

THE  
**RESILIENCE  
PROJECT**™

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CURRICULUM  
INTRODUCTION  
**PRIMARY**

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# INTRODUCTION

## WHY THE RESILIENCE PROJECT?

The Resilience Project delivers emotionally engaging programs to schools, providing evidence-based, practical strategies to build resilience and happiness.

A quick overview of the current state of mental health in young people in Australia:

- **1 in 4 adolescents** will experience mental health problems this year.
- **65% of adolescents** will not seek help.
- **1 in 7 primary school students** will experience mental health problems this year.
- **1 in 5 adults** will experience mental health problems this year.
- **Mental Health Disorders** carry the largest burden of disease for **15–24 year olds**.
- **Suicide** is the most common cause of death for **15–24 year olds**.

The key to reducing these figures is prevention. We know that 50% of mental health issues begin before the age of 15. Research has also shown that current treatments for mental health disorders reduce the burden by 13–36%. Research indicates that PREVENTION could reduce this burden by a further 22%.

Even for students who will never experience a mental health issue, the benefits, in terms of increasing capacity to deal with challenges, changes and stressors, are endless.

## THE FOUR CATEGORIES OF OUR CURRICULUM

The Lessons in The Resilience Project Primary Curriculum are focussed on four key strategies.

### 1. Gratitude

The act of being thankful and appreciating what you have in life. Rather than focussing on what you don't have or what you want, the focus shifts to all that you have.

In 21 days of practising gratitude, you rewire your brain to start scanning the world for the positives. You become three times more likely to notice a positive.

In 42 days you;

- Are less likely to get sick.
- Have higher levels of energy.
- Feel happier.
- Are more enthusiastic.
- Are more focussed.
- Are more determined.
- Are more optimistic.
- Have a better quality of sleep.
- Have lower levels of depression and anxiety.

## ABOUT THE RESILIENCE PROJECT

We teach positive mental health strategies.



## 2. Empathy (Kindness)

Empathy is the capacity to understand and feel what another person is feeling. Every time you do something kind for someone else, your brain releases oxytocin. Oxytocin leads to:

- Increased self-esteem/confidence.
- Increased energy.
- Increased levels of happiness.
- Increased levels of positivity.

## 3. Mindfulness

Mindfulness is the practise of attention regulation. It involves three aspects;

1. Where is our attention?
2. Prioritise where it needs to be.
3. Make it go there and stay there.

You can practise mindfulness in a formal way by completing meditation, mindful colouring in, etc., or in a more informal way by being mindfully engaged in your day's activities.

Research shows that mindfulness can have the following positive impacts;

MENTALLY	PHYSICALLY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reduces depression</li><li>• Reduces anxiety</li><li>• Improves decision making</li><li>• Improves ability to focus</li><li>• Reduces drug/alcohol abuse</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Relieves stress</li><li>• Prevents heart disease</li><li>• Lowers blood pressure</li><li>• Reduces chronic pain</li><li>• Improves sleep</li><li>• Makes you less nervous</li></ul>

## 4. Emotional Literacy

Emotional literacy involves giving students opportunities to:

- Develop their ability to understand and express emotions.
- Practise recognising their own feelings and how to manage them.

Emotional literacy skills are needed by students in order for them to be able to:

- Cooperate.
- Manage conflict.
- Make friends.
- Cope.
- Be resilient when dealing with change.

- Recognise and manage their own feelings.
- Manage stress, set goals and plan for the future.
- Increase feelings of connectedness to school and peers.
- Increase feelings of acceptance from peers and teachers.

## TEACHER GUIDANCE

*Designed by teachers for teachers*

The Resilience Project curriculum has been designed by teachers for teachers. There is an understanding that teachers facilitating the delivery of the curriculum will have varying levels of expertise in the subject content.

To assist, lesson plans and activities have been designed to be easy to follow and include comprehensive resources and a range of practical activities to make the delivery of the curriculum an enjoyable experience.

