



Wellbeing Activities for Learning at Home





Introduction

Supporting wellbeing

PEPS Supports the wellbeing of children and young people is an important part of what our schools do every day. It is especially important to ensure that all our PEPS's students' wellbeing is looked after in times of uncertainty and stress, such as during the current Corona virus pandemic.

Supporting students' wellbeing while they are learning at home will not only help them feel happier and less anxious, it will also help to have positive interactions with the rest of the family and to learn more effectively.

Using the wellbeing activities

The activities we designed to give parents and carers suggested ways of supporting your child's wellbeing as part of the learning at home school day. Although this is designed to be used with all school-aged children and young people, some of them are best suited to Primary or Secondary aged students.

A picture against the title of each activity lets you know whether the activity is best suited for:



Children and young people
of all ages;



Primary aged children;



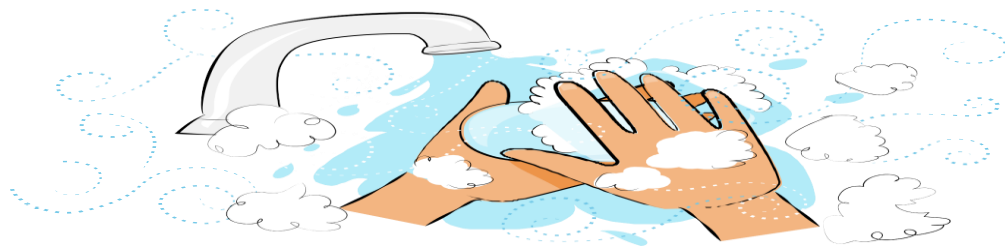
Secondary aged children;

While some activities may be well-suited for children and young people with disability including Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), specific resources for how to support the wellbeing of children and young people with ASD can be found on website at <https://education.qld.gov.au/curriculum/learning-at-home/inclusion/autism>.

Description of each type of wellbeing activity

1. Mindfulness Activities
2. Gratitude
3. Physical Activities
4. Young Person Self-Care Activities

Mindfulness Activities



Mindful hand washing

Washing your hands is always important and is especially important at the moment to keep you healthy and safe. Since we are washing our hands so often, it is great time to practice mindfulness and to be in the present moment.

Instructions:

1. Turn on the water and listen to the sound it makes as it comes out of the tap and goes down the drain.
2. As you put soap on your hands, think in your head or say out loud what it feels like.
3. As you rub the soap together in your hands, notice how slippery it is. Do you see bubbles coming up between your fingers?
4. Now remember to wash your hands for 20 seconds. While you are doing this:
 - a. focus on your hands and what the soap and water feel like
 - b. listen to the sound of the water and any other sounds you can hear around you.

5. As you wash the soap off your hands, watch the bubbles and the water going down the drain – imagine our worries going down the drain with the water.
6. As you dry your hands on a hand towel, notice the feeling of the towel on your hands – is it soft? Or scratchy?
7. When your hands are dry, take a moment to think. Now your hands are clean, you are ready for your need task. How does that make you feel?
8. If you are still worried about anything, talk to someone in your house hold or plan to call a friend at the end of the learning day.

Mindful breathing



This exercise can be used as relaxing and thoughtful way to start the day, end the day or help relax and calm your child.

Tip: find somewhere quiet or put on some relaxing music in the background. For younger students, this can be done with a parent guiding them. For older students, it can be done alone or with others.

1. Find a comfortable place to sit or to lie down on your back.
2. Place your hands on your stomach.
3. Take a big deep breath - in through your nose and out through your mouth. Do this three times and then gently close your eyes.
4. Continue to slowly breathe in through your nose and count 1, 2, 3 in your head (or out loud).



5. Hold your breath and count 1, 2, 3 in your head (or out loud).
6. Slowly breathe out through your mouth and count 1, 2, 3 in your head (or out loud).
7. Count 1, 2, 3 in your head (or out loud) and then breathe in again through your nose.
8. Repeat these steps for five minutes and think about the questions below while you are breathing.
9. When you have finished, gently open your eyes. Have a look at the room around you and think about how you feel. Do you feel different compared to before the activity?

