



Dear Parents and Carers

As part of child Mental Health Week (5<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> February), your child has participated in some emotional wellbeing activities provided by the local charity: Standing in the Gap ([www.standinginthegap.uk](http://www.standinginthegap.uk)) Standing in the Gap's mission is to support children and families by providing tools to build emotional wellbeing and good child mental health.

The theme for 2024 is Managing our Stress using our stress bucket. The aim of the session is to help children consider their stress buckets and how they can put things in place, so they are not overwhelmed by feelings. The children will be introduced to the concept of what can fill our stress buckets and how we can turn on the tap on the bucket to release stress. We cannot prevent life events from impacting us as families, but we can equip ourselves and our children so we don't become overwhelmed by them.

They have watched a short cartoon-like video using our cartoon elves and the stress bucket, played a game to help recall important points and have completed a worksheet, which they will bring home. As part of this we have explored what things could fill their stress bucket. This varies for all of us, but an understanding that things can fill our buckets is really helpful for emotional wellbeing and development. We also discussed a range of activities that can help them open the taps on their stress buckets so the levels don't rise, and they don't become overwhelmed.

We would really like you to be able to see the video we showed your children, please follow the link to the webpage <https://standinginthegap.uk/childrensmentalhealthweek2024> or use the QR code:



We are all individual but below are some examples of what can help us open the taps on our stress buckets. Do have a look at what ideas your child has come up with on their worksheet. It may be worth keeping this on your fridge or somewhere visible as a reminder of what can help.

**Physical things that can open our taps:** some people find that going for a walk, playing an outside game, running up and down the garden or going for a run helps. Others find attending a dance or exercise class, or bouncing on a trampoline can also help open their tap.

Other things you can try at home are a hug, a tickle (this helps to raise endorphins and decreases the stress hormone cortisol) or a Pizza massage (you make an imaginary pizza and add different toppings on your child's back while talking about what fun things they'd like on a pizza).





**Things that can emotionally open our taps:** You may find that having a chat with a sympathetic listener and talking about what's filling up your bucket can be useful. Alternatively writing a list of the things that are whizzing around your head, doing something you enjoy e.g. a hobby or playing a musical instrument, or playing a silly game may help.

Getting enough sleep is really important at any age and a lack of sleep can definitely raise your stress levels. See our What's Normal page to identify how much sleep children need at different ages

<https://standinginthegap.uk/whats-normal>

Perhaps try doing a different activity e.g. such as a colouring sheet / artwork or a quiz.

If you would like to sign up to Standing in the Gap's mailing list to hear more about what support we can offer to children, please follow the link <https://standinginthegap.uk/joinourmailinglist> or use the QR code:

We don't share your details with any other companies and aim to contact you around 4 times a year with updates. Also do follow us social media.



Kind regards

*The Standing in the Gap team*



**Our Vision** is for every child to be emotionally healthy and able to flourish.  
**Our Mission** is to support children and families by providing the tools to build emotional well-being and good child mental health.

[www.standinginthegap.uk](http://www.standinginthegap.uk)

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