

Parents Wellbeing Workshop

HOW CAN WE USE THE NATURE ON OUR DOORSTEP TO SUPPORT OUR CHILDREN?



Activities

EATING AN ORANGE

Using the senses of touch, sight, smell and taste.



SHINRIN-YOKU

Shinrin-yoku (forest bathing - absorbing the forest atmosphere). The goal of forest bathing is to live in the present moment while immersing your senses in the sights and sounds of a natural setting.

Take a few deep breaths and centre yourself. Focus on what your senses are taking in – whether it's the scent of clean ocean air or a chorus of chirping birds. Spend a few moments simply observing your surroundings. Sit and watch how the trees sway in the wind or simply walk around. If you decide to walk, go at a leisurely pace and without a specific destination in mind. It's important to let your mind and senses explore.

ART

Pastels- rubbing of bark or leaves.
Sketch - landscape or close up detail.
Sculptures/ mandalas - using natural materials (make patterns, colour wheel etc)



JOURNEY STICKS

Journey sticks have been used for a long time by many people around the world. The idea is that they can help you record and retell a story / journey with items that are collected along the way. A journey stick is a wonderful way to help your child (and you!) creatively and mindfully record the story of a journey - it could be a walk or even a whole summer. As we walk back we will collect treasures for our journey sticks. As you journey, simply find wonderful things that you find on your adventures; they might be feathers, leaves - it doesn't matter what they are, just that they mean something to you. Use wool or ribbon to attach them to your stick and keep collecting.



These nature based activities are suggestions for supporting children's personal development, mental health and wellbeing. Most of these activities are based on building a mindfulness practice. The aim of mindfulness is to build a pause before reacting so we can react more consciously. Mindfulness is about noticing and observing thoughts and feelings without judgement; 'acting kindly' to yourself. Once we train ourselves to slow down, we encourage our thoughts and feelings not to take over. In doing so we can respond more intentionally and rationally. This will help us build secure personal development, mental health and wellbeing. Mindfulness is a simple, but subtle tool. It is simply bringing to bear the power of our attention, establishing awareness of body, mind, and breath.