



# The Wellness Project

## Teacher Guide

### An Introduction to Your Planner Program

## Welcome to the Wellness Project Student Planner!

COVID-19 put students' mental health in the spotlight. Yet, before the pandemic, it was already at a crisis level. Studies show that poor mental health impacts students' ability to learn, which is why we created the Wellness Project student planners. Students in grades 1-12 should have easy access to resources that support their mental well-being so they can come to school focused and ready to learn.

### About the Planner

The planner will help your students:

- Track and priorities assignments homework, and tests
- Set and work toward goals
- Learn information, skills, and strategies that support
- their mental well-being

The planner will help you:

- Keep students organized and accountable for their responsibilities
- Share students' learning with families and maintain home-to-school communication
- Provide students with easy access to resources that support their mental health and wellness

You can look forward to discussing these topics with students throughout the year:

- Mental Wellness
- Feelings/Emotions
- Worry/Anxiety
- Physical Health
- Friendship/Relationships
- Growth Mindset
- Resilience
- Gratitude
- Technology/Social Media
- Self-Confidence
- Communication
- Asking for Help

### Included in the Planner

The student planner has a wealth of information just waiting to be discovered.

### Planning

The planning process in the student planner is a four-step method that teaches students how to think, record, act, and check for planning and time-management success. Explore the process to see the ways you can support students' development of these important skills.

### Wellness Content

**Monthly Learning Pages:** Each month, students are provided with important information, skills, or strategies related to the monthly theme.

**Monthly Journal Pages:** Research shows that journaling can have a positive impact on mental wellness. Each month includes a flexible space for students to write or draw, as well as a wellness-focused journaling prompt.

**Monthly Activity Pages:** Lively activity pages encourage students to apply what they've learned about the monthly theme, helping them create personal connections with important wellness topics.

**Weekly Content:** Intriguing and fun content aims to help students dive deeper into the monthly themes and includes positive affirmation quotes, interesting facts, and helpful information and strategies.



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### Implementing Your Planner Program

Incorporating the planner into your busy schedule was designed to be easy and flexible. Review the steps below at your convenience to get started!

#### STEP 1: Familiarize yourself with the materials

- Review the sections in this guide for a quick orientation to the planner's content and features. If you want to know more, there are additional resources online.
- An Introduction to Your Planner Program (page 1)
- Planner's Monthly Themes and Learning Outcomes (page 3)

#### STEP 2: Define your purpose and goals

Review the list below to help define your goals for using the planner in your class, and add some goals of your own.

- |   |                                |
|---|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improve academic performance       | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improve home-school communication  | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Track homework                     | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage accountability           | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improve test-taking skills/results | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teach goal setting                 | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teach time management              | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |

#### STEP 3: Plan how and when you will engage students in the planner's content

The planner's flexibility provides several options for its use. Break the content into sections to use daily, weekly, or monthly. Lead students through the content or ask them to work through it at their own pace.

A few ideas for using the planner!

##### Monthly InFocus Pages:

Spotlight the monthly themes in the planner throughout the year. Monthly implementation can be achieved all in one lesson or broken into smaller lessons throughout the month.

##### Weekly Activities:

Deepen students' understanding of the theme through weekly activities. Have students complete the activities once a week as a warm-up, an early finisher activity, or homework.

##### Planner Resource Pages:

At the beginning of the year, refer students to the pages at the back of the planner and explain that they can be used in various classes.



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## Monthly Themes & Learning Outcomes

The chart provides an overview of the planner's themes and learning outcomes to assist you in your planning process.

