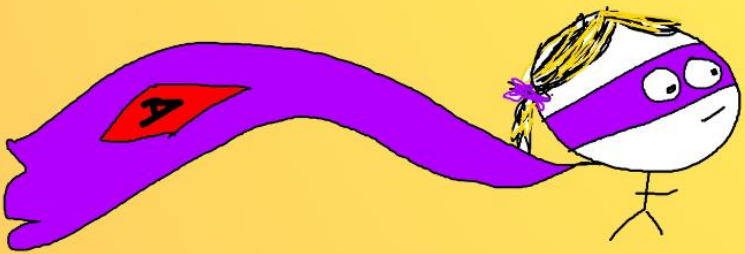
Josh Langley
Inspiring Kids

Josh Langley's
9 Super Skills
for kid's better mental health



Josh Langley's 9 Super Skills

for kid's better mental health

By Josh Langley

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Introduction

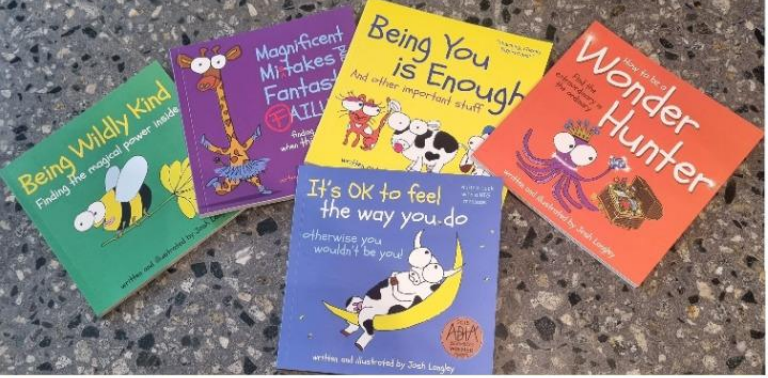
I'm Josh Langley and since 2016, I've been writing books, creating programs, and talking to kids about things that I'm passionate about. And it just so happens they are the things I needed to hear growing up. My childhood was a bit of a mess, so I missed out on a lot of important things like feeling loved and safe, a nurturing home environment and encouragement.

So, I wrote a book for my 8-year-old self, filled with all things that I would go back and tell myself and it's gone on to become a best seller. And unsurprisingly, many parents, teachers and child health experts love the messages and feel if all kids knew them, the world would be a better place.

I didn't know it at the time, but I'd come up with a perfect early mental health prevention framework for kids. I know early prevention doesn't sound sexy or glamourous, but it will have the most profound effect on your kids.

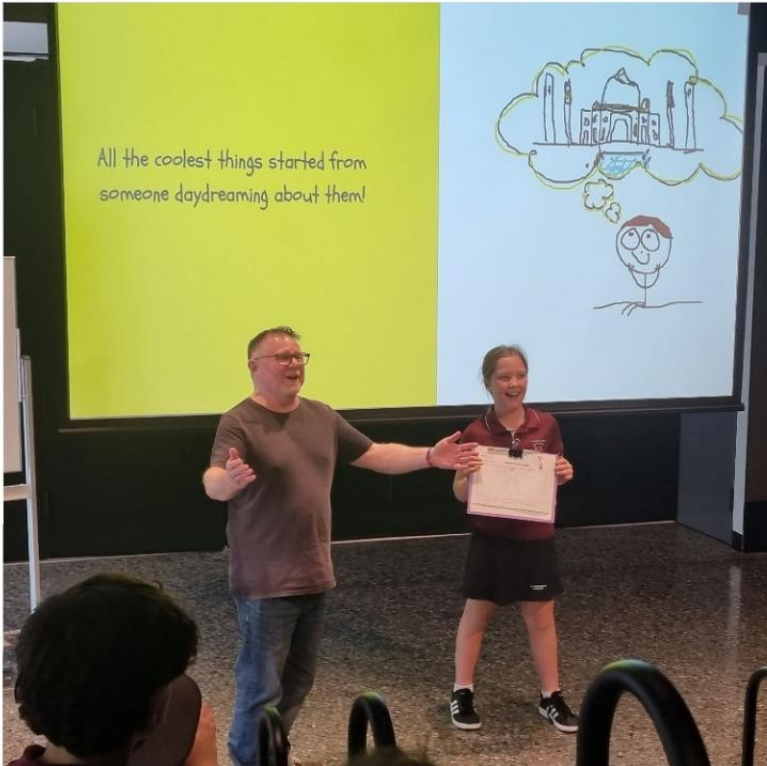
My books and programs are now used across the country by teachers, librarians, early childhood educators, child psychologists, occupational therapists, speech pathologists and of course kids and parents.

