

# Paths Parent Handout



# PATHS<sup>®</sup>

The PATHS<sup>®</sup> Programme for Schools (UK Version)  
Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies

PATHS<sup>®</sup> Plus<sup>+</sup>

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Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies

Believe in  
children  
Barnardo's

PATHS<sup>®</sup> Plus is a lottery-funded programme combining the PATHS<sup>®</sup> Curriculum (a universal SEL programme) and Friendship Group (a targeted SEL programme)

PATHS<sup>®</sup> stands for **P**romoting **A**lternative **T**Hinking **S**trategies.

This is a preventative programme with lots of positive effects.

It has also been recognised amongst the 19 most effective early intervention programmes.

Barnardo's NI aims to provide children and young people with a brighter future through the social and emotional learning curriculum (PATHS<sup>®</sup> and Friendship Group).

The Lottery has provided Barnardo's with funding to roll PATHS<sup>®</sup> Plus out across the UK

## What is Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)?

Through the explicit teaching of

*Self-awareness,*

*Self-management,*

*Social awareness,*

*Relationship skills and*

*Responsible decision making,*

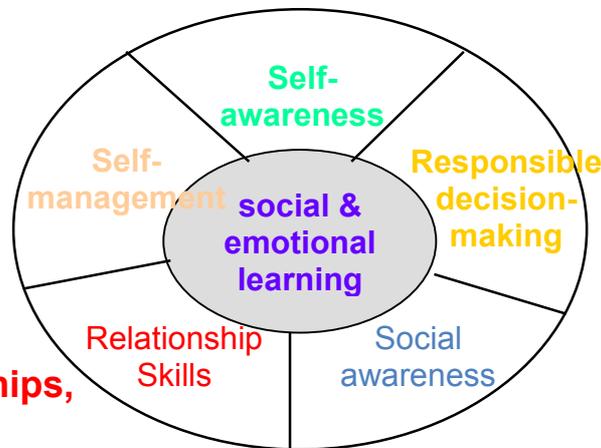
PATHS<sup>®</sup> Plus aims to help children develop the fundamental skills needed for life.

## Core SEL Competencies

Recognising one's emotions  
and values as well as one's  
strengths and limitations

Managing  
emotions and  
behaviours to  
achieve  
one's goals

Forming  
positive relationships,  
working in teams,  
dealing effectively with  
conflict



Making ethical,  
constructive  
choices about  
personal  
and social  
behaviour

Showing  
understanding  
and empathy for  
others



**Self-awareness** - Is all about knowing you, recognising your own emotions and values as well as your own strengths and limitations and having a sense of self confidence

**Self-management** – Is about managing your own emotions and behaviors to achieve your goal. Being able to regulate your own emotions and having an ability to persevere. In the classroom/home its about being able to manage conflict situations effectively and having the language that will make your views known while at the same time showing respect for other children/ siblings views

**Social awareness** Showing understanding and empathy for others. Demonstration an ability to take other peoples perspectives into account while listening to what they have to say. This would also include interacting and participating in the classroom in small and larger groups

**Relationship Skills** - Forming positive relationships, working in teams, dealing effectively with conflict, being open and willing to take other people’s views into account, treating others fairly and with respect and having the ability to seek help when it is needed.

**Responsible decision-making** Assessing risks and making good decisions, having respect for other peoples decisions and also taking responsibility for your own decisions

## **What difference does it make?**

PATHS<sup>®</sup> helps children by training in...

Self-esteem, self-confidence and self-control

Frustration tolerance / anger management

Locus of control / personal responsibility

Attention and concentration

Reflectivity vs. impulsivity

Emotional Understanding

Identification, internalisation, and guilt

Feelings vs. behaviours (all feelings are OK, some behaviours can be OK and some are not OK)

Emotions as a form of communication

Over the next few pages we will break down each of the 5 core SEL competencies into what your child is learning in class through PATHS®.

