

HAPPY SCHOOLS

A MONTHLY WELLBEING NEWSLETTER FROM THE HAPPY HUMAN PROJECT



5 HAPPINESS HABITS TO BRING YOU MORE JOY

How many times have you put your happiness far away in the future, reassuring yourself that once X has happened, finished or been sorted out, then you'll be happy?

The pursuit of happiness is possibly one of the biggest disappointments we can set ourselves up for because it leaves us constantly waiting for something to happen. The Happy Human Project teaches children how to recognise and accept *whatever* they're feeling right now, which ultimately helps them to regulate their emotions and return to a state of peace and wellbeing.

Our programmes are backed by science, and we're confident that these strategies are hugely beneficial to all. We wanted to share 5 simple habits for you to develop to help you start to feel more positive and happy every day. Habits, by nature, are hard to adopt, so we've kept it simple and suggest picking just one of these and trying to do it every day.

To find out more about our work and how we can support your child, head to happyhumanproject.co.uk

1. Smile or laugh as often as you can

Smiling and laughing have such a huge impact on our wellbeing because of the hormones that are released (endorphins, oxytocin and serotonin) and the subsequent health benefits they give us. Not only that, but our brains cannot differentiate between what's real and what's imagined, and they also cannot tell the difference between a genuine laugh and a fake one. This means that you don't need to be around funny people, or watch funny videos to reap the benefits of laughter. Simply smiling on the walk to school is enough to release those happy hormones and put you in a good mood!

2. Eat more fruit and veg

A fairly recent study in Australia has found that out of 12,000 participants, those who ate more fruit and vegetables each day became significantly happier over the 2-year period of the study. Experts aren't yet sure why fruit and vegetables increase people's happiness levels, but if it's as simple as eating a few more bananas, then we're definitely on board!



3. Practice gratitude every day

It might sound fluffy and simplistic, but don't knock it til you've tried it. Making gratitude into an actual practice is important because whilst it might be easy to be thankful for things on good days, it is harder to do on the bad days. Building a habit where you think of three things you feel grateful for each day will boost your happy feelings because you'll naturally start looking for more things that make you feel good. It's one of the simplest and quickest techniques for shifting your mindset from one of lack, problems and challenges, to one of abundance and solutions.



4. Make the effort to connect with others

Science suggests that a phone call does more for our happiness than a text and that's because we are so removed from actual human connection when we message through phones and computers. Simple acts such as making eye contact with someone as we talk releases Oxytocin from the brain, which both relaxes us and helps us to bond with one another. The world can be a tough place, but there's always opportunities to connect with people (and chances are, if you're feeling lonely, there's a lot of others out there feeling it, too).



5. Get outside

Being in nature often brings us into a state of mindfulness which means we're focused on the present moment, not the future. It might be the temperature, the bright sun, the wind, the smells or the sounds but whatever it is, notice what's going on around you because it's good for your brain and overall wellbeing. Really, doing anything that switches your brain off from the worries, regrets and to-do list is good for you so even if that's sitting down with a cup of tea and a book, do it for the sake of your happiness!