MONTH	THEME	LEARNING OUTCOME
AUG.	Mental Wellness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduction to The Wellness Project</li><li>• Explore mental wellness as a life-long journey</li><li>• Explore the definition of mental wellness</li></ul>
SEP.	Growth Mindset	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consider the importance of a growth mindset and the impact on mental wellness</li><li>• Explore the differences between fixed and growth mindsets</li><li>• Consider ways thought patterns influence mental well-being</li></ul>
OCT.	Gratitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consider the role gratitude plays in mental wellness</li><li>• Explore ways to incorporate mindfulness into daily practices</li></ul>
NOV.	Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explore strategies and techniques that help develop resilience</li><li>• Consider the impact resiliency has on mental well-being</li><li>• Examine ways to reframe mistakes as opportunities</li></ul>
DEC.	Feelings/ Emotions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consider the way feelings/emotions impact thoughts, actions, and attitudes</li><li>• Explore what feelings look and feel like</li><li>• Examine the complexities of emotions and consider self-regulation strategies</li></ul>
JAN.	Worry/ Anxiety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explore the role worry and anxiety play in students' lives</li><li>• Examine ways worry/anxiety can manifest physically</li><li>• Learn strategies to help manage worrisome or anxious feelings</li></ul>
FEB.	Friendships/ Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Examine the role healthy relationships play in overall mental well-being</li><li>• Explore ways to be a good friend and make good friend choices</li><li>• Consider conflict-resolution strategies and characteristics of healthy/unhealthy relationships</li></ul>
MAR.	Physical Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consider the connection between physical and mental health</li><li>• Explore the impact diet and exercise can have on mental wellness</li><li>• Learn strategies to incorporate fitness and nutrition into daily life</li></ul>
APR.	Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Focus on the role feedback, criticism, and compliments play in mental wellness</li><li>• Explore ways to give constructive criticism, as well as take and apply feedback</li></ul>
MAY	Asking for Help	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Examine the importance of asking for help when it's needed</li><li>• Consider when to get help and why, as well as the people or resources to access to get help</li></ul>
JUN.	Technology/ Social Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consider how music, television, video games, and social media impact mental wellness</li><li>• Explore ways to stay safe online</li><li>• Examine the impact messages and images have on mental wellness</li></ul>
JUL.	Self-Confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Examine the role self-confidence plays in mental wellness</li><li>• Explore ways to strengthen self-confidence</li></ul>





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### Extend the Learning of Your Planner Program

Monthly tips and ideas help advance the goals of the planner and make the planner content come alive in the classroom. All tips and ideas are simple, adaptable, and require little-to-no prep time.

#### For Lower Grade Levels

##### REINFORCE: Mental Wellness

- Begin a class discussion about the little things that support mental wellness. Describe something that helped your day start well, such as getting your materials ready for school last night. Explain how that helps you avoid stress. Ask students to share what helped their day start right. Talk about how actions support mental wellness.

##### REINFORCE: Growth Mindset

- Play a game of negative to positive to encourage positive self-talk. Provide negative statements and ask students how they could turn them around. Examples: I'm not good enough to...; My ideas are not good; I'm not strong; I don't understand....

##### REINFORCE: Gratitude

- Have students create a gratitude page (like a gratitude jar) in a journal or planner. Have them make a list of things they are thankful for that they can turn to on days when they are feeling down.

##### REINFORCE: Resilience

- Ask students to think of words they can use that show they can bounce back when they have a problem. E.g., I deserve to feel good about myself! Discuss their choices and write their favourites at the top of the whiteboard to remind them that when things are hard, they can handle them.

##### REINFORCE: Feelings/Emotions

- Have students take turns naming feelings and have the rest of the class determine a colour to represent that feeling. Make a list. Have students draw a picture using as many of the colours as they can. Display the pictures around the classroom if you have space for them.

##### REINFORCE: Worry/Anxiety

- Ask students to offer situations that make them feel worried or anxious. Write them on the board. Ask for suggestions about a kind of creature that would eat their worries. What would it look like? How would they get the worries to eat? You may like to draw the creature on the board, with the worries disappearing into its...mouth?

##### REINFORCE: Friendship/Relationships

- Have students draw themselves on paper or provide sheets with a generic gingerbread person shape. Ask them to label and explain the parts that help them be a good friend, such as mind = showing respect; arms = giving hugs. If time allows, lead a discussion of how important friends are to our well-being.

##### REINFORCE: Physical Health

- Discuss the ways good nutrition supports mental health. All the vitamins, minerals, and proteins that make our bodies healthy also support mental health. Breakfast is particularly important for growing children. Have students draw their favourite healthy breakfast. If space permits, post their pictures in the classroom as a reminder.

##### REINFORCE: Communication

- If resources permit, show students the Sesame Street video of Mark Ruffalo and Murray explaining empathy. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9\\_1Rt1R4xbM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_1Rt1R4xbM) Continue the "what if" scenarios by suggesting situations where empathy would help communication. What could we say or do for someone else?