The preferred approach with the curriculum is to complete each lesson in its entirety, however it is acknowledged that this is not always possible. To assist, lessons have been divided into time specific activities, which provides the opportunity to complete as much of the lesson as possible and still achieve great outcomes from each lesson.

### Curriculum

The Resilience Project curriculum has been produced to align with Victorian and Australian Curriculum standards and frameworks. The Resilience Project curriculum addresses aspects of achievement standards in the Personal and Social Capabilities learning area and the Health and Physical Education learning area.

### Delivery

Schools have flexibility in how they plan and deliver The Resilience Project curriculum to best fit with their existing learning programs, resources and needs.

Options of how to plan and deliver the curriculum in your school include:

- In the time allotted to pastoral care in home groups.
- As part of the Health and Physical Education program.
- As a cross-curriculum approach, covering different lessons in different classes.

Whichever approach your school chooses, it is important that the concepts of The Resilience Project are adapted at a whole school level and that the practises are embedded wherever possible throughout the school. The more that students are exposed to these practises as a normal part of their day, the more positive impacts the program will have.

Examples of a whole school approach include encouraging teachers to:

- Complete an emotional 'check in' and 'check out' before and at the end of their lessons.
- Complete a five-minute mindfulness activity before commencing learning to increase focus and productivity.
- Highlight opportunities to develop empathy.
- Set an example of practising gratitude by telling students what they were grateful for at the end of each lesson.

### Lesson order

The lessons can be delivered sequentially in the order outlined or teachers can choose to deliver lessons that are most appropriate to meet the needs of their cohort and setting.

Lessons are generally broken up with a mix of each category (gratitude, empathy, mindfulness, emotional literacy) spread throughout. There are however some lessons where students may benefit from the opportunity to complete the same topic sequentially in order to consolidate and build on knowledge. Teachers can use their professional judgement to deliver the lessons in an order that they see will work best.

All student learning happens on a continuum. The Resilience Project curriculum has been designed to be accessed by students at varying levels of emotional and academic development. The year levels are a guide to the age and ability that the curriculum has been written to engage. As in all learning, teachers may need to make some adjustments to cater for the individual learning needs of their cohorts.

### Pedagogy

The Resilience Project curriculum requires teachers to adapt a facilitation approach. Rather than teachers imparting knowledge onto students, this curriculum places teachers alongside students. Together you will unpack the information in each lesson and build on the knowledge base of the group to find the answers together. Suggested approaches to maximise outcomes from each lesson include:

- Providing space and time for reflection when facilitating lessons. This is paramount. Give the group plenty of time to come up with responses – some silence is ok.
- Guiding and prompting group discussions with questions to elicit thinking and sharing.

The lessons require students to work individuals, in pairs, in small groups and as a whole class. This is to encourage discussion and also to provide opportunities to further develop social skills.

### Preparing to deliver The Resilience Project curriculum

There are parts of the The Resilience Project curriculum that students may find challenging. The Resilience Project curriculum is, in many ways, a personal development journey for our students and teachers. As with any journey there may be difficult parts along the way. As a teacher you need to be mindful of your own emotional reactions to the content and reflect on how it may influence your teaching. How you and your students respond to content will vary depending on past experiences.

It is therefore vital that you establish a safe learning environment before beginning. It is a good idea to involve the class in setting up some agreed behaviours. Include concepts such as confidentiality, respectful listening, etc.

Ensure that students have access to information about where to go for extra support if they need it and keep referring back to this throughout the lesson. Ideally, the school wellbeing team would be the first option; however it is a good idea to give students information about other support services including:

- **Kids Help Line** – 1800 55 1800 or [www.kidshelpline.com.au](http://www.kidshelpline.com.au)
- **eheadspace** – [www.eheadspace.org.au](http://www.eheadspace.org.au)

As the lessons progress you should look for any signs of distress in students. If you notice something that concerns you, seek advice from your student wellbeing support staff around how to approach and support the student. Remember that most young people will not seek help, so it is the responsibility of the adults in their lives to initiate these conversations.

