



## MHWP Newsletter

[www.circlesforlearning.co.uk](http://www.circlesforlearning.co.uk)



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October brings a sense of momentum as children settle into routines, relationships deepen & classrooms begin to find their rhythm. It is also an exciting month for Circles for Learning as we celebrate the launch of our new website & open our Licensed Practitioner Training, creating new opportunities for schools to develop emotional literacy, relational understanding, self-awareness & resilience. We are looking for exciting, creative practitioners who want to bring relationships and wellbeing into the heart of the classroom. So if this is you, check out the new training.

This month's newsletter is packed with free, practical resources to support your work with children & young people. You'll find classroom ideas, downloadable activities, evidence-informed insights & reflections designed to help you strengthen relationships, understand behaviour & support emotional wellbeing in everyday school life.

We hope October's newsletter gives you something useful to read, reflect on, download & take straight into your classroom — alongside fresh ideas for creating environments where children feel understood, connected & ready to learn.



## Free Resources for Relationships, emotional literacy & Wellbeing

Explore free, downloadable resources to help you build positive relationships, develop children's emotional literacy and support wellbeing in your classroom.

[DOWNLOAD HERE](#)



## What is Circles for Learning?

Watch our animation and see [Click HERE](#)

# Circles for Learning:

Circles for Learning is an exciting and powerful programme which introduces a parent and their young child to a class of KS1-KS3 children once a month. These amazing visits help children to watch emotions and how they affect our behaviour, relationships in action and the ups and downs of learning. These fun filled sessions are then followed up with activities that help develop emotional literacy, resilience, self-awareness, tolerance, relational understanding and so



much more. Circles for Learning is a unique, evidence-based programme that brings wellbeing to life in the classroom. It has demonstrated a 75% increase in emotional literacy and 74% in social skills. What teachers found After running the Circles for Learning program: \* Emotional literacy increased by 86%. Children were much more able to talk about how they felt and link this to how they behaved. \* Self-regulation improved by 86%. Children learnt a range of strategies to help them regulate how they felt. They also became supportive of other children. \* Social skills improved by 91%. Children became far more tolerant and supportive towards each other and worked hard on understanding and building better relationships \* Empathy grew by 87%. Children listened to each other more and had a better understanding of how our thoughts, feelings, and emotions affect our behaviour

[Click to book an introduction call](#)

[Click to download information](#)



**Circles for Learning is looking for curious, reflective practitioners who want to approach classroom wellbeing differently?**

**Are you a teacher, teaching assistant, ELSA, or nurture practitioner who wants to bring relationships and emotions into the heart of the classroom?**

**If you believe relationships sit at the heart of learning, this training will feel like coming home.**

[Click to watch Circles for Learning in action](#)

# Circles for Learning in Action: Top Tips for Building Belonging in the Classroom.

All teachers who have introduced Circles for Learning into their classrooms have highlighted how it strengthens relationships and helps children feel valued, connected and that they truly belong.

## 1. Create Moments of Connection

Belonging grows through small, repeated experiences. Greet children by name, notice when something has changed and make time for genuine conversations. A simple "I'm pleased you're here" can communicate something powerful: you matter in this classroom.

## 2. Help Children Become Curious About Each Other

Create opportunities for children to listen to different ideas, feelings and perspectives without needing to decide who is 'right'. Use questions such as "What might they be thinking?" or "Could somebody experience that differently?" This builds the relational understanding that sits at the heart of Circles for Learning.

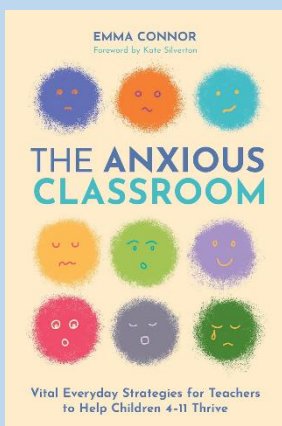
## 3. Make Every Child's Contribution Matter

Look beyond the children who speak first or loudest. Offer different ways to contribute and actively notice the strengths each child brings to the group. Belonging develops when children don't simply feel included — they recognise that the classroom would be different without them.

[CLICK HERE](#) to watch Circles for Learning supporting children

## Staff book recommendation

### The anxious classroom: Vital everyday strategies for Teachers By Emma Connor



Anxiety is one of the biggest challenges facing children in education today, cited as one of the main reasons children do not attend school. While many books help teachers understand mental health, few focus on anxiety - which school staff feel they know the least about.