##### REINFORCE: Asking for Help

- Play charades! Choose 2 or 3 students to act out the feelings you'll whisper to them one at a time (e.g., sad, scared, confused). Ask the class to figure out the feeling and then discuss whether it's okay to ask for help when they feel that way and whom they should ask.

##### REINFORCE: Technology/Social Media

- Lead a class discussion about the types of things that are okay and not okay to share online, such as when they're playing a game with someone they don't know. Suggest options or situations, e.g., "can we say hi"; "should we tell someone our full name"; or "can we share our favourite type of ice cream."

##### REINFORCE: Self-Confidence

- Ask students what is worse: to be afraid to try or to try and fail? Lead the discussion to having the self-confidence and bravery to keep trying, knowing you'll get there. To finish the discussion, have students draw themselves as a hero with the confidence to try hard things.



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#### For Higher Grade Levels

##### REINFORCE: Mental Wellness

- Lead a class discussion to define mental wellness. Offer one or two suggestions—a state of being where you can cope well with challenges or where you are able to recognize your abilities. Ask students to make suggestions and write them on the board. Have them reach a class consensus. Post their definition in the classroom.

##### REINFORCE: Growth Mindset

- Self-awareness supports mental wellness. Have students assess themselves by answering questions you provide on worksheets or orally. Encourage them to think carefully and answer honestly. When do you: Feel strongest? Feel weakest? Learn best? Feel stress? Need help?

##### REINFORCE: Gratitude

- Ask students to reflect for a few minutes on the best things in their lives. Have the students create an inspirational graphic or saying to represent what they are most grateful for. If space is available, post them in or near the classroom or encourage students to display them at home.

##### REINFORCE: Resilience

- Have students work individually or in groups to create a list of “okays,” such as “It’s okay to feel your feelings” or “It’s okay to ask for help.” If time permits have each group share one or two “okays” with the class.

##### REINFORCE: Feelings/Emotions

- Discuss sample feelings and what contributes to them— happy, sad, angry, jealous. Assure students that there is no right or wrong answer to what creates their feelings and that the answer will remain private. Ask students to write down their biggest feeling and what they think goes into making that feeling.

##### REINFORCE: Worry/Anxiety

- Ask students how they deal with worry and anxiety. Have the class practice some of the strategies offered, with the person suggesting the strategy leading the class. Or lead the class in strategies you are comfortable with—yoga, meditation, a breathing exercise, a distraction, such as counting backward by 3s from 124.

##### REINFORCE: Friendship/Relationships

- Have students write “FRIEND” as an acrostic down the side of a sheet of paper and write a positive word, phrase, or line of poetry for each letter. Example: F is for the fun we have. If time allows, lead a discussion of the importance of friends to our mental wellness.

##### REINFORCE: Physical Health

- Poll the class about how students feel when eating a healthy breakfast versus skipping breakfast. Ask about feeling tired or having brain fog versus feeling ready for the day or doing well on a test. Have students prepare a menu of their ideal healthy breakfasts.

##### REINFORCE: Communication

- Have students think about all the times in a day they communicate face-to-face with someone. Ask them to write down the ten words they use the most to communicate with others. Poll students to determine the most common words used by the class. Discuss whether those words mean the same thing to each person.

##### REINFORCE: Asking for Help

- Have the class brainstorm ideas of situations in which they may need to ask for help, both practical and emotional, and to list the people they can turn to for help. Examples: they see someone bullied; they need help with a subject; they feel stressed.

##### REINFORCE: Technology/Social Media

- Ask students to name social media words and abbreviations —selfie, texting, tweet, photobomb, unlike/unfollow/unfriend, lol. Discuss how these words didn’t exist before social media. Divide the class into groups of 4 or 5 to invent a new social media word for something that shows kindness. Examples: sprt (support), helpie

##### REINFORCE: Self-Confidence

- Ask students to think about this statement (paraphrased from Edison): “I haven’t failed. I’ve just tried 10,000 ways that won’t work.” Lead a discussion about trying again and again. Suggest that this requires self-confidence. Ask students if they agree and why or why not.