In 2018, my book on feelings, '*It's Ok to Feel the Way You Do'*, won the Australian Book Industry Awards, Small Publisher's Children's Book of the Year.


Being Wildly Kind
Finding the magical power inside
Being You is Enough
And other important stuff
Wonder Hunter
It's OK to feel the way you do
otherwise you wouldn't be you!

LEAVERS

LEAVERS


All the coolest things started from
someone daydreaming about them!

The more we support kids upstream, the less we'll need to rescue them downstream

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That is not a feel-good meme, it's a call to arms

The rates of anxiety and mental health issues in our kids is sky rocketing. And we can do something about it right now, by providing kids with valuable skills to navigate the ups and downs of life.

It's not just me saying it, I have countless child health experts saying the same thing including, Prof. Helen Milroy (consultant psychiatrist with the Western Australia Department of Health, specialising in child and adolescent psychiatry) who said this when I interviewed her:

"It really doesn't take as near as much to intervene well with children and support their wellbeing, than it does much further down the track. Not only will it save us money, but we'll have these wonderful, brilliant children who will achieve their full potential."

These 9 Super Skills are widely known to have a powerful effect on kids emotional and mental being now and well into the future and provides them with a psychological shield that can help reduce the risk of anxiety and depression.

So, what are these skills and what difference will they make? Let's find out.

About this guide

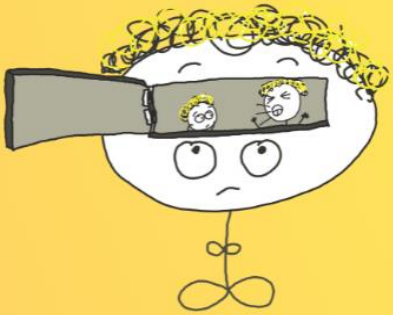
Each of the 9 skills comes in 3 parts.

1. Explanation of the skill and why it's important.
2. Where in my books and programs you can start exploring them with your kids
3. Screenshot of the module from Inspiring Kids @ Home for easy visual reference.

OFFICIAL
Wonder
Hunter
How to be a
Wonder
Hunter
Find the extraordinary in the ordinary

Josh's Super Skills for kids No.1

Self-awareness (noticing and changing thoughts)



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Super Skill No. 1 Self-awareness

Imagine that as a kid, you were taught how to notice your inner monologue and chattering mind and then given the skills to be able to change any unhelpful thoughts into more supportive ones?

How different would your life be now?

It's not hard to do and that's what I teach kids today.

From around the age of five, a child's prefrontal cortex is beginning to develop along with their sense of self and inner dialogue and thoughts. It's the perfect time to give them the skill to notice this inner voice and monitor it for helpful and unhelpful thoughts.

It's also especially important for them to notice the connection between what they're thinking to what they're feeling. That can be lifechanging.

Then a child can notice early signs of unhelpful thoughts and before spiralling downwards, they were then able to ask for help.

Self-awareness is the foundation from which the rest the 9 Super Skills are based. Think of it like a concrete slab on which we can then build a house.

Self-awareness in action

Watch:

Inspiring Kids @ Home - Videos 'Noticing Your Thoughts' and 'How to Change your Thoughts' are the perfect way to introduce your kids to the concept.

Read:

Being You is Enough; Pages 11 to 17 introduces kids to the concept of noticing their thoughts and then changing them.

Magnificent Mistakes and Fantastic Failures: Pages 76 to 81, highlights self-talk and then provides kids with different affirmations they can use. You and your child can then come up with your own.

Module 1

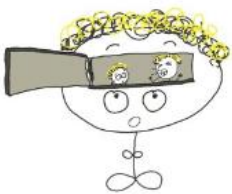
Self-awareness

(2 videos | 2 Activities | Estimated time 12 minutes)

READ

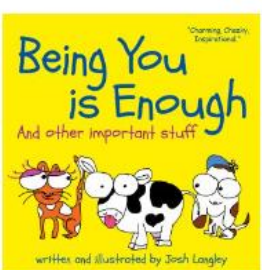
We all have a little voice in our head and it's telling us all sorts of things. Some things are helpful and some things are unhelpful and can make us feel blah! So it's important to notice this voice. BTW it's the same voice you have when you read silently to yourself.

