

Interoceptive differences

Information for young people, parents, carers and schools

Please scan the QR Code to watch our video on interoceptive differences before trying any of these suggestions



Interoception is our body's natural sense that tells us how our body feels; are we too hot, too cold, hungry, thirsty, do we need the toilet or do we feel pain?

Things to help with understanding our body:

- Talk with your child about how their body might be feeling, can they feel their tummy rumbling? What might that mean? How does it feel when their fingers are cold? Tingly? Painful?
- Mindfulness and yoga are activities that can be helpful, especially for the older child
- Talk about our bodies being like a car or steam engine, when does it need to slow down or stop, when might it need more fuel?
- Use charts or drawings to record and draw how things might feel.
- Play games that include running or jumping, How does your heart feel? Can you feel it pumping?
- Talk about how pain is also very helpful. Pain is normal and it's our bodies way of protecting us and keeping us safe.

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Practical suggestions to help:

- Use charts that include the weather types, eg its snowy today, we need warm clothes. (we have created a template for you to use on the webpage)
- Have pictures or written reminders on the wall to help remind young people to use the toilet if this is an area of difficulty.
- Smart timers and watches can also be useful to remind and prompt an older child or young person.

How can school can help:

- Does the young person need a toilet pass or symbol so that they can visit the toilet when they need to
- Younger children may need school staff to be extra vigilant if they fall and don't always recognise pain. Help them to start recognising that a bruise or bump may be a result of them hurting themselves.
- School staff may need to prompt children and young people to take off or put on a jumper or coat according to the weather.
- Children may need a prompt to visit the toilet or have a snack at break time

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