#### Further information and support:

For extensive links to research and reference material, go to:

<https://theresilienceproject.com.au/resources-references/>

#### For other enquires contact:

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SCHOOLS PROGRAM MANAGER

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## HELP

THE RESILIENCE PROJECT

# LESSON 8

Help

Draw one thing that makes you **happy** and one thing that makes you **sad**:

**Something that makes me happy:**

**Something that makes me sad:**

17

### Learning Intentions:

#### We are learning to:

- Describe how others may feel.
- Help others when they feel sad.

### Resources:

- Student Journals.

### Outline:

#### Activity 1: Class Discussion (15 mins)

- Ask students the following questions:
  - What makes you happy? What makes you sad? What makes you angry? What makes you excited?
  - How do you behave when you feel this way?
  - Can you tell how your mum, dad, siblings or friends feel? How? Is it the way their body or face looks? Or does their voice change?
  - When is the last time you helped someone?
  - How did they react?
  - How did you feel?
  - What is something you do to make someone happy?
  - What is something someone else does for you that makes you happy?

You could use prompts to assist students: maybe when someone asks you to play with them? Or someone runs away from you when you are playing together?

You could record answers in a table on the board:

When someone made you feel happy	When someone made you feel sad
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inviting you to play</li> <li>Helping you in class</li> <li>Helping when a friend isn't feeling well</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Running away</li> <li>Laughing when you're hurt</li> <li>Taking your things</li> </ul>

#### Activity 2: Role-play (10 mins)

- Explain that we are going to role-play 'empathy' (understanding how others feel). Put students in groups of two to four. Students can either come up with their own role-play to show empathy or use one of the ideas brainstormed on the board.

#### Activity 3: Performance (10 mins)

- Students perform their role-plays.

#### Activity 4: Student Journal Activity (10 mins)

- Students complete the activity in their Student Journal drawing what makes them feel happy and what makes them feel sad.



## CALMING DOWN

# LESSON 13

## Calming down

Draw or write about three activities that can make you feel like you need a time out...



### Learning Intentions:

**We are learning to:** use mindful strategies to calm our bodies and minds.

### Resources:

- Interactive whiteboard.
- Bean bags.
- Hoola hoops (four).
- Video Resource List.

### Outline:

#### Activity 1: Video and Student Journal activity (10 mins)

- Watch **Video 119** from the Video Resource List.
- Pose the following questions:
  - "Do you find that sometimes your head has so much going on inside that it gets a bit out of control?"
  - "Do you find that it just keeps building and building to a point where you almost feel like you're going to explode?"
  - "Do you feel like sometimes you have put so much of your energy into something that you just need a break, like a time out?"
- Students can write in their Student Journals about three activities that make them feel like they need a time out.

#### Activity 2: Bean bag hunt (15 mins)

- Take the students outside for a game of 'bean bag hunt'. (Play two to three games).
- Bean bag hunt: Divide the class into four teams. Place the four hoola hoops in a square, with a large space in the middle. Scatter the beanbags into the middle of the four hoops. Each team stands behind a hoola hoop.
- One person from each team is allowed to collect a beanbag, one at a time. They then put the beanbag in their team's hoop and high-five the next person to go and collect another. When the beanbags are all gone from the middle, the teams can take from the other hoola hoops—still only one person at a time. At the end, count to see which team has the most beanbags.

#### Activity 3: Discussion (5 mins)

- Return to the classroom and ask the students: "That was an interesting game, wasn't it? Was it difficult or did it make you a bit sad or mad that your friend was taking from your team?"
- Explain to the students that together they are going to take a mindful moment to calm themselves down, to relax, and to come back to this moment.

#### Activity 4: Relaxation (5 mins)

- Say the following script slowly:
  - Get your body comfortable and gently close your eyes. Slowly take deep breaths. Try breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth. Feel your tummy fill up and then empty.
  - Spend a moment or two relaxing your feet and legs, letting go of any tightness and letting them become heavy and relaxed.
  - Now relax your chest and shoulders. Now, your arms and fingers. Feel how relaxed you are.
  - Let everything go and just focus on this moment. Being here, now.
- After a few moments, invite the students to wriggle their hands and feet, and slowly sit up and join the class again.