Questions to think about

- What parts of your body move when you breathe in?
- Do different parts of your body move when you breathe out?
- Can you feel your hands moving?
- What does it feel like when you breathe in – where does the breath go?
- What does your breath sound like?
- What other sounds can you hear while you're breathing?
- Does your body feel heavy or light while you're breathing?



Test your senses



An excellent activity to engage the five senses and notice the difference in how each sense is engaged.

Tip: This works best in a quiet and comfortable place. Young students will need a parent to guide them while older students may do this independently.

1. Slowly breathe in through your nose and count 1, 2, 3 in your head.
2. Hold the breathe for 1,2,3.
3. Slowly breathe out through your mouth and count 1,2,3

See

1. Look around the room you are in.
2. Notice 5 things as you look around. Try to pick out things you would not normally notice.
3. Focus on the shapes, colors and different patterns that surround you.
4. Write down the 5 things you can see.

Feel

1. Now, close your eyes. Bring your attention to the things you are currently feeling.
2. Can you focus on 4 things you can feel?
 - a. Where are your hands? Are they touching anything? What does it feel like?
 - b. Can you feel your shirt against your skin?
 - c. What about your body? Can you feel where you are tense or relaxed?
 - d. Can you feel the air around you? Is it warm or cold? Is there a breeze?
 - e. Can you feel what you are sitting on? Is it soft or hard? Wet or dry? Smooth or bumpy? Cold or hot?

Smell

1. Keep your eyes closed.
2. Focus on 2 things you can smell.
 - a. What different scents can you pick up around you?
 - b. Are there strong smells around you? What are they?
 - c. Are there familiar or new smells?
 - d. Do you like the smells?

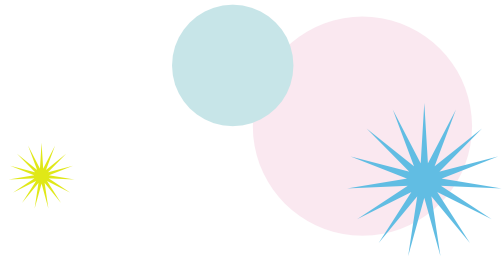
Taste

1. Keep your eyes closed.
2. Focus on 1 thing you can taste.
 - a. How your tongue feels resting between your teeth?
 - b. Can you still taste the last thing you ate?
 - c. Can you taste something that you can also smell?

Open your eyes and write down or draw all the things you felt, heard, smelt and tasted.

Hear

1. Keep your eyes closed.
2. Focus on 3 things you can hear.
 - a. What sounds can you hear around you? Can you notice anything different to before?
 - b. Can you hear noises in other rooms?
 - c. Outside?



Gratitude

Gratitude Journal



Young students will need a parent to help them and to write things down while older students may do this independently.

1. Select your journal.
Pick out a journal that looks appealing, or decorate a cheap notebook with cherished pictures of people or things you love and care about.
2. Before writing in a gratitude journal, choose a ritual to repeat every time beforehand.
This might include playing a favorite song or drinking a cup of tea.
3. Express gratitude. A list of gratitude ideas are below.
 - Gratitude journals can take on any desired format. You might:
 - make a gratitude list of items to express gratitude
 - draw images or create a collage of pictures
 - Write a poem to capture and motivate your gratitude.
4. If the moment of gratitude is about someone else, if it is possible, call or message the person at the end of the learning day and tell them why you are grateful for them. This will make you feel good and also make the other person feel valued and improve their wellbeing.

Gratitude ideas

- Somethingsomeonedidforyoutoday
- A person who you love
- Something you like to do
- A talent you have
- Apartofyourbodyyouaregratefulfor
- Somethingthatmadeyoulaughtoday
- A song you like
- A game you like to play
- A new skill you have learned
- A food you like to eat
- A pet that you love
- Somethingyouhavethatyouknowother people don'thave
- A memoryofsomethingyou have done in the past

Gratitude moment



Tip: it may help to write down your gratitude and share it with the person it is about.