Let's get to know that voice a bit more and learn to notice what it's saying and how you can change it to make yourself feel better.

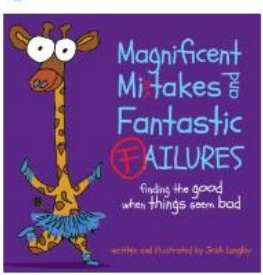


- **Watch: Noticing your thoughts (5.41 min video)**
- **Do: Noticing your thoughts (Summary & Activity Page)**
- **Watch: How to change your thoughts (4.18 min video)**
- **Do: How to change your thoughts (Summary & Activity Page)**

Further Reading



Pages 12 – 27



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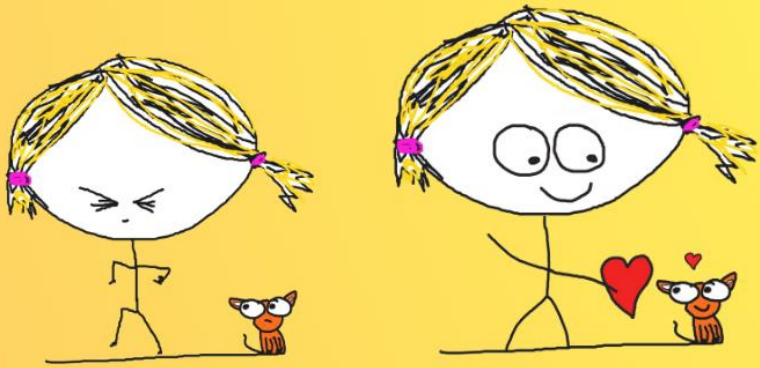
Josh's Super Skills for kids No.2

Making friends with big emotions



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Super Skill No. 2 Making friends with big feelings

The fancy term for making friends with big emotions is called ‘emotional regulation’, which is basically noticing big emotions; what they feel like and how they affect us. Then it’s knowing what to do with them and how to let them move through us safely.

We’ve all been in situations were something has pissed us off and we’re suddenly all angry and annoyed. How did we get there so quickly?

How amazing it would be if we could initially notice the anger arise before it become out of control and then deploy simple strategies on how to release the energy safely and bring ourselves back to calm again. Well, it’s easy to do, but it takes practise. Same goes for all big emotions like anxiety, sadness, etc all of them we can learn to be OK with and manage.

How different would our lives be if we taught that as kids? That’s why I educate kids now so they can grow up with a better understanding of how they operate emotionally and be more in control of their lives no matter what’s happening. Imagine the impact that would have on your child’s life, let alone yours! Fewer meltdowns!

Making friends with big feelings in action

Watch:

Inspiring Kids @ Home – Videos. Watch all 4 videos in 'Module 2: Big Feelings'. Watch them together and then do the activities. Pick one video / activity per night at bedtime.

Read:

It's Ok to Feel the Way You Do; Pick pages at random to start conversations

Module 2

Big feelings

(4 videos | 3 Activities | Estimated time 30 minutes)

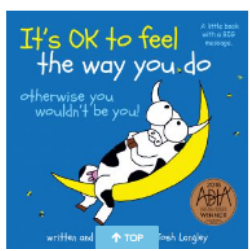
READ

We all have feelings, they're part of us and they are what makes us human! So whatever feeling you're feeling at any given moment is completely normal as feelings and emotions are normal

Let's watch Josh explain how you can make friends with all your big emotions so you feel a lot better about yourself.

- **Watch: Let's meet our feelings (3.48 min video)**
- **Do: Let's meet our feelings (Summary & Activity Page)**
- **Watch: Sad feelings (5.01 min video)**
- **Do: Sad feelings (Summary & Activity Page)**
- **Watch: Angry feelings (6.24 min video)**
- **Do: Angry feelings (Summary & Activity Page)**
- **Watch: Anxious feelings (4.53 min video)**
- **Do: Anxious feelings (Summary & Activity Page)**

Further Reading



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Josh's Super Skills for kids No.3

Talking about feelings

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Super Skill No. 3 Talking about feelings

We all know from personal experience that when you start to talk about what's stressing, worrying, or upsetting you, you immediately start to feel better. You feel lighter. Whatever you were so concerned about isn't so big anymore.

This is something all kids need to know from the get-go. And grownups need to create the safe space for kids to open up.

