

LEARNING SUPPORT AT TAWHAI

Week 3, Term 6, 2024



Kia ora e te whānau.

As you will be aware, I am leaving Tawhai School at the end of term. It has been such a privilege to spend my days working with and for the children and families of Tawhai School. I will be joining the Resource Teachers – Learning and Behaviour team in Upper Hutt and continuing my work with UHub. However, I am very focused on the next few weeks and the many events we have to look forward to this term. As always, I am happy to connect and discuss any questions or concerns you may have about your child’s learning or development.

My office is next to Room 14 and I work onsite every day except Tuesday. Please feel free to pop in for a chat or email me to make an appointment.

Hei kōna mai.

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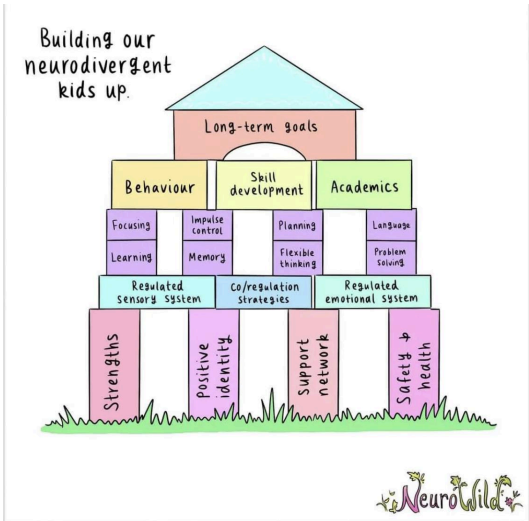


‘Competence Anchors’ – A tool for identifying and focusing on strengths.

I seem to have been sharing this image a lot recently.

While it refers specifically to Neurodivergent kids, the foundations for success are the same for us all. We need to feel safe and well, have people around us to provide support, feel positive about ourselves and our abilities, and know our strengths.

Here is an excerpt from an article on [Understood.org](https://www.understood.org). Click on the link for the full article.



Kids with learning or thinking differences often experience more negative feedback than other kids. As a result, they can start to believe that they can't do new, challenging things.

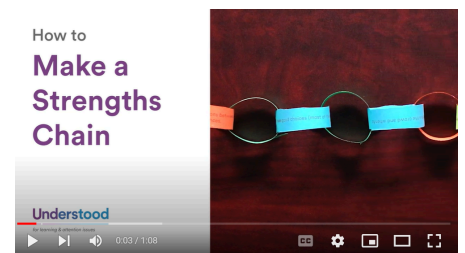
If kids think the work will be hard – if they believe that they can't do the task – their brains go into escape mode, even on tasks they really can do. Their inner voices are yelling: "This is going to be too hard for me! I have to get out of here!" The purpose of the competence anchor is to change this thinking.

When a child faces a new, challenging task, a competence anchor is used to trigger a memory of a similar activity in the past that the child did very well. Tapping into that memory will help them recall the sense of confidence and joy they got from that activity. Just thinking about the past success can reduce the anxiety of a new task.

Imagine someone is in a challenging situation and feels anxious. They're not sure they can do the task. Then a friend says, "You should be able to do this. It's similar to _____, which you learned how to do really well." That's a competence anchor at work.

Strengths are sometimes hard to identify especially when things are tough. But tapping into a child's strengths is a powerful way of building self-esteem and finding ways for children to experience success.

I have attached a lovely strengths-finding activity you could try at home. You could do it as a whole family and celebrate the shared and unique strengths of your whānau.



You could use this template but make your own strengths strips so that they are super personalised. Try to add pictures to the strips for young children or those who may have difficulty reading them.

[Make a Strengths Chain](#) (PDF attached to this email) Enjoy!

'All Kinds of Minds' Celebrating Kanorau/Diversity at Tawhai

I'm very excited for our 2 'All Kinds of Minds' events this term. These will take a conversational approach; a bit of learning and sharing of resources and an opportunity to connect, ask questions, and think about what might be possible.

The topics that parents wanted to talk about included ADHD, anxiety, social skills, Neurodiversity, Dyslexia, big emotions, sensory needs, transitions, and more, so there is plenty of scope.

If you would like to join in the fun please RSVP to lsc@tawhai.school.nz so I have an idea of numbers.



For more information email me at lsc@tawhai.school.nz or pop into my office

Pop into your calendar...



2024 Regional
Community
Awards
Upper Hutt
Rising Star Winner



2024 Regional
Community
Awards
Upper Hutt
Education & Child/Youth
Development Runner Up

Where in the World is Shelley on Tuesdays?

I am now part of the UHub team at Upper Hutt Public Library on **Tuesdays** 9.30-12.30pm.

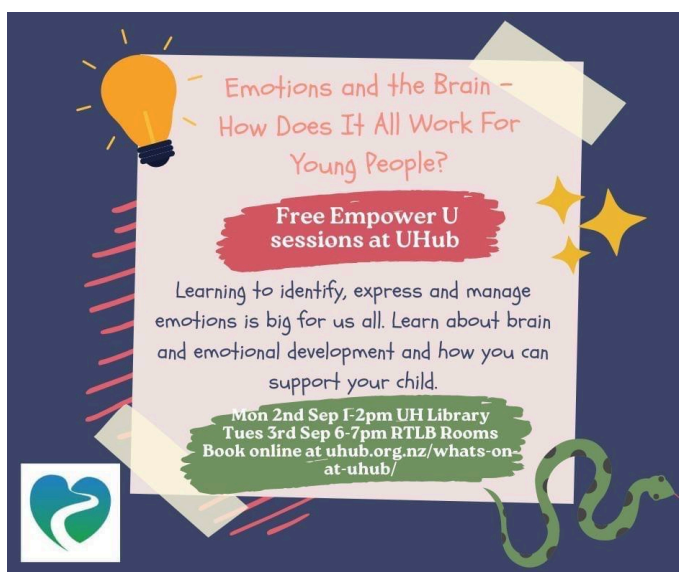
What's on at UHub?

Emotions and the Brain – How does it all work for young people?

This session will be hosted by Maria McKenzie.

Maria spent years working for the Brainwave Trust and has a wealth of knowledge and experience in the area of Neuroscience. She is a very entertaining speaker and this promises to be a fantastic session.

I will be at the Tuesday evening session too so don't be shy. Make a booking here ['What's happening at UHub'](#).



*Please note that evening sessions are held at the Upper Hutt School RTL B rooms on Brown Street Upper Hutt. Look for the UHub flag.

Check out our UHub [Facebook](#) page or [UHub.org.nz](#) to find out more about ['What's happening at UHub'](#).