- Sit somewhere comfortable.
- Close your eyes.
- Slowly breathe in through your nose and count 1, 2, 3 in your head.
- Hold the breath for 1, 2, 3.
- Slowly breathe out through your mouth and count 1, 2, 3 in your head.
- Repeat this 2 more times.
- Think of something that made you feel grateful today (ideas below)
- Focus on how this thing affects your life or the life of the people around you.
- Focus on how you feel about your gratitude moment.
- Let the feeling grow in your body until you can feel it from your head to your toes.

Physical Activities



Yoga



Yoga is great for stretching and for relaxation. Younger students may only be able to try some of the poses and may need a parent to help them while older students may do this independently.

Caution - it is important to be very careful when trying yoga poses and to not put strain on your neck or back. Yoga should be avoided (or done with extreme caution and under supervision) if you have spinal pain or an injury or chronic condition. Speak to your parent before trying the poses and do not try any poses that cause pain. Just do the best you can in a way that feels safe and comfortable for your body.

1. Ensure that you have enough space around you.
2. Take five minutes to jog on the spot, do arm circles, shoulder rolls and controlled punches.
3. If you have a yoga mat, bring it out and sit in it. If you do not, choose some where it is not a hard surface where you can comfortably lie down.
4. Do each exercise for 60 seconds.

				
Bridge Pose	Tree Pose	Cobra Pose	Cat Pose	Bow Pose
				
Frog Pose	Easy Pose	Butterfly Pose	Sleeping Pose	Chair pose
				
Hero Pose	Boat Pose	Mountain Pose	Happy Baby Pose	Lion Pose

You may be able to find good yoga classes or ideas for poses online – do a search and see what you can find.

Easy Pose

This is the simplest of all poses that you can try – try this before trying any others.

How to do:

- Sit up straight with your legs crossed.
- Place your hands on your knees, palms facing up.
- Balance your weight evenly on the bones of your body you are sitting on.
- Keep your head, neck, and spine aligned all the way along your body.
- Lengthen your spine – without stiffening your neck.
- Relax your feet and thighs.
- Hold this posture for a for 30 seconds.
- Release and change the cross-legged position.



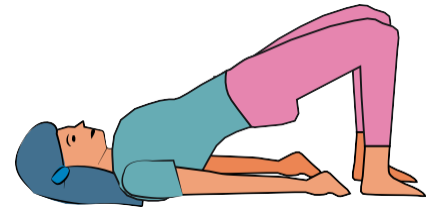
Tip: Use a firm pillow or fold a blanket if you are finding it difficult to sit flat.

Bridge Pose

This pose helps to open and stretch the spine and thighs..

How to do:

- Lie on your back.
- Bend your knees and keep the feet flat on the floor, hip-width apart.
- Your knees and ankles must be in a straight line.
- Place your arms in a resting position beside the body, with the palms downwards.
- Press your feet into the floor, take a deep breath in and lift hips off the floor.
- Balance your body in a way that the arms, shoulders, and feet support your body weight.
- Keep your bottoms squeezed.
- Press down into the arms and shoulders to lift your chest up. Engage your legs and bottom to lift hips higher.
- Hold this posture for as long as you are comfortable and breathe slowly while you are in the pose.
- Exhale and release.





