

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH Support

Early years mental health is about children feeling **safe, held, and cherished.**

Wellbeing is built through daily, responsive care - like crouching to a child's level - acts as an ingredient for brain resilience.

Early Years Detectives:

Children lack the vocabulary for complex emotions like "anxiety," so they communicate through behaviour. Practitioners must act as detectives:



QUIET CONNECTION

Sharing space without demands can build trust for overwhelmed children.

FACT-BASED NOTES

Record objective snippets to track a child's story and learn from their behaviour.

Relationships and Rituals:

Consistent bonds and routines provide a vital safety net for healthy mental development.

SPOTTING DISTRESS

Such as lingering by coat pegs or unease during daily transitions.

3-Minute Anchor

Greet every child brightly by name within 3 minutes of arrival to build a sense of belonging.

Predictable Rituals

Use transition routines, like "goodbye songs" as comfort blankets for anxious children.

The Key Person

Focus on deep individual knowledge, like a child's cup preference, to foster safety.

Practitioners are an early-warning system. **Partner with parents** and approach with gentle curiosity. Simple observations can start important conversations.

This is the living practice of the EYFS framework. Guarding one-on-one moments and responding with patience ensures every child feels they deeply and truly belong.