

GEM Day: Gratitude, Empathy, Mindfulness

“He who knows he has enough is rich.” Lao Tzu

Dear Families,

This Friday we are celebrating GEM Day at OGPS. GEM Day is all about Gratitude, Empathy and Mindfulness. We started celebrating GEM Day about five years ago following some work we did with *The Resilience Project*. This Friday we are encouraging everyone to wear a ‘splash of green’, as it represents growth, balance and the ‘Green Learning Zone’. We’d love to see parents and carers wearing a splash of green too.

“Empathy is about standing in someone else's shoes, feeling with his or her heart, seeing with his or her eyes. Not only is empathy hard to outsource and automate, but it makes the world a better place.” Daniel H. Pink

If you would like to do some GEM activities at home this week, you may consider doing one or some of the following:

Gratitude:

- Write a letter or card to someone and thank them for something that they have done for you.
- Talk about all the things that you are grateful for in your lives.
- What are the best things about your family? Make a list.
- What made you smile and laugh today? Talk with your friends about these things.

Empathy:

- Play a game together. Take note of everyone’s emotions and how they change throughout the game. How do you think they were feeling?
- During dinner, imagine what it would be like for some people who have very little to eat. How would they feel?
- Can you imagine someone who would like some flowers that were picked from your garden? Why would they like them?
- Talk about who you think would benefit from a ‘random act of kindness’ and why they would.

Mindfulness:

- As a family, do some colouring in together in silence. Listen to the noises outside. Can you hear the pencils rubbing on the paper? What other noises do you notice? What body sensations do you feel?
- Put on some relaxing music and listen.
- When you are eating together, choose one item of food from your plate. Look carefully at it before smelling it then slowly eating it. Talk about all the things that you notice before doing it again with another item of food.
- Go outside and lie on the grass and watch the clouds float past.

“Mindfulness is about love and loving life. When you cultivate this love, it gives you clarity and compassion for life, and your actions happen in accordance with that.” Jon Kabat-Zinn

Thanks for being grateful, empathetic and mindful.

Andy McNeilly
Mental Health and Wellbeing Coordinator