We need to break the taboo that feelings are off limits and that only girls are able to talk about them. Hog wash! Feelings and emotions are signs that we're human and we need to share and talk about them no matter who we are.

We can start by talking about our own feelings first and normalising talking about them. When a child sees that grownups are talking openly, then they can feel safe to do the same.

A child who can safely express and talk about their feelings is going to grow up with a healthy relationship with who they are and also the people around them.

Talking about feelings in action

Watch:

Inspiring Kids @ Home - Videos '*When You Feel All Alone'* and '*Anxious Feelings'* and '*When We Feel Angry*' all encourage kids to talk opening about what they're feeling.

Read:

It's Ok to Feel the Way You Do; Pick pages at random to start conversations.

Magnificent Mistakes and Fantastic Failures: Pages 71 to 74 is about how important it is to talk to someone about your feelings.

Module 3

Talking about feelings

1 video | 1 activity | Estimated time 7 minutes

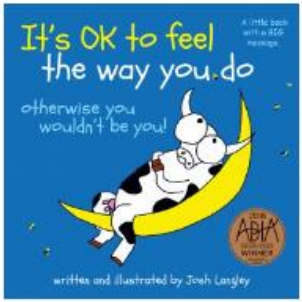
READ

It's important to always talk about your feelings, especially if you're feeling sad, worried, anxious or concerned about something. Let's watch Josh explain why it's important and who you can turn to.

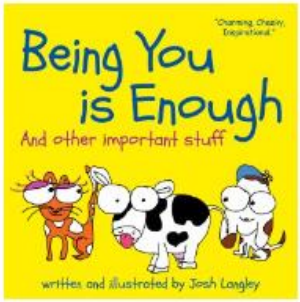
˅ **Watch: Why it's important talk about feelings (3.48 min video)**

˅ **Do: Why it's important to talk about feelings (Summary & Activity Page)**

Further Reading



Throughout *It's OK to Feel The Way You Do* there are references to seeking appropriate support.



Pages 95 – 101

Pages 71 – 74

Josh's Super Skills for kids No.4

Self-acceptance

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Super Skill No. 4 Self-acceptance

There's a fundamental misconception in our society that there's something wrong with us and we need to be fixed to make us normal and acceptable.

However, I want to make one thing abundantly clear.

• You are not broken.

• You don't need fixing.

• The only thing you need - is to be loved as you are.

However, self-acceptance doesn't happen in a vacuum for kids. It needs to come from an outside source.

It could be a long-awaited ADHD diagnosis. It could be seeing themselves reflected in a book or TV show. It could be a grown up seeing them just as they are. Because when we see someone as they are and accept them as they are, then they can begin to do the same. We give them permission to love themselves as they are, no strings attached.

All the resistance they feel about themselves can then start to drop away and they can see the world with new eyes and see new opportunities.

This is especially important for neurodivergent kids, kids with learning differences and kids with disabilities.

Self-acceptance in action

Watch:

Inspiring Kids @ Home: Videos, 'It's Ok to be Different', 'Every Body Is Just Fine', 'Being You is Enough', 'How to Make Friends with Yourself', 'No-one is perfect' and 'Even Cool Kids Have to Poo' are all about self-acceptance and having someone apart from their parents telling them how amazing they are.

Read:

Being You is Enough: Pages 40 to 47 are all about self-acceptance.

Magnificent Mistakes and Fantastic Failures: Pages 83 to 93 reinforce the self-acceptance message.

Module 4

Self-acceptance

5 videos | 4 activities | Estimated time 30 minutes

READ

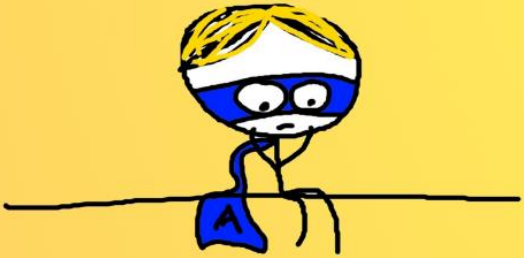
You are amazing. You are incredible and you are wonderful. Now it's time you knew that inside and out! Let's watch Josh talk about how important it is to accept yourself as you are and the amazing things you can do when you do. Plus try not to laugh too much during the last video and wait until you see what the activity is!