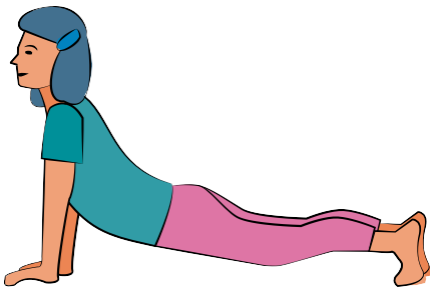
Tree Pose

Establishes strength and balance in the legs, like a tree

How to do:

- Begin the posture with the mountain pose. Legs and back straight, hand by your side. Distribute your weight evenly across both feet.
- Shift your weight to your left foot. Bend your right knee and lift your right foot.
- Place your right foot on your left inner thigh.
- Press your hands together above the head.
- Gaze at a point about 1.5 meters away.
- Hold the position for 30 seconds to a minute.
- Return your hands to your chest and then lower your right leg.
- Repeat it on your left leg.

Tip: If you get unsteady in the beginning while trying to hold your posture, you can stand with your back against a wall.



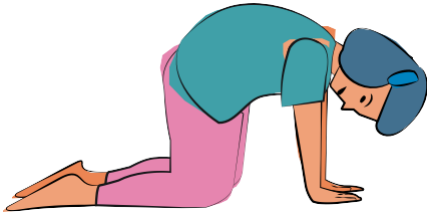
Cobra Pose

This pose promotes strength and flexibility in the back, abs, and strength.

How to do:

- Lie on your belly with the tips of your feet flat on the floor, chin on the floor and palms on either side of the body.
- Inhale as you gently lift your head and chest off the floor. Keep your lower ribs on the floor.
- Pull your shoulders slightly back towards the spine.
- Lift your body into a cobra pose while keeping the chin up. Use your hands for support, but without unnecessary pressure.
- Hold the posture for 15 to 30 seconds, before gently releasing your body to the floor.

Tip: Everybody has different flexibility, so take the stretch slowly. This is a good, morning yoga pose that you can to practice daily.



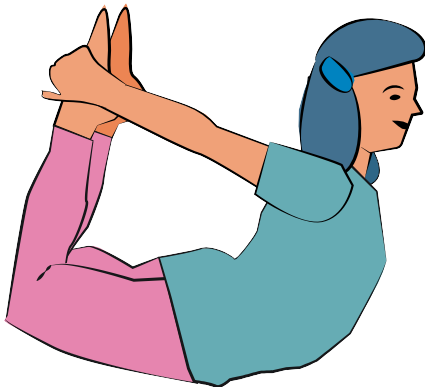
Cat Pose

A gentle pose for the back and core and a great warm up exercise.

How to do:

- Start in a tabletop position. Point your fingers to the top of your mat.
- Your knees should be directly below your hips,
- Your wrists, elbows, and shoulders should be straight and perpendicular to the floor.
- Centre the head in a neutral position with eyes looking downward.
- With an exhalation, carefully round your spine up towards the ceiling.
- Release your head towards the floor without forcing the chin towards the chest.
- Come back to the initial tabletop position while inhaling slowly.

Caution: If you are having difficulty, have someone place a hand above and below your shoulder blades for extra support



Bow Pose

Bend the back like a bow and open the chest and shoulders with the bow pose.

How to do:

- Begin by lying flat on your stomach, with your chin on the mat and hands resting at your side.
- Inhale and bend your knees, bringing your feet towards your hips.
- Reach back with both hands and grasp your ankles.
- Lift your heels towards the ceiling and lift your shoulders, stomach, legs, and hips off the floor while gazing straight ahead.
- Hold the posture for four to five breaths, then lower your knees and release your feet.
- Rest on your stomach.

Caution: Sometimes beginners find it difficult to lift their thighs away from the floor. You can give your legs a little upward boost by lying with your thighs supported on a rolled-up blanket.

Frog Pose

This pose is good for opening your hips and groin muscles

How to do:

- Begin in a tabletop position.
- Make sure your hands are underneath your shoulders and knees are stacked under your hips. Have your ankle in line with your knees. Point your fingers forward.
- Look downwards and focus at a point between your hands.
- Inhale and slowly widen the distance between your knees as much as you can without over stretching. Point your toes away from your body.
- Make sure the ankles and hips are in line with your knees.
- Continue sliding downwards while keeping your palms and elbows flat against the floor, if you can and aren't over stretching.
- Exhale and keep pushing your hips backwards until a stretch is felt.
- Now, hold this position for three to five breaths.
- Come back to the table position again.



