help your child to see that these situations help us to grow and develop so that we are better able to cope with life's ups and downs.

If you are at all concerned about your child's emotional health, please contact school so we can support you and your family or signpost you to another agency who may also be able to help.