- Watch: It's Ok to be different (3.27 min video)
- Do: It's Ok to be different (Summary & Activity Page)
- Watch: Being You is Enough (3.36 min video)
- Do: Being You is Enough (Summary & Activity Page)
- Watch: Every 'body' is just fine (3.14) min video)
- Do: Every 'body' is just fine (Summary & Activity Page)
- Watch: No-one is perfect (4.40) min video)
- Do: No-one is perfect (Summary & Activity Page)
- Watch: Even cool kids have to poo! (3.27) min video)
- Do: Even cool kids have to poo (Summary & Activity Page)

Further Reading

Josh's Super Skills for kids No.5

Resilience
(learning from mistakes and find opportunities in failure)



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Super Skill No. 5 Resilience

Resilience means many things to many people, however for me it's simply about how we can learn from mistakes and what opportunities are there in failure and feeling all the feels associated with that.

It's crucial that kids learn this from an early age for their long-term mental health.

Kids need to feel the feelings associated with making mistakes and failures (disappointment, rejection, frustration, anger, embarrassment etc) as that's how they learn and grow. We don't want to rob them of those experiences.

Not being picked for the team, getting a bad test result, missing out on a merit certificate, or breaking the family's favourite Ming vase are all part of life's experiences. However, it's how kids learn from those experiences is what really matters.

And it's through the support and encouragement from grownups that makes it safe for kids to feel those uncomfortable feelings. Showing up for kids and guiding them through these big experiences and feelings is crucial for their learning.

Kids need to know it's ok to stuff up, to get things wrong and to not do so well, as it'll help them put things in bigger perspective and they'll be able make better informed decisions and choices in life.

Resilience in action

Watch:

Inspiring Kids @ Home – Video: 'Mistakes can be Magnificent', 'Failing can be Fantastic', 'Problems Don't Have to be Problems' and 'How to avoid overthinking'. The activities are super fun to do.

Read:

Being You is Enough; Pages 88 – 92 – explores mistakes.

Magnificent Mistakes and Fantastic Failures: Pages 5 – 31 takes a fun look at mistakes and finding the opportunity in failure and how to look at problems differently and 60 to 69 looks at over thinking.

Module 5

Resilience

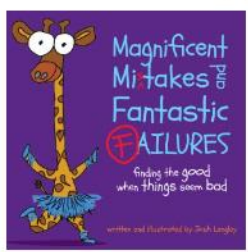
4 videos | 3 activities | Estimated time 35 minutes

READ

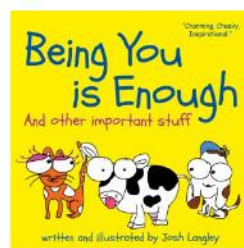
We're all human and we learn to be better people by making mistakes and failing at things. In these short videos Josh talks about how he always made mistakes and failed at things growing up, but he learned big lessons and he's grateful for all that has happened.

- **Watch: Mistakes can be magnificent (3.52 min video)**
- **Do: Mistakes can be magnificent (Summary & Activity Page)**
- **Watch: Failing can be fantastic (5.42) min video)**
- **Do: Failing can be fantastic (Summary & Activity Page)**
- **Watch: Problems don't have to be 'problems'! (5.32 min video)**
- **Do: Problems don't have to be 'problems'! (Summary & Activity Page)**
- **Watch: How to avoid overthinking (4.51 min video)**
- **Do: How to avoid overthinking (Summary & Activity Page)**

Further Reading



Pages 5 – 31, 60 – 69



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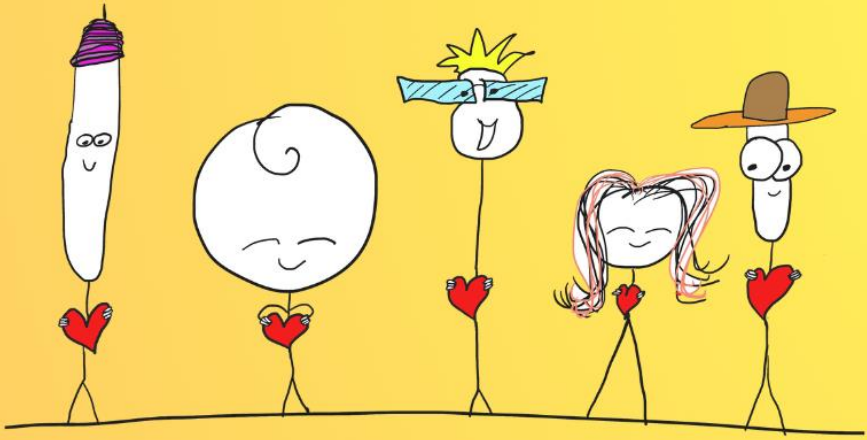
Josh's Super Skills for kids No.6

Gratitude



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Super Skill No. 6 Gratitude

Gratitude can come across as a bit of a wishy-washy feeling, however it has the power to change not only your child's life, but the world as well.

