



L1. COPING SKILLS

Y6



LAUGHOLOGY
HAPPY-CENTRED
SCHOOL PROGRAMME

LAUGHOLOGY

LESSON 1 QUESTION:

What does it mean to cope?



YOU WILL NEED:

A range of games and activities that frustrate, such as: a Rubik's cube, a 1000-piece jigsaw, Operation, Kerplunk, Frustration, Jenga, a Where's Wally book, a complex crossword etc.



DIRECT TEACHING INPUT:

- Ask the children what they understand by the term 'coping.' Write down their thoughts.
- Explain that, today, they are going to play a variety of games and do activities that might frustrate them.
- The games should be laid out on tables. Children should be encouraged to choose one that they think will be a challenge and begin to play/ do it.
- Circulate and note the reactions of children when they find things difficult or things go wrong.
- At a point when things seem to be calm e.g. they are starting to look like they are solving the Rubik's cube, say that the time is up and they are to move on.
- You could also add to frustrations by 'accidentally' knocking the table that the Jenga tower is on etc.



REFLECTION/BRINGING THE SESSION TOGETHER:

- Bring the group back together.
- Ask them how they enjoyed playing the games and doing the activities. If they talk about being frustrated ask them how they coped with these feelings. When they persevered and enjoyed the challenge, how did they feel?
- Point out behaviours that you witnessed, such as: people taking deep breaths, people gritting their teeth, people briefly walking away from the table, people shouting out.
- Ask the children which behaviours they think helped them to calm down and regain control. Which ones do they think sent messages to their brain that they were struggling to cope?
- Explain that next week the children will be finding out more about the brain.

TEACHER NOTES:



> POSSIBLE RELATED VOCABULARY TO TEACH:

Coping, Strengths, Success, Co-operation, Friendships, Aid, Guide, Listen, Model, Together, Teamwork, Community, Compassion, Reassurance, Giving, Comfort, Thoughtfulness, Grit, Determination, Can-do, Attitude, Together, Standing tall, Breathing, Relaxation

> DIFFERENTIATION AND EXTENSION:

As they go around the activities the children could keep notes of their feelings, actions and behaviours. These could be sorted into positive and negative reactions.

Some children may find this activity very challenging and may benefit from being given a personal target prior to the session.

> TEACHER'S ANNOTATIONS:

> WHAT WENT WELL?

> WHAT MAY BE EVEN BETTER NEXT TIME?

> OTHER IDEAS:



L2. COPING SKILLS

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LESSON 2 QUESTION:

How can I develop good coping skills?



YOU WILL NEED:

Any devices capable of carrying out internet research; access to websites such as www.copingskills4kids.net; books about the brain.



DIRECT TEACHING INPUT:

- › Ask the children what they can remember about the brain from their Coping lessons in Year 5.
- › Explain that, this week, the children are going to work in teams to find out all that they can about the brain and its impact on how we cope and manage situations.
- › The children should, as a team, start to put together a presentation about the brain to present to the class the following week. They should consider how the brain is formed and how it helps us to cope when we are challenged. They should also provide some examples of ways that we can grow our brain/ further develop our responses linked to fixed and growth mind-set research.
- › Remind the children of the skills needed to work in a team. Explain that you will be looking for great presentations but also fantastic teamwork, in which everyone plays a role and copes with not always getting their way etc.
- › Support the children to understand the information that they are researching and to make their presentations relevant and interesting.



REFLECTION/BRINGING THE SESSION TOGETHER:

- › Make sure that the children save any work that they have so far and tell them that they will have more time next week to finalise their presentations and rehearse them, before delivering to the class.
- › Ask them how they are feeling about giving their presentations. If any are nervous, or feel that they will struggle to be prepared enough, ask them what they could do to feel more in control.

TEACHER NOTES:



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> DIFFERENTIATION AND EXTENSION:

Some children may benefit from recapping on the slides from Year 5.

Some children may benefit from having pre-prepared information to research from.

Some children may find it more challenging to work as part of a team. They may benefit from a personal target prior to the session beginning.

> TEACHER'S ANNOTATIONS:

> WHAT WENT WELL?

> WHAT MAY BE EVEN BETTER NEXT TIME?

> OTHER IDEAS...



