



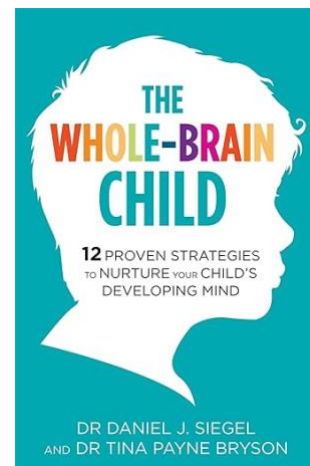
Venture Kitley Farm

Newsletter: Spring 1

Dear Parents / carers,

It has been a special half term at Kitley. Our new children have continued to settle, and our older ones are finding their feet in their new role, supporting our younger children and realising their important place in our amazing Venture community. As always, our team have shown exceptional dedication to the process of settling new children and continuing to support and nurture all of our Venturers. During our staff supervisions last week we were reminded once again of what a unique, committed and exemplary team we have at Kitley. It was also lovely to meet with so many parents to chat about how your children are getting on.

In this newsletter I wanted to recommend a book that a couple of the Venture team have recently read – *“The Whole-Brain Child”* by Daniel Siegel and Tina Payne Bryson. It is a fascinating insight into how the human brain works, written in a brilliantly accessible way. The book outlines some strategies which are particularly useful for helping parents to support their child’s developing brain.



In the whirlwind of supporting children in their development, understanding how a child's brain works can be a game-changer. Here's a condensed overview of key points from the book, including some strategies particularly useful for children between two and five years old.



1. Integration of the Brain: The book emphasises the importance of nurturing the integration of both hemispheres of the brain. For parents of children aged 2-5 this can mean engaging in activities that stimulate both creative and logical thinking. Encourage imaginative play that involves problem-solving, such as building blocks or playing dressing-up. These activities help strengthen the connections between different parts of the brain, promoting holistic development.

2. Emotional Regulation: Understanding and managing emotions is crucial for young children. "*The Whole-Brain Child*" suggests a

strategy called "name it to tame it," where adults help children label their emotions to better manage them. When your child is upset, acknowledge their feelings by saying something like, "I can see that you're feeling sad because you wanted to play with that toy." Then, offer simple coping mechanisms like taking deep breaths together or providing a comforting hug. These techniques validate your child's emotions while teaching them healthy ways to cope.

3. Connect and Redirect: Building strong connections with your child lays the foundation for effective discipline. Rather than simply punishing undesirable behaviour, the book advocates for the "connect and redirect" technique. This involves empathising with your child's feelings while gently guiding them towards more appropriate behaviour. For

example, if your child hits a friend during play, you might say, "I understand that you're feeling frustrated, but hitting hurts. Let's use our words to tell your friend how you're feeling." This strategy requires consistency and patience from adults – children need time to develop



Impulse control and the language to utilise this independently, but using this approach fosters a sense of security and trust while teaching valuable lessons about empathy and self-control.

4. Engage the Lower Brain: The lower, instinctual brain plays a significant role in children's behaviour and reactions. "The Whole-Brain Child" suggests engaging this part of the brain through physical activities, rhythmic movements, and sensory experiences. Try to incorporate activities like dancing, jumping, and exploring different textures into your daily routine. These activities help regulate emotions and promote overall well-being by providing sensory input that calms the nervous system.

5. Foster Mindfulness: Mindfulness practices are beneficial for both children and adults. The book highlights the importance of teaching children mindfulness techniques to enhance self-awareness and attention regulation. For example, you can introduce simple mindfulness activities like mindful breathing, where you and your child take slow, deep breaths together while focusing on the sensation of the breath entering and leaving the body. These activities help children develop valuable skills for managing stress and promoting focus, setting a foundation for emotional resilience.



At Venture, we use many of the above principles and strategies and endeavour to create a nurturing environment that supports your child's emotional, social, and cognitive development. Please let us know if you would like to know more about how we support your children with this.

We hope you have an enjoyable half term break and look forward to seeing you back at Kitley on **Monday 19th February**.

Best wishes,

Emma and the Kitley team

Term dates

Spring term 2024 (11 weeks)

Starts: Monday 8th January

Half term: Monday 12th to Friday 16th February

Ends: Thursday 28th March

Summer term 2024 (13 weeks)

Starts: Monday 15th April

Bank Holiday: Monday 6th May

Half term: Monday 27th to Friday 31st May

Ends: Friday 19th July

Waterproof reminder

To ensure children get the most out of being at Venture, we ask that all children have a high-quality set of waterproofs. Confusingly many brands' version of "waterproof" are not up to a day in the rain which is why we strongly recommend the tried and tested Didrikson set. These can be bought second hand on eBay / Vinted and really are brilliant.



