



TERM 01 TOPIC

Parents Newsletter

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Wellbeing is the state of being comfortable, healthy or happy. It is about how people feel and how they function, both on a personal and a social level, and how they evaluate their lives as a whole.

HOW TO USE A “HEALTHY MIND PLATTER” TO SUPPORT YOUR FAMILY’S MENTAL WELLBEING

“Healthy Mind Platter” is a model developed by Dr Daniel Siegel, a Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at the UCLA School of Medicine and the founding co-director of the Mindful Awareness Research Centre at UCLA in collaboration with Dr David Rock, Executive Director of the NeuroLeadership Institute. It consists of 7 daily essential activities to create well-being by balancing your brain. It is based on evidence that suggests that doing these 7 activities regularly can have a positive impact on your and your children’s mental wellbeing.



- PLAY TIME
- TIME IN
- CONNECTING TIME
- DOWN TIME
- PHYSICAL TIME
- SLEEP TIME
- FOCUS TIME

FOCUS TIME

FOCUS TIME is doing one thing at the time and truly focusing on just that one thing. In a world that values multi-tasking, this can be incredibly difficult to do, but essential for our brains and mental health. Ways to encourage focus time in your family:

- Play a game with your children and turn all the electronic devices off (yes, that includes your phone).
- Create “reading time” with your family when you’ll all just read something for a while without distractions.

CONNECTING TIME

CONNECTING TIME: regularly connecting with other people, with yourself, with nature helps build sense of belonging and self-worth. It also provides you with emotional support and allows you to support others, while empathising at the deepest level. Here are some suggestions to connect every day with your children:

- Make sure that everybody gets at least 12 hugs a day.
- Counterbalance each negative experience with 5 positive ones.
- Spend regular 1-1 time with each of your children.

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DOWN TIME

DOWN TIME is about being non-focused, not having a specific goal. It is about letting our mind wander and simply relaxing which in turn allows our brains to recharge. Consider using these suggestions to make more space for down time in your family:

- Reflect on how many structured activities you and your children do. Would you benefit from cutting that number down and not having to rush all the time?
- Play some music, encourage everybody to move and allow the music to take over and guide your movement and thoughts.
- Go for a walk with your children and let your minds wander too: talk about everything and anything without any agendas.

SLEEP TIME

SLEEP TIME: sleep allows brain to recover from day's experiences. It also consolidates learning and allows the brain the time to "tidy" its various elements. To help you and your family to maximise your sleep time, think about the following:

- Is everybody in the family getting enough sleep? If not, what is in your way? What can you do about it?
- Have you got an effective bedtime routine that you apply consistently?
- Do you and your children have a regular bedtime and wake up time?
- Are electronic devices interfering with your and your children's sleep?

Are any of these 7 activities on your Healthy Mind Platter?

If not, which ones you might need to focus more on to enhance your own and your family's wellbeing? Reflect, make a plan, be consistent and have fun!

As always, if you need any help with making this work for your family, please do reach out on

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– I am more than happy to help you.

PLAY TIME

PLAY TIME: allowing ourselves to be fully immersed in a game, or just being playful, keeps our brains young and strengthens parts of the brain that keep our emotions in check. In addition, when we allow ourselves to be spontaneous and enjoy new experiences, we make new connections in the brain. Here are some ways you can encourage adults in your family to be more playful (I suspect children won't need much encouragement with this one 😊):

- Have a regular "silliness" time with your children: have pillow fights, try to catch them, turn into a tickling monster.
- Do something unplanned every once and a while: go for a walk in the dark, camp in the garden, or jump in some muddy puddles!
- Learn to play a new game.

TIME IN

TIME IN is about being present in the moment and quietly reflecting on sensations, feelings, and thoughts. This can strengthen and broaden your awareness, as well as enhance your well-being. It also helps to reaffirm your life priorities, improves your self-understanding and allows you to make positive choices based on your own values and motivations. Ways to encourage time in with your family:

- Find 5 things that make you smile on the school run.
- Go for a mindful walk and notice everything that makes a sound.
- Really taste what you are eating and notice different textures, smells, and sensations that food creates in your body.

