



Psychoeducation for Children (5–11 Years) on Thoughts, Feelings, and Behaviour

Introduction

Psychoeducation is a structured approach to teaching children about mental health concepts. For children aged 5–11, it focuses on helping them understand the connection between their thoughts, feelings, and behaviours in a developmentally appropriate way.

Purpose of Intervention

The aim is to:

- Increase emotional literacy and self-awareness.
- Help children identify and label their thoughts and feelings.
- Teach children how thoughts influence feelings and behaviours.
- Support emotional regulation and positive behaviour.

Target Audience

This intervention is suitable for:

- Children aged 5–11 years.
- Pupils with social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) needs.
- Children supported through EHC Plans who benefit from structured emotional support.

Who Can Deliver the Intervention

Psychoeducation can be delivered by:

- SENCOs and pastoral staff.
- Teachers and teaching assistants.
- School counsellors and educational psychologists.
- External mental health professionals.

Session Structure

Each session should:

- Begin with a check-in and warm-up activity.
- Introduce a key concept (e.g., identifying feelings, understanding thoughts).
- Use visual aids, stories, and role-play to explore the concept.
- Include reflection and discussion.
- End with a calming or grounding activity.

Frequency and Duration

- Frequency: Weekly or bi-weekly sessions.
- Duration: 30–45 minutes per session.
- Can be delivered in small groups or one-to-one settings.

Key Principles

Effective psychoeducation for children includes:

- Using age-appropriate language and visuals.
- Encouraging active participation and discussion.
- Reinforcing concepts through repetition and practice.
- Creating a safe and supportive environment.
- Linking learning to real-life situations.



Training and Implementation

To implement effectively:

- Staff should receive training in child development and emotional literacy.
- Use structured programmes or resources (e.g., Zones of Regulation, CBT-based tools).
- Collaborate with mental health professionals for guidance.
- Monitor progress and adapt sessions to individual needs.

Evidence and Outcomes

Research shows that psychoeducation can:

- Improve emotional understanding and regulation.
- Reduce behavioural incidents.
- Enhance social skills and peer relationships.
- Support mental wellbeing and resilience.

Feedback

Feedback should be gathered from:

- The child (through drawings, discussions, or check-ins).
- Parents and carers.
- Class teachers and support staff.
- Observations of behaviour and emotional responses.

Further Information and Resources

- Anna Freud Centre: <https://www.annafreud.org>
- Young Minds: <https://www.youngminds.org.uk>
- Zones of Regulation: <https://www.zonesofregulation.com>
- Local CAMHS and educational psychology services

Child-Friendly Activity Ideas

- Feelings Thermometer: Children colour a thermometer to show how strongly they feel different emotions.
- Thought Bubbles: Use cartoon-style bubbles to help children write or draw what they might be thinking in different situations.
- Emotion Charades: Act out different emotions and have children guess them to build emotional vocabulary.
- Story Time Reflection: Read a story and discuss the characters' thoughts, feelings, and behaviours.
- Behaviour Mapping: Use simple diagrams to show how a thought leads to a feeling and then to a behaviour.
- Feelings Journal: Encourage children to keep a journal with drawings or words about their daily emotions.
- Role Play Scenarios: Practice common school situations and explore different responses based on thoughts and feelings.
- Emoji Sorting: Match emojis to different situations and discuss why they fit.