



Finding me

Information for parents and carers

Hamish & Milo is a programme which gives children the opportunity to be involved in a range of activities about a particular theme of emotional wellbeing as part of a small group. We are delighted to be able to welcome your child to the group.

In this theme, we look at sadness. We are very aware that this can be a sensitive and personal experience, and that sadness is something we can all feel at times. It's important for us to understand what it is, why we might feel it and learn how to look after ourselves and others with care, compassion, empathy and kindness.

Sometimes we know what we are sad about and the sadness can pass, but at other times it stays within us and we can become 'lost in sadness'.

Helping your child

We recognise that you as parents and carers know your child best and we want to involve you in the thinking about how best to support your child. We encourage you to speak with a pastoral member of the team in school if you would like to.

When children feel deep sadness, it's often due to an experience that has been too hard or painful for them to manage and they haven't been able to speak about their pain. They need help to reflect on and tell their story and feel heard before it becomes too deeply internalised.

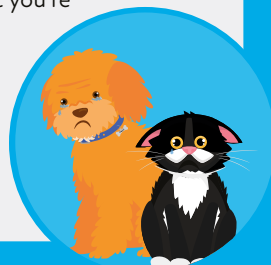
When this happens, we are not really sure where the feeling is coming from or what it is connected to.

Sometimes if we have experienced hurt, loss or pain, we can be left with a deeper internal sadness that can get blocked. If this happens, we need time to think, reflect and be supported to release it.

Sadness is something we all feel at times. It's important to understand why we might feel it and learn how to look after ourselves and others with care and kindness.

We encourage you to talk with your child about their experiences of being in this group and about the activities they have been involved in to support them.

We also recognise that you're often doing much of what we suggest, but hope it will be helpful for your child to join the group and share in the sessions.



Some suggestions

Notice and recognise how your child may be feeling and use language like:

"I can see that..."

"I'm noticing that..."

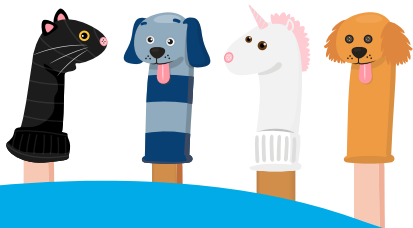
Listen and validate their feelings:

"Sadness can feel a very lonely place."

"It can feel dark and bleak."

Be conscious to show kindness and reassurance, respond with empathy:

"It is good to allow yourself to cry if you feel sad."



"I'm listening..."

"It's important to talk to someone who cares."

"Crying is important as it lets the sad and hurt feelings out."

"Sometimes when you are sad you can feel confusing feelings."

"We can sometimes feel angry and mad as well as sad at the same time."

"Our feelings do change and won't always feel the same."

As part of the 'Finding me' group, your child will be involved in 10 weekly sessions.

These engaging and practical activity sessions will help the children to understand why we feel sad, how sadness might present and how we can take care of ourselves and others.

Sock puppets

An expressive, interactive and hands-on way to engage

For each of the sessions, we use sock puppets to help the children talk about and share their feelings. Your child will make their own sock puppet to use in each session as part of this group.

You may like to make one at home too as a way of helping your child to talk about their feelings or just for fun! Sometimes it's easier for them to tell you what they're thinking about through describing the puppet's feelings or situations.



The children will also receive their own journal to reflect on the sessions as they move through the programme, 'reward' stickers and a certificate!

Here we outline all the programme activities, along with suggestions of what you might like to do or say to support your child at home.

Session and overview	Ways to help
Session 1: Caring, safe hands Finding who cares and supports us.	Talk to your child about who they go to for reassurance at school or when not at home. Talk about who in your family is there for them.
Session 2: Images of sadness Drawing a representation of feelings.	Encourage your child to express how they feel and recognise the range of feelings we have. Help them to put words to sensations as well as feelings, e.g. numb, sad, angry, lost, hurt, upset.
Session 3: Broken dreams Thinking about disappointment and how we manage it.	Talk to your child about how they have managed feelings of disappointment and how all things pass in time.
Session 4: Masquerade! A mask-making activity and opportunity to understand feelings that mask sadness.	Talk to your child about what other feelings may come with or mask sadness. You may like to make a mask at home too!
Session 5: Understanding sadness Exploring what happens in our bodies and brains when we feel sad.	Talk with your child about what they know about what happens to their body and brain when they feel sad.
Session 6: Bubbles of kindness Knowing what to say and what to do when someone is sad.	Sharing time to talk about feelings is important and validating and acknowledging the feeling of sadness is healthy, too. Help your child if they are sad to notice and name the feeling, rather than trying to brush over or dismiss it.
Session 7: Expressions of clay Using clay in an exploratory way to create a scenario about sadness.	Encourage your child to share or talk to you about their thoughts and feelings but also allow them privacy and self-reflection time.
Session 8: My imaginary safe place A mindfulness activity that calms, regulates and helps be in the present moment.	Practise mindfulness activities or visualisations with your child. There are lots of resources online but a helpful website is www.relaxkids.com
Session 9: Miniature nature garden Creating a miniature garden as a therapeutic and enriching activity.	Create a special garden area at home with your child. Alternatively, you could create an indoor garden in a box or tray and plant some seeds together.
Session 10: Rainbow of emotions Recognising the feelings we experience and to know things change. Sadness will pass and we can find hopefulness.	Talk to your child about their hopes and dreams and encourage them to do things that they enjoy.

If you feel worried about your child and their wellbeing, talk to someone at school so that you can share ideas.



Sensation & Emotion Cards

These cards are a great way to help children put language to sensations and emotions, to help regulate their feelings and increase self-confidence. Our unique cards consist of 60 different emotions, guidance and 20 activities.



Hamish & Milo Pals

Our Hamish and Milo Pals are precious cuddly friends that help children to feel comforted, cared about and listened to. Perfect to snuggle and they are great fun too.

Find out more at hamishandmilo.org

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