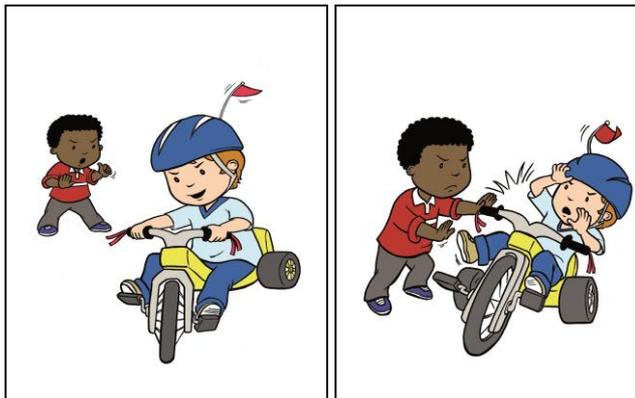
## Self Awareness

Throughout the PATHS® Curriculum, pupils are learning new words to describe different feelings.

They are encouraged to verbalise their feelings by the use of Feeling Face Rings and Feelings Dictionaries.

Pupils are taught that feelings can be either comfortable (yellow) or uncomfortable (blue), but all feelings are OK to have.

However, behaviours can be either OK or NOT OK.



Children learn that it is OK to feel angry (feeling) at your friend,

But it is NOT OK to push or hit (behaviour) your friend.

## PARENT TIPS #1

- Use language at home that is consistent with PATHS® language
- Talk to your child(ren) about how they are feeling
- Model your own feelings - tell your child how you are feeling

***Everyone has the same types of feelings.***

***Feelings are on the inside but can show on the outside.***

***There are many different feelings.***

***Feelings are either comfortable or uncomfortable.***

***There are no bad feelings.***

***All feelings are OK to have. Behaviours can be OK or not OK***

***Feelings are very important signals.***

***Feelings tell us what is going on around us and inside of us.***

***If we pay attention to our feelings, they can help us understand things.***

***Everyone has feelings all the time.***

## Self-Management

In Year 3 & Year 4, pupils learn the 3 Steps for Calming Down which are displayed on posters throughout the school.

Reception classes and Years 1 and 2 'do turtle'. They use the same steps but cross their arms and mimic Twiggle, who is a character in their PATHS<sup>®</sup> Stories.

The 3 Steps teach children to:

1. Stop
2. Take a long deep breath
3. Say what the problem is and how you feel



Using the 3 steps for calming down gives children a chance to reflect on how they are feeling and what the problem is. It stops them from behaving in a way that is NOT OK. And gives more opportunity for them to reflect on their choices. Very often, calming down is the first step to solving their problem – but it doesn't actually solve the problem itself. The problem is still there.

## PARENT TIPS #2

- Use language at home that is consistent with PATHS<sup>®</sup> language
- If you see your child is about to lose control, guide them through the 3 steps to help them calm down
- Model calming down at home if you are feeling like you are about to lose control

## Social Awareness

Through the PATHS<sup>®</sup> lessons, pupils learn how to recognise emotions in themselves and **others**.

They learn to show understanding and empathy for others, and they have the ability to take other people's perspective into account and listen to what they have to say.

For example, they learn the social importance of following rules, and discuss their school rules and classroom rules.

School rules include things such as raising your hand to speak, waiting your turn, paying attention to the person speaking, keeping hands and feet to yourself, and respect that everyone has something important to say.

The **Golden Rule** is also introduced – 'treat other people as you would like to be treated'.

Through their knowledge of the **Golden Rule**, pupils begin to understand how other people might feel by putting themselves in other people's shoes.

### Compliments

Pupils learn about the four different types of compliments

- Ways people look
- Things people have
- Things people do
- The way people are

Pupils practice giving compliments to their peers and themselves through selecting a Pupil of the Day.

They are developing their thinking skills and awareness of how their feelings and behaviours can have either a positive impact on others (complimenting) or a negative impact (NOT OK behaviours).

### **PARENTS TIPS #3**

- Compliment your child,
- Let them see what you think is OK behaviour by pointing it out when you do it or your child does it.
- Praise them for thinking of others, share your feelings.

## Relationship Skills



Pupils learn all about making and keeping friends, good manners and ways to play fairly.

Children who are liked by their peers are

- Cooperative
- Share with others
- Sensitive to the needs and perspectives of others

In PATHS<sup>®</sup>, children develop the skills to initiate interactions with other children, and maintain relationships with them.

### PARENT TIPS #4

- Play games at home which encourage team work and cooperation
- Refer children to the Fair Play Rules during outdoors playtime.
- Mediate problems at home using PATHS<sup>®</sup> approaches and language.
- Model good manners and playing fair
- Praise your children when they use these strategies

## Responsible Decision Making

As we know, the children are taught to control their feelings through the 3 Steps for Calming Down.

