

## FEELIT CHECK-IN

### WHAT?

The FEELIT CHECK IN is a fundamental part of the programme, creating a window, twice a day where children (and adults in the setting) come together to 'check-in' with their feelings.

### WHEN?

Ideally done at the start of the day or at natural break periods to be seen as part of the daily routine.

### HOW?

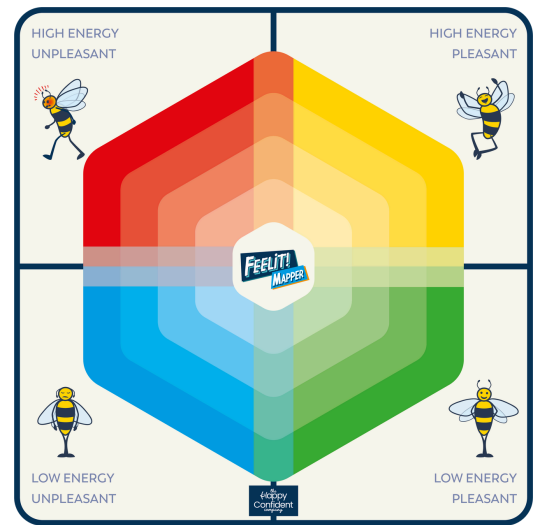
- Touch in on the mapper
- Blue tac names or pictures to the mapper
- Share your 'colour' when asked
- Express your feeling in words
- Hold up a coloured token (more ideas overleaf)

## WHY DOES IT MATTER?

The FEELIT CHECK IN provides a space for children to reflect on their feelings, reinforcing that feelings are temporary, and helping them identify the link between thoughts, feelings and behaviours.

The check-in helps children develop a greater sense of self-awareness and find it easier to express themselves in a helpful way.

Over time, as they become more adept, and can acknowledge the energy level and pleasantness of their feelings, they will learn to understand the cause and affect of their feelings and actions, taking greater responsibility for their behaviours, and learning to self-regulate.



## THE SCIENCE...

Numerous scientific studies and scholarly articles have been carried out on the activity in the brain relating to the 'amygdala response' – our brain's way to manage stress, which will result in a fright, fight or freeze response.

The ability for children to self-regulate is hard because their executive functions are not fully developed. However, there is a way to 'trick' the prefrontal cortex (responsible for executive decisions) into calming the dysregulated response, and that is by acknowledging and naming our feelings.

Dr Dan Siegel, psychiatrist, professor and the founding co-director of the Mindful Awareness Research Center at UCLA, coined the phrase 'Name It to Tame It' and proved that naming our emotional states re-activates the prefrontal cortex when we have big, uncontrolled feelings.

He discovered that the action of consciously labelling these BIG feelings triggers a physical response, sending a signal to the brain to send soothing neurotransmitters to the amygdala, calming us down, and helping us feel more in control.

## THE BENEFITS



### IDEAS

Here are some ways to help children check in with how they are feeling at nursery.

1

Thumbs up, thumbs down.

2

Hold up a coloured sign to reflect a quadrant of the FEELIT Mapper.

3

Move a photo of themselves/a name label onto the appropriate quadrant of the FEELIT Mapper as they enter the setting.

4

Move a photo of themselves/a name label onto a named feeling on a wall display. This could be combined with a self registration process.

5

Use lolly sticks with names on and pupils place their stick in a pot representing how they are feeling. Use the Happy Confident Bees to represent these feelings.

6

If you have set up your classroom with coloured zones based on feelings, as children enter the classroom they could choose an activity to start, in the relevant colour zone for how they are feeling.

7

Create a feelings wall or chart and pupils can place named wooden pegs on the feeling matching how they feel.



9

During the register, pupils state how they are feeling - this could even be just a simple acknowledgment of high/low energy, pleasant/unpleasant rather than a specific feeling.

10

During the register, pupils say how they are feeling and what feeling they would like to feel (if appropriate) - this could then spark conversation about how they are going to transition.

11

During registration, pupils write how they are feeling on mini-whiteboards and hold them up. They could also use simple emojis, or colours to represent their feelings.

12

Pupils place their name on the FEELIT Mapper as they enter the classroom (ideal for older pupils who have grasped the nuances in the Mapper).

13

Have a 'My Morning Mood' activity set up for pupils to complete when they arrive at school. This could be extended to include reasons for their feeling, or space to draw something. Pupils could set intentions for the day as they become more familiar with this.

Just as you want to see where students are at when they start their day, it is also helpful to understand how they feel as the day goes on and at the end of the day. Repeat the check in after lunch to assess how things have changed, improved, worsened.

You can use one of the more simple methods for pupils to tell how they feel about their day as the school day is ending.

CLINICIAN  
APPROVED

TEACHER  
ENDORSED

LOVED BY  
CHILDREN