#### Activity 5: Reflection (5 mins)

- Pose the following questions: "How do you feel now? Have the stresses and worries from our game, or even before our game, left your body? Do you feel calm and at ease?"
- Ask students to turn to the person beside them and tell them how they are feeling after the mindful moment.

## BOUNCING BACK

### Learning Intentions:

**We are learning to:** bounce back when things don't go our way.

### Resources:

- Student Journals.
- Interactive whiteboard.

### Outline:

#### Activity 1: Discussion (5 mins)

- Ask the students and discuss responses:
  - » "Can you think of a time when things didn't really go according to plan?"
  - » "Perhaps for your birthday you really wanted a particular toy and you didn't get it, or you were playing in the bottom team at basketball and you lost?"
- Discuss the reaction they had to these different events. For example, they may have cried, they may have yelled at a friend, they may have gotten really angry with people and said hurtful things, or they may have become physical with others.

#### Activity 2: Student Journal activity (15 mins)

- Students refer to their Student Journals and draw and/or write about their experience.

#### Activity 3: Class discussion (10 mins)

- Explain to the students that there are different ways to react to problems. Write the following headings on the board:
  - 1. Good reactions:** a reasonable way to act.
  - 2. Bad reactions:** a bad/angry way to react.
  - 3. Bounce Back:** a good reaction with an action you can take.
- Ask two students to come to the front of the class and perform what a 'good reaction' would look like if someone asked if they could play with you (this would include using manners).
- Ask two students to come to the front of the class and perform what a 'bad reaction' would look like if someone asked if they could play with you (this may include yelling).
- Ask two students to come to the front of the class and perform what a 'bounce back reaction' would look like if someone asked if they could play with you (this may include saying no, but offering to play with them another time).

#### Activity 4: Bounce back (5 mins)

- Model the following example for the student activity:  
Charlie was at the library looking for his favourite book when he saw his friend, Luke, pick it up and borrow it.
  - » **Typical reaction:** Charlie yells and snatches the book out of Luke's hands.
  - » **Reasonable reaction:** Charlie tells Luke that he really wanted to borrow that book.
  - » **Bounce back reaction:** Charlie asks Luke if he could borrow that book when Luke has finished with it. Charlie borrows a different book for the time being.

#### Activity 5: Student Journal activity (10 mins)

- Read the following scenario to the class:  
"Carly is at her house playing with her best friend Adele. Adele is playing with Carly's favourite toy when, all of a sudden, part of the toy breaks!" Adele is really sorry."
- Explain to the students that they are now going to use their Student Journals to answer some questions about this scenario.

#### Extension activity: (15 mins)

- Students create their own role-play to perform their own scenario of each reaction.

THE RESILIENCE PROJECT

## LESSON 1

### Bouncing Back

Not According to Plan

THE RESILIENCE PROJECT

## LESSON 1

### Bouncing Back

**Scenario:**

Carly is at her house playing with her best friend Adele. Adele is playing with Carly's favourite toy when, all of a sudden, part of the toy breaks!" Adele is really sorry."

**How would you react?**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**What would be a 'bad reaction' be?**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**What would be a 'bounce back reaction' be?**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## BUCKET FILLING

### LESSON 14

#### Bucket filling

Whose bucket did you add to?

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Why did you choose them?

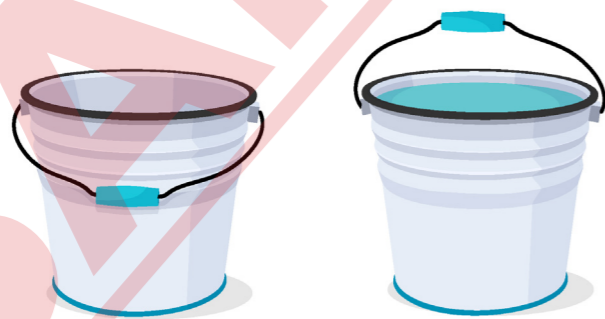
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#### Learning Intentions:

**We are learning to:** give compliments and express gratitude.

#### Resources:

- Video Resource List.
- 'How full is my bucket for kids'.
- Brown paper bags.
- Colour textas/pencils.
- Blu-tac.
- White A4 paper cut into strips.
- Student Journals.