However, these approaches are not seen as the final solution to the children's problem.

They promote a reflective opportunity for children to assess their feelings and decide on an action.

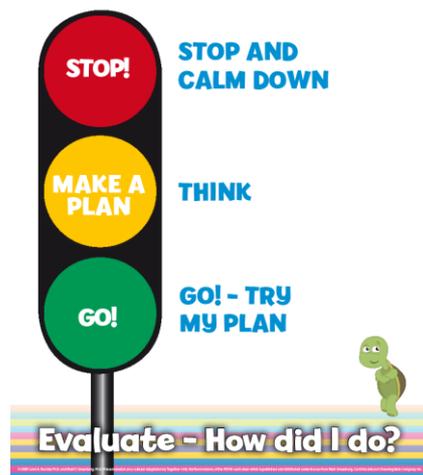
This gives children a sense of confidence that they can control their behaviours, and enables them to begin to learn the language of problem-solving.

Throughout the PATHS<sup>®</sup> programme, children are introduced to making choices and good decisions in a developmental approach, beginning in Year 2 and Year 3 when they learn to think about OK and NOT OK choices.

In Years 4, 5 and 6 there is a greater emphasis on Making Good Decisions and Problem-Solving Skills.

Between Year 2 and Year 4, pupils learn how to use the Control Signals to help solve their problems.

## Control Signals



In Year 5 and Year 6, pupils learn an 11 step Problem Solving Strategy.



### PARENT TIPS #5

- When problems occur at home, encourage your children to use the PATHS<sup>®</sup> Problem-Solving Steps
- Mediate problems at home using PATHS<sup>®</sup> approaches and language.
- Model good problem solving
- Praise your children when they use these strategies

## Summary

We are our children's role models so it is important that we model behaviour that we want to see in our children.

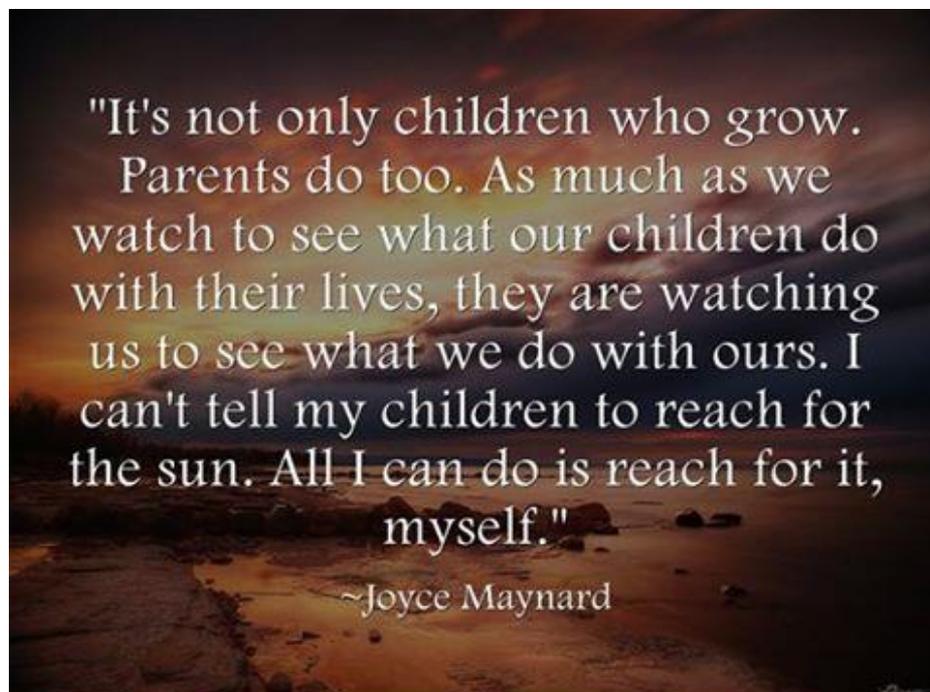
All their behaviour is communication ~ we may not be able to alter the underlying feelings, but we can change what the child does with these feelings.

In order to model effectively, we need to teach children alternative ways of coping with their emotions.

Adults are really important in using indirect or inductive strategies in order to aid this social-emotional skill development.

These strategies include:

- Ignoring low level negative behaviour,
- Providing explanations of behaviour when corrected,
- Encouraging socially appropriate behaviour by emphasising the social impact it has on others.



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