

Belonging

Find somewhere for the child to belong

It is important to help improve your students' sense of belonging and help them to identify a safe place or group where they can go when they are feeling vulnerable. Encourage them to have the right people in place to support them so that they feel protected.

Help them understand their place in the world

Value and welcome every student in your tutor group and encourage them to develop their own individuality and explore their diversity. Encourage students to understand their roots and why it is important to identify where they have come from.

Tap into good influences

Help students identify what qualities make a good friendship. Explore with them how positive role models can make a difference to someone's life. Encourage a student to think about developing a relationship with a role model. This could be someone the student already knows like a teacher, club organiser or an older student.

Keep relationships going

Help students to consider why it is important to have good relationships and why it is important to maintain them. Keeping relationships going can help students have a sense of stability and constancy in their lives and this in turn will help them feel more resilient.

The more healthy relationships the better

It is important to help students increase the number of good influences in their lives so they outweigh the bad ones. Encourage students to identify what makes a good relationship and whether they could develop those qualities themselves so that they could then have better healthy relationships.

Take what you can from relationships where there is some hope

Help students to positively expand their network of friends. Students need to consider different types of friendships and relationships that meet different needs. Encourage students to see that relationships are not just about building friendships – relationships can be built through activities or events which can lead to something good.

Get together people you can count on

Help students to identify people who can help and support them and be a network of support. Encourage students to think about how their network of support could help them cope when they are going through a hard time.

Belonging involves responsibilities and obligations too

Students who have appropriate roles and responsibilities, including running errands and doing odd jobs, have a chance of developing positive self-esteem and a sense of being able to make their own mark on what happens in the world. Helping students identify their responsibilities and obligations can make them feel a sense of belonging.

Focus on good times and places

It is important to encourage students to remember the good events that have happened and to revisit them. They are a reminder that, despite the difficult things, there are lots of good things too. 'Bottling up' good experiences can help students reconnect to people in their lives who have had some degree of healthy relationship with them. Helping students visualise and picture a favourite memory or place can help students feel safe, calm and more resilient.

Make sense of where the child has come from

Help your students to understand where they have come from. Encourage your students to understand their history and share who they think they are, what their good bits are and how they see the world.

Predict a good experience of someone or something new

Help students take a risk and try new things. Encourage students to set a challenge that will give them a good experience. Get them to plan it do it and review it and this will help them identify what works well and not so well.

Make friends and mix with other children

Even if a student has quite a few negative relationships in their life, forming just one new positive relationship can be powerful. Help students in your tutor group to find out more about what they like doing, their interests and activities. Encourage students to think about someone in their tutor group who might have a similar interest to them and could end up being a good friend.