#### Outline:

##### Activity 1: Video and brainstorm (15 mins)

- Watch **Video 308** from the Video Resource List.
- Discuss with the class: "How do you fill a bucket?" (give a compliment). "How do you take from a bucket?" (say something hurtful/upsetting).
- On the board, write examples of bucket filling and bucket dipping. The students brainstorm ideas to add to the list.

##### Activity 3: Compliments (10 mins)

- Discuss as a class what a compliment is. For example, expressing gratitude for someone. It could be for something they said or did, but it must be genuine and authentic.
- Model an example for the students, for example, 'I want to say thank you to Sarah for picking up the rubbish in the yard today. She did it using her own initiative.'
- Students are then to think about someone who they are grateful for or say something nice about someone. Then, they are to write this down on a strip of paper and when they have finished, fold it up and put it in that student's paper bag.
- Remind students that it isn't about writing about your friends, but really thinking about caring, grateful things to say about others. Each student should write for three other people.

##### Activity 4: Student Journal activity (5 mins)

- Students to answer the reflection questions in their Student Journals.

**Bucket Filling**  
'You are a really kind person'



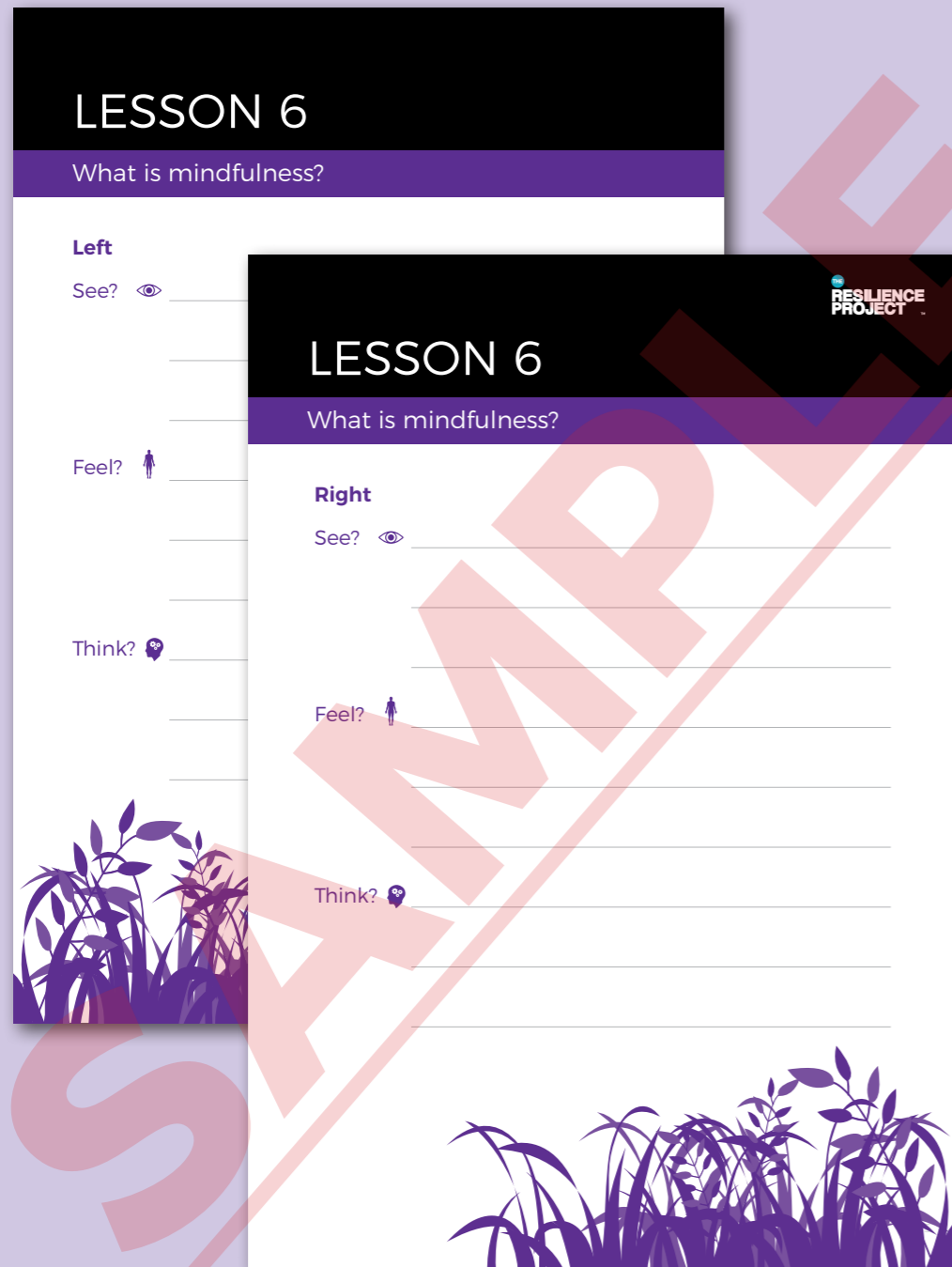
**Bucket Dipping**  
'You are a loser'