L3. COPING SKILLS

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LESSON 3 QUESTION:

How can I help others to develop good coping skills?



YOU WILL NEED:

All of the research and the beginning of presentations from last week's session; any additional research that the children have carried out at home.



DIRECT TEACHING INPUT:

- › Recap on the task that the children have to complete in teams.
- › Give the children time to complete the task and rehearse their presentations.
- › Remind them that they are putting together a presentation about the brain to present to the class this week. They should include how the brain is formed and how it helps us to cope when we are challenged. They should provide some examples of ways that we can grow our brain/ further develop our responses linked to fixed and growth mind-set research.
- › Remind the children that they should fully focus on other people's presentations and not spend the whole time running through their own in their heads.
- › Remind the children that, as well as great presentations, you are looking for teamwork, which includes everyone and ensures that all members are coping.



REFLECTION/BRINGING THE SESSION TOGETHER:

- › At the end of each presentation ask the team how they would score themselves for the quality of their presentation, the quality of teamwork and their ability to cope under pressure as individuals.
- › Ask the children if they can think of any occasions going forward when the things that they have learnt about coping will help, e.g. when they attend secondary school for their induction interviews.
- › Ask the audience if they would like to add any comments, reminding them of how to give praise and constructive criticism.

TEACHER NOTES:



> POSSIBLE RELATED VOCABULARY TO TEACH:

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> DIFFERENTIATION AND EXTENSION:

Pull team names/ numbers out of a hat to decide the order that people deliver in. Ask the children how they felt when they were pulled out first/ last etc. If they wanted to 'get it over and done with' but were pulled out last, how did they cope?

> TEACHER'S ANNOTATIONS:

> WHAT WENT WELL?

> WHAT MAY BE EVEN BETTER NEXT TIME?

> OTHER IDEAS...



L4. COPING SKILLS

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LESSON 4 QUESTION:

How will I cope with secondary transition?



YOU WILL NEED:

A3 paper and pens; if possible, some Year 7 students or the Head of Year 7 from a local secondary school.



DIRECT TEACHING INPUT:

- › Ask the children, in groups, to make lists of all the things that they are looking forward to when they transfer to secondary school. Share these and point out how many exciting new things there are to anticipate.
- › Now ask the groups to list the things that they are more worried about. The most common things are: travel arrangements, difficulty of work, making new friends/ not being with old friends, homework, rules, consequences, detentions, bullying, lunch arrangements, getting lost, new teachers.
- › If you have managed to get some Year 7 students or the Head of Year 7 from a local secondary school in, encourage the children to share their worries and ask for advice on how they should cope in any challenging situations.
- › In groups, the children should produce mind-maps. In the middle of their mind-map, they should write 'Secondary Transition' and on each branch one of their potential worries. From each branch, they should draw further branches with a range of solutions, e.g. Travelling to school – practise the journey, travel with others, check the timetables, plan to get there too early rather than just on time in case the bus is late, keep travel documents in the same, safe place etc.



REFLECTION/BRINGING THE SESSION TOGETHER:

- › The children should leave their mind-maps and rotate round the other tables to see what other groups have produced.
- › Explain that, if they would like to magpie any ideas from other groups, this is fine.
- › Tell the children that being slightly apprehensive about a new, unknown situation is perfectly normal. However, from their mind-maps, they have lots of ideas as to how they can make things less stressful for themselves and lots of strategies to cope.

TEACHER NOTES:



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> DIFFERENTIATION AND EXTENSION:

If you have arranged for Year 7 pupils to come in to speak to the children, you may like to brief them prior to the session, about the kinds of questions that they will get. It would help if their answers are honest but positive.

You may like to expand on some of the solutions that the children come up with. For example, you could bring in bus timetables so that they can discuss which is the best bus to get, in order to feel calm when they arrive at school.

Some children may benefit from a personalised secondary transition package which includes things like travel training. They may be able to share what they have learnt with their peers.

> TEACHER'S ANNOTATIONS:

> WHAT WENT WELL?

> WHAT MAY BE EVEN BETTER NEXT TIME?

> OTHER IDEAS...



L5. COPING SKILLS

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LESSON 5 QUESTION:

Can I create a coping plan for the future?



YOU WILL NEED:

A quiet place for children to sit and be able to visualise and imagine; pens and paper.