Tip: Listen to your body as you slide your knees out and press your hips backward. The stretch should not be painful.

Butterfly Pose

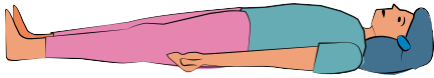
A pose that makes you flutter like a graceful butterfly.

How to do:

- Sit with your spine upright and legs spread out straight.
- From a seated position, bring the bottoms of the feet together with the knees bent out to the sides, and interlace the fingers around the toes.
- While exhaling, gently move your thighs and knees in a downward motion.
- Then start flapping your legs up and down, like the wings of a butterfly.
- The flapping should be slow to start with, and then pick up speed.
- Keep your back flat and the chest open.
- Slow down gradually and then stop.
- Gently release your posture while exhaling.



Caution: If you have tightness in your hips, knees, or groin, sit a blanket under your thighs to prevent pain.

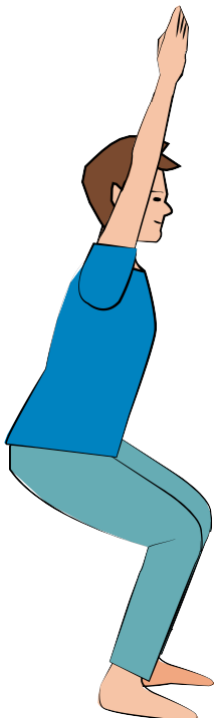


Sleeping Pose

Don't underestimate the art of relaxation. This can be a challenging pose and requires patience. *How to do:*

- Lie on your back with your legs straight and arms at the sides.
- Rest your hands about 15cm away from your body.
- Keep your eyes closed, and palms faced upwards.
- Let your feet drop open.
- Breathe normally while resting your body's weight on the ground.
- Slowly exhale while relaxing and de-stressing all your body parts.
- This is the best relaxing yoga pose for young people.

Tip: If you are uncomfortable lying on your back, place your legs on a chair or supporting your neck with a pillow.



Chair pose

The chair pose works the muscles of the arms and legs, but it also stimulates the diaphragm and heart.

How to do:

- Begin in Mountain Pose. Stand with your feet hip width apart.
- Inhale and raise your arms above your head.
- Bend your knees forward while exhaling; your thighs should be parallel to the floor.
- Your knees will move slightly project over your feet while doing this pose.
- Keep your tailbone down and your lower back long. Shift most of your weight onto your heels.
- Keep your breath steady and easy throughout.
- Keep your gaze forward.
- Retain this posture for as long as comfortable, but not more than a minute.

Caution: Avoid this pose if you are experiencing headaches or insomnia.

Hero Pose

A seated yoga pose that stretches the thighs and ankles.

How to do:

- Begin kneeling on the floor. Sit with your knees together and your feet hip-width apart.
- Sit on your heels with your heels touching your hips. Lower your bottom to sit on the floor between your feet.
- Rest your hands on your knees with your palms facing down.
- Straighten your spine and drop your shoulders down.
- Relax your core while taking deep breaths. Retain your posture for as long as it is comfortable.

Tip: If you cannot sit easily on the floor, sit instead on a rolled up blanket or towel placed between your shins.



Boat Pose

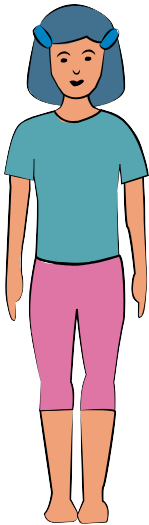
This balancing yoga pose might help you to de-stress and revitalize.