The most important and immediate benefit is giving your child the ability to regulate their emotions. There is a direct correlation between thinking about something you're grateful for and the good feelings that arise. You can't feel upset and grateful at the same time. It's impossible.

So, if a child is feeling down or upset and using self-awareness described in Super Skill No. 1, they can then think of something they're grateful for to change how they're feeling.

Kids aged 5 to 12 are at the perfect age to be taught this skill as their brains are still forming new neural networks and it's easier for them to integrate it into their learning.

Plus, the other broader benefit is that the more kids start to feel appreciation for what they have in their life, the more they'll value what's around them.

Get your kids to write down 10 things they're grateful for and pin it on their bedroom wall so they can read it first thing when they wake up. What a great way to start the day!

Gratitude in action

Watch:

Inspiring Kids @ Home - Videos 'The Power of Gratitude'. Plus it comes with the list of 10 things you're grateful for idea.

Read:

Being You is Enough; Pages 67 to 75 – introduces to kids to the power of gratitude.

Coming soon in 2024 new book, "*Thank You – a book about gratitude*"

Module 7

Gratitude

1 Video | 1 activity | Estimated time 9 minutes

READ

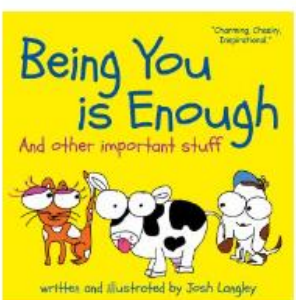
Gratitude is so powerful, it can change not only how you feel, but they whole world! And it's done with a little bit of magic.

Let's watch Josh explain how it's done.

˅ **Watch: The power of gratitude (4.25 min video)**

˅ **Do: The power of gratitude (Summary & Activity Page)**

Further Reading

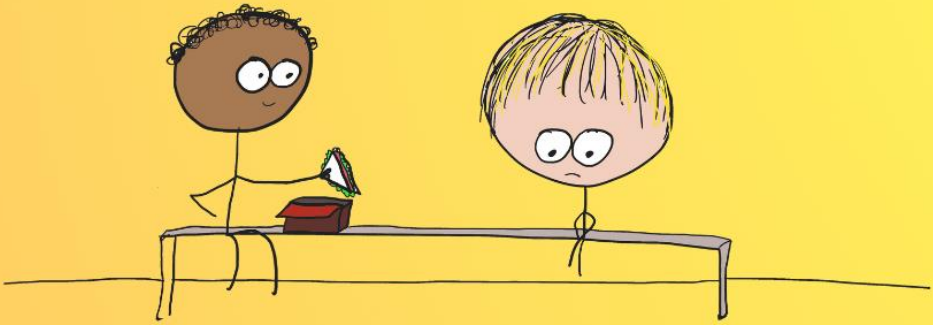


Pages 68 – 75

Coming soon!

Josh's Super Skills for kids
No.7

Kindness and Empathy



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Super Skill No. 7 Kindness and Empathy

It's really important we foster kindness in kids from an early age.

Kids aren't learning much about kindness or empathy from being online. Gaming, chats and most apps don't provide a platform for kids to see what kindness and empathy looks like, so they have to learn it in the real world, from us.

We can start by modelling kindness ourselves – so kids can see what it looks like. We need to be the kind person we want our kids to be.

In regard to empathy, we need to have kids to recognise their own feelings first (Super Skill 2). Once they are familiar with their own feelings, it's then you can help them recognise that we all have the same feelings. We know how awful it feels to feel sad, upset and humiliated, so why would you want to make someone else feel those same uncomfortable feelings?

I know sometimes it's hard to discuss this topic without a kid rolling their eyes, so that's where my books and programs can be a great way to start a conversation.

Kindness and Empathy in action

Watch

Inspiring Kids @ Home: All videos in Module 9 Kindness and Empathy.

Read:

Being Wildly Kind: Pages 14 – 49 talks about why and how to kind and build empathy.

Bonus reading: *It's Ok to Feel the Way You Do*: Helps kids understand their own feelings.

