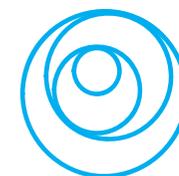


Learning to Thrive

in a climate of uncertainty

learning and support materials



Lifeworlds
Learning

Learning to Thrive

in a climate of uncertainty

was inspired by some BIG questions...

"I keep hearing about eco-anxiety, but how do I address this without making things worse?"

"I'm concerned about the future that young people are facing. How can I help them?"

"What skills and understanding will young people need to thrive in an uncertain future?"



"I know my children are worried about the world but what can I do about it?"

"I don't know what I can do to help - I'm no expert. Where can I get the help that I need?"

"What can we really do to make a difference when the issues are so BIG?"

If you have been asking similar questions about children, their futures and what we can do as adults to help them thrive, then we invite you to join the conversation...

Starting out...

Welcome to the learning and support materials for the animation *Learning to Thrive*.

This introduction shares an overview of the materials and the different pathways that we have created to help you access them.

Background

Learning to Thrive was created to help adults think about the ways in which being connected to nature can help young people to thrive.

There is growing evidence that young people are concerned about the state of the natural world around them. They are exposed to stories about the changing climate, biodiversity loss, habitat destruction and about the impacts these have both now, and also on their futures.

These stories can lead to feelings of anxiety and uncertainty, which can in turn affect the wellbeing of young people and their wider learning and development.

The good news is that there is growing support for the idea that providing young people with opportunities to connect with and relate to nature can make a difference. Time in nature can reduce stress levels and positively regulate emotions. This can improve wellbeing, but the benefits do not end there.

Paying greater attention to the world around us has also been linked to higher levels of concern for the environment and for those we share it with, and to greater likelihood of finding positive responses to some of the challenges posed by living in a climate of uncertainty.

The animation, *Learning to Thrive*, brings this story to life and provides an imaginative and nurturing space to engage in thinking about how we might support young people and ourselves to thrive into the future.



What do we mean by learning and support?

We have created a set of learning and support materials to sit alongside the animation. They provide ideas that can be used to engage young people in discussions and activities about their own relationship with, and connections to, the natural world around them. They also prompt us to reflect on our own experiences as adults and how these might influence how we approach these discussions.

This is not a teaching kit or a how to guide and there are no fixed rules about how you might use the materials you will find here. We have carefully researched the ideas that we share and you will find selected links to follow up on these if you are interested. The activities have been produced in partnership with experienced learning specialists and are designed to support both you and the young people in your care to engage with the ideas raised in the animation and to relate them to your own experiences and local environment.

The materials are organised using three **pathways**. Each has been created with a slightly different audience in mind, but some activities and ideas feature across the pathways. The three pathways and their relevant focus are:

- **Pathway 1: Caregivers** - supporting children to thrive
- **Pathway 2: Educators** - reflections on practice and pedagogy
- **Pathway 3: Support for learners** - teaching/learning opportunities

Finding your way...

To help you find your way we use the following icons throughout the materials.

The Pathways: our three different learning pathways



Pathway 1: Caregivers



Pathway 2: Educators



Pathway 3: Support for learners

The Elements: our four key elements



Noticing



Playing



Connecting



Wellbeing

Most of the content is included within the support and learning materials, but we may sometimes link directly to the online animation or to downloadable resources that have been produced to support a particular activity or discussion. Where this is suggested it will be clearly indicated along with any associated information.

That's all you need to know in order to access the learning and support materials. The next section shares a little more information about the pathways and their elements to help you choose the one most suited to your own engagement with *Learning to Thrive*.

We'd love to hear how you got along with using these materials.





The three pathways

The Learning to Thrive support materials have been organised using three pathways. Each pathway is intended to suit a different audience and is presented and written accordingly with different (though sometimes related or similar) content. All pathways aim to help their audience to support children and young people. They focus on support for ages 8-14 years, but many of the ideas are accessible and meaningful to younger and older children and adults.

The audiences for the three pathways are imagined as follows:



Pathway 1 - Caregivers

Our imagined audience for this pathway is caregivers who have some connection with or interest in children and young people and in supporting them to thrive. The materials support personal reflection and suggest ideas, conversations, or activities to do with children and young people.

We assume that those using this path would typically use the animation and these support materials directly with children and young people for whom they have a responsibility, caring or nurturing role. We assume that this may be on a one-to-one basis or perhaps in small social groups of 1-4 children with 1-2 adults (e.g. a family unit, or perhaps a small home-learning group). We assume that any adults using these ideas will make their own judgements about appropriate locations and conditions for undertaking any activities.



Pathway 2 - Educators

Our imagined audience for this pathway is those in a direct teaching or educational role that focuses on children and young people. The materials focus on personal reflection relating to the animation and how it relates to practice, pedagogy and learning environments.

We assume that those using this path will normally be working within a particular setting with children and young people. We do not assume that they have had formal educational training as a teacher (though they may have done so), but that they are passionate about learning/education and about their role as an educator. We do not assume any specialist knowledge of nature or the outdoors but do assume a willingness to think about new ideas and to creatively respond to these in their practice.



Pathway 3 - Structured support for learners

Our imagined audience for this pathway is those in an educational role who are, or want to, directly engage with children and young people with the issues raised in the animation. The materials focus on offering guided encounters and include tips, prompts and links to downloadable resources and templates where relevant.

We assume that the opportunities to learn with children and young people are structured or semi-structured and involve groups with a minimum of 12 learners and often 25-30. We assume that the ideas and activities could be run as a sequence over time to build learning for children and young people. We assume that any health, safety and risk assessment guidelines will be followed in line with using any ideas shared in these materials.

Pathway content

All three pathways follow a set of shared elements – each of them aimed at exploring a key aspect of the animation that they accompany. The four key elements are as follows:



Noticing – attending more closely to our local environments.



Connecting – realising a sense of interdependence and togetherness.



Playing – promoting and developing a more playful outlook.



Wellbeing – recognising the health benefits of being in and with nature.

Within each element we have gathered a range of ideas and activities for you to consider. You are encouraged to adapt these to suit you and your environment or to use them as inspiration for your own ideas and activities.

In the same way, if you identify with one of our assumed pathway audiences and start there, do not feel limited to that pathway alone. Each pathway resource is clearly labelled and follows a colour scheme as used above in introducing the three pathways.

Start here...

Before you start exploring the pathways, we recommend looking at the materials that have been written to help prepare audiences. There are three resources that are aimed at all three pathways. These focus on:



The importance of [creating a safe space](#) for what can sometimes be sensitive and emotive discussions.



Ideas on how to get the best from [talk with children and young people](#).



An [interactive viewing](#) of the animation to help you get the most from engaging with Learning to Thrive.



There is an additional resource on [facilitating learning](#) that is aimed at pathways 2 and 3, but that may be of interest to those who self-identify with pathway 1.