Emma Connor offers a

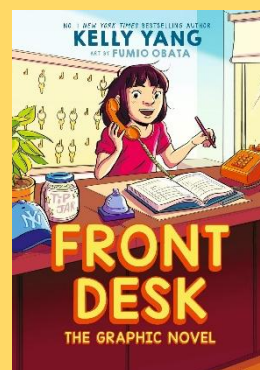
Compassionate practical toolkit for supporting anxious children in school. Drawing on over 20 years of experience, she combines attachment theory, neuroscience, and effective strategies that fit naturally into everyday teaching.

Warm, grounded, and deeply respectful of educators, this book empowers every member of the school community to build emotional safety, strengthen relationships, and create classrooms where children can truly thrive.

## Children & young people book recommendation.

### Front Desk

by Kelly Yang



The graphic novel adaptation of Kelly Yang's New York Times bestselling book Front Desk! This beautifully illustrated modern classic highlighting Mia Tang's ever-relevant immigrant story. Mia Tang has a lot of secrets. No 1 she lives in a motel and not a

house. Every day, while her immigrant parents clean the rooms, ten-year-old Mia manages the front desk & tends to its guests. No 2: Her parents hide immigrants, & if the mean motel owner, finds out they've been letting them stay in the empty rooms for free, the Tangs will be doomed. No 3: She wants to be a writer. But how can she when her mom thinks she should stick to maths because English is not her first language? It will take all of Mia's courage, kindness, & hard work to get through this year.

## **Small Clips, Big Impact: Understanding What Shapes Pupil Wellbeing**

This month's short professional development clips focus on **Making Every Voice Count**. Explore practical ideas where every child has a way to participate, communicate and belong.

[Understanding situational mutism:](#)

[Building A Connected Classroom:](#)

[Creating a Safe classroom Environment:](#)

[Creating an Inclusive Classroom:](#)

[When I Grow Up children heard and seen:](#)

## **CPD Opportunities for Staff**



[ESBD Conference: Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> October online.](#)

[Adaptive strategies for a neurodiverse friendly classroom: Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> November Online](#)

[Advanced School Mental Health Lead: 18<sup>th</sup> February 2027 Online](#)

[An Anxious Child is not a Learning Child! Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> November Online](#)

[Supporting children's mental health and wellbeing](#)

[Supporting Children and Young People's Emotional Well-Being](#)



**Podcast:** [Movement, Regulation, and Belonging: Shifting Behaviour Management from Penalisation to Partnership:](#)

**Video:** [Supporting Children with Emotionally Based School Avoidance \(EBSA\): Tips for Teachers:](#)

**Blog:** [School non-attendance research 2026:](#)

**Whole school resource:** [Attendance Champion Toolkit:](#)



### **Helping your Neurodivergent Child Navigate School**

For neurodivergent children, being heard means having their needs, experiences and ways of communicating understood. These resources offer practical guidance to help parents listen to what may sit beneath behaviour, advocate for their child and work alongside schools to make learning feel safer and more manageable.

[What can my autistic child get support with at school?](#)

[Understanding and supporting my child's ADHD](#)

[Working with your child's school](#)

# FREE Resources for teachers.

*Just click on them and they will take you to the resource*

## **Resources for Teachers: Making Every Voice Count**

This month's resources focus on helping every child feel heard, understood and able to participate.

We've gathered practical tools and ideas to help teachers look beneath behaviour, create more inclusive environments and find different ways for children and young people to communicate their needs, experiences and ideas — because every voice matters, even when it isn't spoken aloud.

**Circles for Learning mental health and wellbeing resources:** The Circles for Learning Resources page provides a range of free, practical resources to support schools in developing children's mental health and wellbeing.

**Childhood trauma, migration and asylum: animation and toolkit for education settings:** A valuable animation and practical toolkit for education staff, helping schools recognise and respond sensitively to trauma experienced by children and young people affected by war, migration and asylum, while also supporting staff wellbeing.

**Before Behaviour Escalates: free guide for teachers:** A practical guide helping adults look beneath visible behaviour, recognise what may be happening before escalation, and respond earlier and more consistently to support children's regulation and prevent difficulties reaching crisis point.

**Collaborative Problem Solving:** A practical, compassionate guide to collaborative problem-solving with young people, showing how safety, empathy, listening and working together to address underlying needs can reduce distress and help prevent future crises.

**Inclusive environments toolkit:** A practical toolkit packed with ideas for creating more inclusive, sensory-friendly environments, helping children and young people feel comfortable, understood, welcomed and able to participate in ways that work for them.