How to do:

- Begin in a seated position with your knees bent and your feet flat on the floor.
- Keep your arms and fingers outstretched in the direction of your toes.
- Inhale and while exhaling, lift your feet off the floor. Keep your knees bent at first.
- Straighten your legs to a 45-degree angle. Take care not to let your lower back sag or chest collapse.
- The weight of your body will solely rest on your hips.
- Your eyes, hands, and toes should align straight.
- Spread your shoulder blades wide and reach out through your fingers, actively engaging your hands.
- Hold your breath and retain the posture for a few seconds.
- Exhale slowly while bringing your body down to the neutral position. And relax.

Caution: This pose should definitely be avoided if you have spinal pain/injury.





Mountain Pose

An active pose that helps improve posture, balance, and stress

How to do:

- Stand straight and tall.
- Spread your legs 10cm apart and spread your toes. Press your weight evenly across both your feet.
- Keep your arms alongside your body.
- Your shoulders must be relaxed and not stiff.
- Raise your arms above your head.
- Hold your posture and breathe slowly.
- Retain as long as comfortable.

Happy Baby Pose

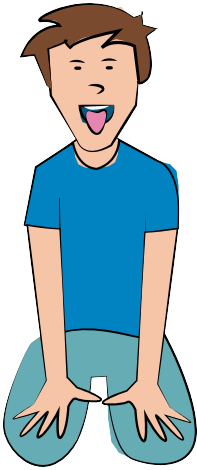
A gentle stretch for the lower back and hamstrings.

How to do:

- Lie on your back with a neutral spine
- Bring your knees toward your chest. Hold your feet with your hands. Ensure that your arms are in front of your stomach.
- Tuck the chin into your chest with the head on the floor. Press your tailbone down into the floor as you press the heels up and pull back with the arms.
- Flex your feet and show the soles of your feet to the ceiling. Draw your shoulders to the back.
- Draw your knees wide apart, as much as comfortable.
- Retain the position for a minute or less, and then release.



Caution: Avoid this pose if you have any knee or ankle injuries.



Lion Pose

This animal pose may help you to de-stress —you may even wish to roar.

How to do:

- Start in a seated position with your hips on your heels.
- Rest your palms on your knees.
- As you inhale, bring your palms to the floor in front of your knees and arch the spine. Stick your tongue out.
- Keep your eyes wide open, exhale through your mouth, and make a sound of a roaring lion.
- Inhale back to the starting position and repeat.

Caution: Be careful if you have a knee injury.

Young person self-care activities

1. Make a music playlist

Music makes feel so better. Hop on to a streaming app or your own music player and make a play list of your favorite songs.

1. You could make a group playlist and ask your friends to add five of their favorite songs as well.
2. If you want to get fancy, you could make several playlists for different moods/vibes (e.g. rainy day, feeling happy, etc.).



3. Learn Something New

Have you wanted to get into drawing or learn a musical instrument? Now's a great time to make a start.

If you want to learn a new language, there are lots of apps or online lessons that help you to learn a language for free —you can access these from your computer or phone.



Incorporate mindfulness practices into everyday tasks

1. Washing the dishes

- When you wash the dishes after dinner, do you usually think about everything you still have to do before you can finally relax?
- Instead, try focusing only on washing the dishes.
- Start by listening to the sink fill up with water.
- Feel the warm water on your hands, and smell the dishwashing liquid.
- When you notice your mind wandering, bring your attention back to your senses.
- What can you see/hear/smell/feel?

2. *Write a 'thank you' list*

- Writing a 'thank you' list is one way to slow down and appreciate the small (and big) things in your life.
- It doesn't need to be long, you could just write down three things you're thankful for.
 - Maybe it's the delicious breakfast you had this morning,
 - the support and love you get from your friends, or
 - The courage you found to speak up for yourself the other day.
- Make it your mission to write three things in a 'thank you' note every day!

3. *Have a quick stretch*

- We sometimes get so caught up in our thoughts that we forget about everything else.
- But when we take a moment to focus on our body, such as by doing some stretching exercises, it gives us a break from our thoughts.
- Take your time, and focus on how your body feels.





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