Module 9

Kindness and Empathy

5 videos | 3 activities | Estimated time 26 minutes

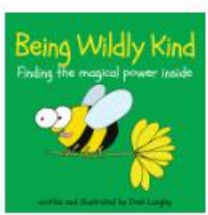
READ

Josh has a saying, "If I had the choice of someone being mean to me or being kind, I know what I'd choose". In these videos Josh explores kindness and empathy and shows you how you be wildly kind, not only to other people, but also the planet.

Let's jump in and find our wildly kind powers!

- Watch: Find your wildly kind powers (1.55 min video)
- Do: Finding your wildly kind powers (Summary & Activity Page)
- Watch: Being wildly kind to people (5.09 min video)
- Do: Being wildly kind to people (Summary & Activity Page)
- Watch: The real reason not to be mean (3.48 min video)
- Do: Real reason not to be mean (Summary & Activity Page)
- Watch: Being kind to nature and the planet (5.38 min video)
- Do: Being kind to nature and the planet (Summary & Activity Page)
- Watch: The effect of kindness (3.36 min video)
- Do: The effect of kindness (Summary & Activity Page)

Further Reading



The entire book cover kindness in all it's forms

Pages 31 – 47 helps kids to spend time in nature

Josh's Super Skills for kids No.8

Creativity and imagination

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Super Skill No. 8 Creativity and Imagination

As adults we've lost that wonderful childlike ability to let our minds wander and dawdle through a garden of wild and untamed ideas and thoughts. Sadly, it's been swapped out for a mediocre life of scrolling through social media, watching Netflix, going to work, paying tax and buying stuff we don't need to impress people we don't like. Where'd all the magic and inspiration go?

Thankfully kids have wild imaginations, and we should be nurturing them well into adulthood.

It's proven that the ability to use your imagination is paramount in creative thinking, problem solving, visualisation, innovation, and invention.

Your child may hold the key to finding a cure for cancer, change the art world like Picasso or help solve the climate crisis with their bold and brave ideas.

As automation and AI become more integrated into our society, the one skill that will be needed more than anything is creative and imaginative thinking – something AI can't replicate (yet).

Creativity and Imagination in action

Watch:

Inspiring Kids @ Home – Module 8 The power of daydreaming and imagination. The exercise for this video features the popular drawing an invention idea that I use in my school talks.

Read:

How to be a Wonder Hunter: Pages 56 – 69 introduces children to the concept of using their imagination in a variety of ways. *Being You is Enough*: Pages 77 to 85 gives children permission to daydream and go on to dream up big ideas.

Module 8

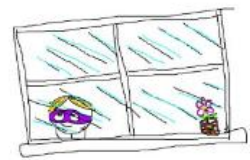
Creativity + Imagination

1 video | 1 activity | Estimated time 10 minutes

READ

Josh used to get told off for daydreaming all the time, however now it's his biggest superpower. Here he explains how it can be your superpower too.

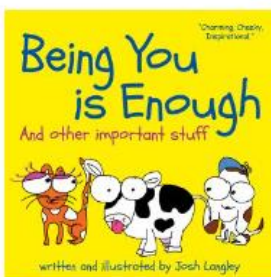
Let's unleash your creative imagination!



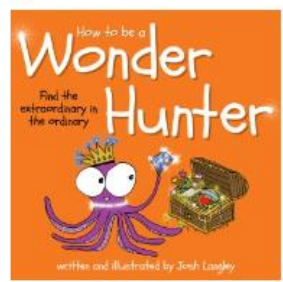
˅ **Watch: The power of your imagination (6.37 min video)**

˅ **Do: The power of your imagination (Summary & Activity Page)**

Further Reading



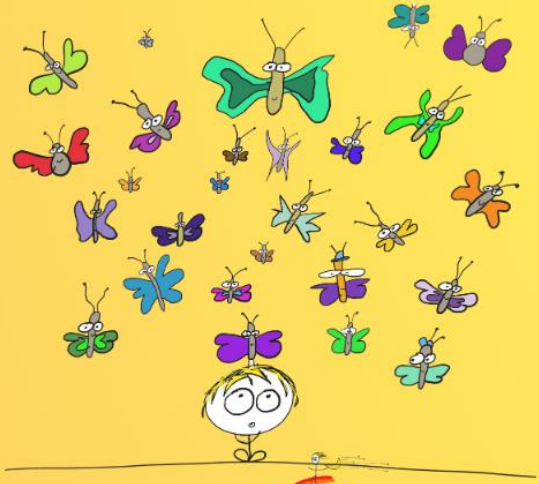
Pages 77 – 85



Pages 57 – 69

Josh's Super Skills for kids No.9

Curiosity and wonder



Josh Langley
Inspiring Kids

www.joshlangley.com.au

Super Skill No. 9 Curiosity and Wonder

As kids become more entrenched in their devices and an online world, I fear some of their natural curiosity will be lost.