##### Activity 2: Brown paper bag (20 mins)

- Have students get a brown paper bag and give them time to draw a picture of their face on one side. Students can also decorate the bag with things that are important to them, e.g. family members, pets, football team, etc. These are to be displayed in the classroom - affix each brown paper bag along a wall or ledge with blu-tac.



## WHAT IS MINDFULNESS?



### Learning Intentions:

**We are learning to:** develop an understanding of what mindfulness is.

### Resources:

- Student Journals.
- Projector and speakers.
- A bell (if possible).
- Video Resource List.
- The Resilience Project app or another meditation app

### Outline:

#### Activity 1: Video (15 mins)

- Watch **Video 404** from the Video Resource List. This video provides a good description of mindfulness.
- Discuss The Resilience Project definition, 'Mindfulness is the ability to be in the present moment; to shut off disruptive thoughts, to feel calm.'

#### Activity 2: Attention and Student Journal activity (20 min)

- Explain that sometimes being mindful is about focussing our attention on one thing, appreciating that thing, and being observant about the details.
- Find a space outside. Have students observe what is around them by completing the diagram in their Student Journal in as much detail as possible. Spend five minutes in each direction (left and right). Ring a bell when it is time to change direction, otherwise this activity should be quiet.

#### Activity 3: Classroom Brainstorm (15 mins)

- Ask the students to think of all the different ways you can practise mindfulness.
- Student should choose one of these to practise this week.
- Furthermore, ask the students:
  - What does someone look like who is being mindful?
  - How do you know?
  - What would happen if they were not being mindful?

#### Extension Activity: (5 mins)

- As a class, complete a meditation from the Resilience Project app or another meditation app.

## INFLUENCING OUR EMOTIONS

### Learning Intentions:

**We are learning to:** develop strategies to cope with strong emotions.

- **Give** – Give a little kindness. Performing a small act of kindness has proven to produce serotonin, endorphins, oxytocin and even reduce aging!
- Students complete 'Calling G' Student Journal activity.

### Resources:

- Interactive white board.
- Student Journals.
- Video Resource List.

### Outline:

#### Activity 1: Video (15 mins)

- Watch the following videos. They all display strong, immediate emotions from young children:
  - Watch **Video 515** from the Video Resource List.
  - Watch **Video 516** from the Video Resource List.
  - Watch **Video 517** from the Video Resource List.
- We all experience strong emotions. They can be positive, negative and in between. Sometimes we have no choice in our immediate reactions, however, we can influence our behaviours and emotions through practice and positive-thinking.
- Students share examples of when they have had a strong immediate reaction.