**My School Day Heatmap:** An accessible, child-centred School Day Heatmap that helps pupils identify where their school day feels easiest or most difficult, explore possible barriers and communicate what changes could make school feel more manageable.

**Mental Health and Physical Activity in Kids:** A compelling overview of research involving 38,000 young people, showing that regular, structured physical activity can significantly reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression and highlighting movement as an important part of supporting children's mental health.

**Expect Respect Educational Toolkit:** It provides age-appropriate lessons from Reception through to Year 13, exploring healthy relationships, respect and domestic abuse. Importantly, it also gives teachers guidance on creating safe discussions and responding appropriately if a child discloses abuse.

**Dyslexia Awareness Week schools pack:** An excellent free, ready-to-use resource for primary classrooms. It includes an assembly/lesson presentation, quiz, discussion activity, printable tool cards and activities for ages 5–11.



# Staff Wellbeing

This month, to support our October theme **Making Every Voice Count**, we have a range of staff wellbeing resources designed to encourage reflection, connection and self-care. When adults feel heard, valued and supported, they are better able to create the same experience for the children and young people around them. Making every voice count starts with remembering that staff voices matter too.

**What if Reflective Supervision could influence whole school culture?:** An inspiring article exploring how reflective supervision can support staff wellbeing, reduce stress and prevent burnout, while strengthening self-awareness, relationships and relational practice across the whole school.

**The September Return to School: Coping with Teacher Overwhelm (Part 1: Individual focus):** A practical and reassuring article exploring why teachers can experience overwhelm as the school year begins, with evidence-informed strategies for managing workload, setting boundaries, prioritising recovery and protecting mental wellbeing.

**Karen May's monthly Musings:** A thoughtful reflection on identity, belonging and the expectations we absorb, encouraging us to question inherited stories, reconnect with our own values and recognise when adapting to others begins to pull us away from ourselves.

## Articles for Teachers

**Understanding Anxiety as a Protective Response:** An insightful article exploring anxiety as a protective nervous-system response, encouraging us to replace judgement with curiosity about what the brain and body may be responding to.

**Study of nearly 30,000 children finds overlooked form of childhood adversity linked to mental health risks:** An important new study of nearly 30,000 children highlighting how unpredictability and inconsistent routines can be an overlooked form of childhood adversity, increasing the risk of anxiety, depression and physical symptoms.

**Brief intervention to encourage empathic discipline cuts suspension rates in half among adolescents:** A powerful study showing how childhood adversity can have lasting effects on relationships and mental health into adulthood, reinforcing the importance of positive, supportive relationships early in life.

**Mentalising and Emotion Regulation in Children and Families:** An insightful exploration of how mentalising—being curious about the thoughts, feelings and intentions behind behaviour—may strengthen emotional regulation and relationships in children and families.

**The Teenage Brain: Social Sensitivity, Risk-Taking, and What It Means for Practice:** An insightful article exploring how the developing teenage brain is especially sensitive to relationships, belonging and peer influence, creating both vulnerabilities and powerful opportunities for positive social and emotional growth.

**Reclaiming Resilience: Why we've misunderstood one of psychology's most important concepts:** An thought-provoking article challenging the idea that resilience is simply an individual ability to 'bounce back', and highlighting the importance of relationships, environments and wider support systems in helping children and adults cope with adversity.

**Mind the certainty trap and always remain curious:** A thought-provoking article exploring the "certainty trap" in evidence-informed practice, reminding us that children—particularly those with SEND—are individuals and that research must be balanced with curiosity, professional judgement and responsiveness to each child's needs.

# Online Training 12<sup>th</sup> November



## Become a Licensed Circles for Learning Practitioner

Bring emotional literacy, connection and relational understanding into the heart of your school.

Circles for Learning is an evidence-informed, year-long programme for children and young people across KS1, KS2 and KS3. Through monthly observations of a parent and young child, followed by carefully designed classroom activities, pupils develop the foundations for positive mental health, emotional regulation, self-awareness, empathy, resilience, relationships and learning.

Our online Licensed Practitioner Training gives you the knowledge, practical resources and confidence to establish and deliver Circles for Learning in your own school.

And the support doesn't end when the training finishes.

Every practitioner receives professional online coaching throughout their first year, providing guidance and support as they establish the programme and bring the learning to life with their children.

Training is suitable for teachers, teaching assistants, ELSAs, SENCOs, pastoral teams, learning mentors, nurture staff and Thrive practitioners who want to make preventative, relational practice part of everyday school life.

Train online. Be supported throughout your first year. Make a lasting difference in your classroom.