DIRECT TEACHING INPUT:

- › Ask the children what they remember about positive visualisation and coping plans in Year 5. Ask if anyone has used positive visualisation as a tool to help them cope since they first learnt about it. Explain that they are going to practise positive visualisation again in this session and that this will lead to them producing coping plans.
- › Explain to the children that in this session you want them to use their imagination. Ask the children to think back to a time when they achieved something great. It might have been winning a race or doing well at a school subject and being congratulated for it. Make sure all the children have something and collect some examples from the class.
- › Ask the children to think about how they felt at the time of this achievement. How did it make them feel inside and outside? What thoughts did they have? Encourage the children to visualise the event and re-live the moment in their minds. Allow them to keep this focus for at least 30 seconds. Then ask the children to think about something else completely different, maybe falling off a bike.
- › Then ask the children to bring the positive experience back into their minds again and hold it for 30 seconds.
- › Repeat this exercise a few more times.
- › Ask the children how they felt when visualising the positive experience.
- › Remind the children that this exercise is called 'positive visualisation' and doing this will help them feel better in times of challenge. They can also visualise places and people that help them feel positive. Ask for examples of what, or who, these might be.
- › Recap on all of the things that have been learnt about coping so far, such as: we can grow our brain and develop growth mind-sets, mind-maps help us to come up with solutions, if we can foresee problems we can brainstorm different solutions, visualising positive experiences and people can help us cope when we are struggling.
- › In their pairs, ask them to recall a real scenario; something that might have happened to them in the past that made them upset or anxious. It should be a time when they needed coping skills.
- › In pairs, can they write a coping plan with their new knowledge, from the coping skills sessions, on how they might have dealt with this scenario differently.



REFLECTION/BRINGING THE SESSION TOGETHER:

- › In pairs, share their coping plans. Ask if anyone else can think of other solutions. The aim is to realise that there are many ways to deal with different problems and a range of people who can help.
- › Ask the children if, going forward, they think that they could devise coping plans for any bigger worries that they have.

TEACHER NOTES:



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> DIFFERENTIATION AND EXTENSION:

The children could group the strategies for coping that they have come up with and put these on a mind-map, to aid their memories, e.g. people, being prepared, calming techniques etc.

> TEACHER'S ANNOTATIONS:

> WHAT WENT WELL?

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> OTHER IDEAS...



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LESSON 6 QUESTION:

What advice will I give to my future self about coping?



YOU WILL NEED:

Card; paper; pens.



DIRECT TEACHING INPUT:

- › Remind the children that everyone has times in their lives when they find things more challenging and that it is normal to experience periods of anxiety, nervousness, worry and stress.
- › Tell them that keeping these feelings to ourselves is usually not the best solution, but that there are many great solutions available to them.
- › Recap on all of the things that the children know about coping. They should think about the things that they have learnt this year, but also cast their minds back to previous years. While they are making suggestions, everyone should be writing notes on their whiteboards.
- › Explain that different coping strategies will work for different people, in different situations and at different times of their lives. Just because positive visualisation or mindfulness may not work for them now, it doesn't mean that they won't in the future.
- › So that they remember everything that they have learnt, the children should write letters/ cards to themselves, which will go home and can be referred to in the future. These letters/ cards should explain all of the ways that they can learn to cope with challenges in the future.



REFLECTION/BRINGING THE SESSION TOGETHER:

- › You may want to take copies of these letters/ cards so that children have something to refer to at school.
- › Ask the children where they will keep their letters/ cards at home so that they remember to refer to them.
- › Ask them if they will share the advice with other family members. If so, how do they think that will help others.
- › The children should take their letters/ cards home.

TEACHER NOTES:



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> DIFFERENTIATION AND EXTENSION:

If this work is to be used for assessment, the teachers should look at the reasons the children give for using particular strategies in order to glean their understanding.

It may help for the teacher to have collated strategies from the previous years' coping lessons, to remind the children of the many different things that they have learnt. If the work is used for assessment, this is still fine to do, as it only serves as a memory aid.

Some children might like to write letters for younger children to help them learn how to cope better with challenging situations.

> TEACHER'S ANNOTATIONS:

> WHAT WENT WELL?

> WHAT MAY BE EVEN BETTER NEXT TIME?

> OTHER IDEAS...