#### Activity 2: CALLing G (25 mins)

- What can we do when we are faced with a strong emotion? We can C.A.L.L. G.
- **Connect** – with others, visit friends, have a chat, or play a game. Being around others makes us feel safe, gives us a sense of belonging and can offer support.
- **Active** – Get moving! Go for a run, take a short walk or do 10 star-jumps. Moving our bodies increases blood flow, resulting in the brain thinking clearer and the body feeling better.
- **Listen** – Listen to your body. If you are feeling thirsty, have a drink, or if you are tired, take a nap. Also, listen to others. They may have experienced similar situations and may have advice. Emotions are often contagious, and by listening to others who are calm, relaxed or happy, can rub off on you.
- **Learn** – Learn something new. It will redirect your mind and stimulate the release of good chemicals in your body.

#### Activity 3: Video (10 mins)

- A jail in the Philippines has been teaching inmates how to dance. They experimented with the idea to see if it would change inmates' emotions, behaviours and self-understanding. The results are incredible. Watch **Video 518** from the Video Resource List.
- Watch **Video 519** from the Video Resource List.
- Ask students: "How do you feel when watching this clip? Would you want your dad/uncle/teacher to do this and why?"

#### Extension Activity: (10 mins)

- Using the C.A.L.L. G list, students choose a class game (silent ball, tunnel ball) as part of being 'active'.

The image shows three overlapping lesson plan cards for 'LESSON 15: Influencing our emotions'. The top card is partially obscured by the middle one, which is partially obscured by the bottom one. Each card features the 'C.A.L.L. G' acronym and a list of activities. The bottom card is the most visible and contains the following text:

**LESSON 15**  
Influencing our Emotions

**C** Connect  
Connect with others.

**A** Active  
Get active and move.

**L** Listen  
Listen to others.

**L** Learn  
Learn something new and clear your mind.

**G** Give  
Give to someone who needs it, but not on your own terms.

**Activity**  
On the following page, write down three actions you could take to help you manage your emotions.

1. Visit a friend.
2. Play with one of your siblings.
3. Tell an adult how you're feeling.

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_\_

# LESSON 17

## GRATITUDE QUILT

### Learning Intentions:

**We are learning to:** reflect on things we are grateful for.

### Resources:

- Student Journals.
- Interactive whiteboard.
- 10cm x 10cm blank piece of paper.
- Approximately 12cm x 12cm coloured piece of paper.
- Video Resource List.

### Outline:

#### Activity 1: Who are you grateful for and Student Journal activity (15 mins)

- Watch **Video 613** from the Video Resource List.
- In their Student Journals, students note down three people they are grateful for and why they are grateful for them.
- Students then share their responses with the person next to them.
- It is important to highlight to students that often it is the small gestures that make a very big difference.

#### Activity 2: Inspiring gratitude (15 mins)

- Inform the students, that they are going to watch clips to provide some inspiration for our upcoming gratitude quilt activity.
- Watch **Video 614** from the Video Resource List.
- Watch **Video 615** from the Video Resource List.

#### Activity 3: Thankful squares (20 mins)

- Give each student a 10cm x 10cm blank piece of paper (or just a square-shaped piece of paper) on which to draw/write/symbolise something he or she is thankful for.
- Mount/paste each square on a coloured piece of paper slightly bigger (approx. 12cm x 12cm) so it creates a border.

#### Activity 4: Gratitude quilt (5 mins)

- Piece the squares together to create a classroom gratitude quilt. (The gratitude quilt can be displayed on a wall, on the ceiling or can be done on material and put together as a class 'blanket').

LESSON 17

Random acts of kindness

Right now, I am grateful for:

**AT HOME**

Person 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Why are you grateful for them?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**AT SCHOOL**

Person 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Why are you grateful for them?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_


**OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL**

Person 3: \_\_\_\_\_

Why are you grateful for them?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



35