

Stories to help children cope

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The Mindfulness Magician -- one of the characters from the Wellbeing Stories.
Credit: Elizabeth Stanley

An educational psychologist has created stories to help children deal with issues such as anxiety and depression.

The Wellbeing Stories feature ten characters representing different types of thinking—including the Worry Wart, the Sprite of Bad Stories (SoBS) and the Mindfulness Magician.

The stories, for 9 to 13-year-olds, are laced with humour to appeal to the diverse young people they hope to reach, and each includes a supportive character.

"Much of the conversation around mental health at the moment is what needs to happen when young people are in difficulty," said author Dr. Sue Roffey, honorary associate professor at the University of Exeter and Western Sydney University in Australia.

"There is much less on how we might promote resilience and wellbeing in the first place.

"The Wellbeing Stories raise awareness of the power of internal dialogue for wellbeing.

"How we think impacts on how we feel—about ourselves, other people and the world around us.

"These stories are based in positive and narrative psychology. The use of ten characters to represent different types of positive and negative thinking means that the person in the [story](#) has a relationship with these voices and therefore the potential for more control.



The Worry Wart -- a character from the Wellbeing Stories. Credit: Elizabeth Stanley

"The stories are only part of the resource though, as each comes with a teacher toolkit and a family toolkit that enable the exploration of issues in a safe and constructive way.

"The family toolkits are also to guide parents in what they might do to help their child deal with some of the challenges they face.

"The overall aims are to give [young people](#) options that will enable them to cope better when things are tough, provide a resource for teachers to address [wellbeing](#) in school and to encourage students to support each other."

Supported initially by the Royal Society of Arts, the Wellbeing Stories were co-authored Dr. Keith Heggart and illustrated by Elizabeth Stanley.

Provided by University of Exeter

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