Bounce Back Unit

Humour

PARENT INFORMATION: - HUMOUR
Enjoying a laugh with others is a unique human bond that helps us connect with others. Finding something funny about a difficult situation can also help us to feel more hopeful. Humour helps us to gain a sense of perspective on our problems, because it can throw a little light on an otherwise dark situation. It reminds us that life goes on. It allows us to release the tension created by strong and uncomfortable feelings such as sadness, disappointment, anxiety and anger. Having a laugh also helps us to stay healthy and well because of the changes that laughter creates in our bodies. The use of laughter in children’s hospital wards is an example of how humour can help us cope and deal with hard times.

Key messages to communicate to your child about humour

Humour helps us to stay healthy.
Laughter helps our body to fight disease and illness. Humour is like exercise for our mind and our feelings.

Humour can help you to feel better.
Having a laugh and finding the funny side of a situation can help you feel a little bit better when you are feeling unhappy, sad or worried, or when things are difficult.

You can use laughter and humour to help someone else feel a little bit better.
You can cheer someone up when they have a problem, or they are feeling sad or worried, by being funny in a nice gentle way. Stop doing it if they don’t like it.

Humour should not be used to pretend that you don't feel sad or worried.
Even though laughter can help you feel better when you have a problem, you still need to try to solve the problem, or deal with the unhappy feeling. Laughter doesn’t make problems go away. It just helps you to cope with them a little better.

Humour shouldn't be used to hurt someone's feelings.
It’s unkind to laugh at someone else’s problems or bad luck, or make fun of the way another person looks, thinks, speaks or acts.

What can you do to help your child learn about humour?

- Share funny songs or movies and TV shows with your child. This is a great way to connect and enjoy each other’s company.
- Read funny stories or poems to your child and enjoy the humour together.
- Share riddles and jokes that don’t rely on put-downs or insulting humour.
- Help your child learn how to tell a riddle or joke well.
- Encourage your child to make a funny card, drawing or banner to cheer up a family member or a friend who is sick or having a difficult time.
- Create opportunities for your child to have fun and some laughs with their friends (e.g. when your child has friends around to play you could show a funny movie, encourage a joke-telling session, play silly or fun games, provide funny dress-ups or encourage them to put on a funny skit).
- Point out to your child when they are using humour in an inappropriate way (e.g. to put down someone such as their younger brother or sister, or to trivialise something important, or to deny a problem or a feeling they are having). Discuss this with them.