Learn about The Courtyard's Talk Away Don't Walk Away Mental Health Project. Primary school classes enjoy taking part in workshops and sessions at The Courtyard in Hereford. There is sunshine beaming through the windows as children get creative, dancing, drawing, and playing with their teachers and Youth Theatre leaders while learning about Mental Health.

Transcript:

[Music]

Becky Cook (Courtyard Education Officer): Talk Away Don't Walk Away is The Courtyard's award-winning mental health project. So far we've been able to deliver it in secondary schools and colleges and youth groups around Herefordshire but now we're also able to share it with primary schools which is very exciting. Today we've been working with Mordiford Primary School and we've been working with their key stage one and also key stage two. So, key stage one we've been focusing on our emotions our feelings and how to support each other so how to be kind and how to be a good friend. Key stage two we've been looking at the five steps to positive well-being these five steps are be active, engage, interact, notice, and give which spells out the word BEING. So the younger ones we explore these different themes through storytelling so we look at different characters and their emotional journeys and how this can relate to young people and what they might do in those scenarios.

Emilia (Year 2 Participant): So I've been learning about a whale in a story. I think it was about kindness.

Eden (Year 6 Participant): We started off with a little bit of it like a dance and like copied what each other did it was really fun because you got to know like "oh my friend likes doing that type of dance" "oh maybe if we do dance in school we can maybe put that in somewhere". I found that really fun because um then you and your friends could all like play together and you got to engage with maybe some people that you don't normally play with.

Charlotte (Year 2 Teacher): We feel that educating children about mental health is really important particularly in today's day and age that the children can express themselves and understand their emotions. During the Covid times we haven't been able to go out of school um too much so coming here today has been another dimension.

Jim (Year 2 Participant): We got a sheet and we had to write in a whale what makes us a good friend.

Anne-Marie (Year 6 Teacher): Well mental health is important for young children because I think we forget that um the last few years has been really tough for them and you know working in the classroom you're so focused on studying and getting them ready for high school that you um kind of forget that they might have a head full of worries.

Rowan (Year 6 Participant): I liked when we wrote the cards because and gave it to other people because it felt um really nice seeing their reactions and it made me feel really happy that I made other people feel happy.

Lucy (Teaching Assistant): I think the arts are important for children in terms of their mental health because it can give them another creative outlet for their feelings and emotions in general. That's maybe a step away from the traditional academic side of school. The staff have been really engaging, really welcoming. The activities that we've done have been really topical, the children have really engaged with it

Anne-Marie: I think all schools should get involved in this project because first of all it takes children out of the classroom and it gets them really active and enjoying themselves and just making them think about mental health in in a different way in a much more creative way. And I think they're learning skills that they can use in later life you know about being active um pushing boundaries engaging in new um activities. I think this is things that you know will stay with them into their adulthood.

Becky: So we're hoping that this project will continue to develop and expand and we would like to work with as many young people and schools as possible.

Jim:I've had lots of fun today.

Emilia: My favourite part of the day was being eating biscuits

[Text] For more info please visit courtyard.org.uk

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