For me, it's about balancing screen time with real world time and trying to deepen their interaction with the latter.

I wrote *How to be a Wonder Hunter* to act like a field guide to help kids navigate this new way of taking in and processing what's around them. Without calling it mindfulness (but it is), I encourage kids to use their senses to make note of their immediate surroundings and see the small things that are happening. I'm encouraging the lost art of noticing life and looking for the magic in the everyday.

The more we encourage kids to immerse themselves in the natural world, the more they'll feel connected to something bigger than themselves and the game they're obsessed with! Even if you have trouble prising the phone or tablet from their hands, get them using it take photos and maybe write about what they saw.

By getting kids to be active participants in the world around them, it can turn everyday tasks such as picking up dog poo or putting away the dishes into something a little less mundane. Hopefully anyway!

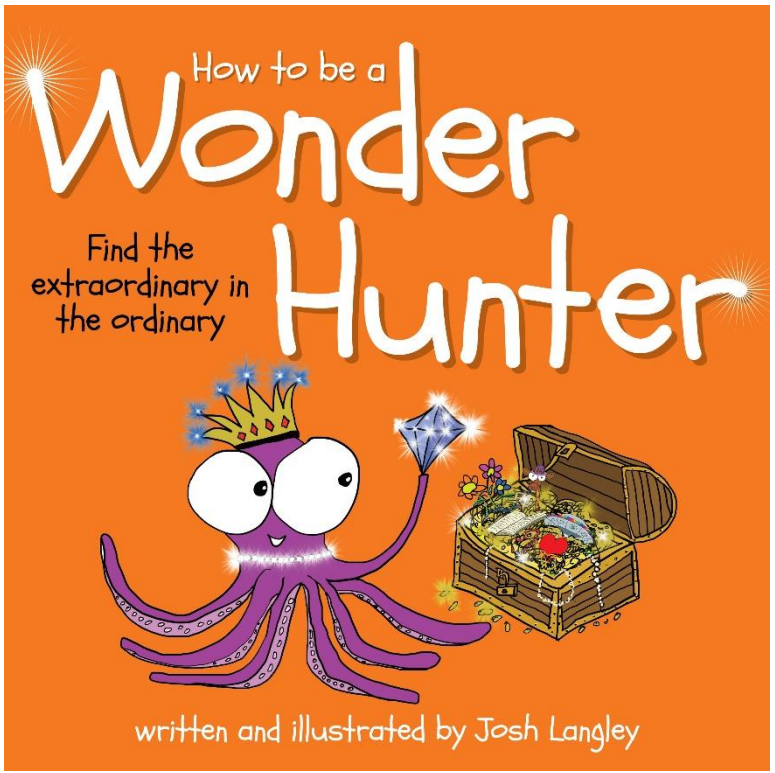
Curiosity and wonder in action

Watch:

Inspiring Kids Home Program – Videos. The Power of Daydreaming and Imagination

Read:

How to be a Wonder Hunter: all pages.


How to be a
Wonder
Hunter
Find the extraordinary in the ordinary
written and illustrated by Josh Langley

Lifechanging

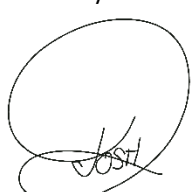
Now you can see how the 9 Super Skills can have a dramatic impact on your child's life, whether they're neurodivergent or neurotypical.

By giving your kids the skills to be in control of their thoughts and feelings, you're safeguarding their emotional and mental wellbeing and setting them up for success in life.

However, there's another big bonus to these 9 Super Skills and that's how they bring you and your children closer to together. You'll enjoy deeper discussions and have new insights into what they're thinking and feeling. No more second guessing.

And you'll feel good knowing that you're doing your best to help support their overall wellbeing and that's worth its weight in gold.

To get started, check out the resources below and if you want to get in contact, then reach out via my website, www.joshlangley.com.au



What parents are saying

“It was such a huge relief to find you and your incredible work! I came home after a particularly hard school drop of with my daughter who is 9. I was in tears and desperate to find something to help her as she struggles with Dyslexia and high anxiety. Thankfully I stumbled across you and your wonderful work. It has been a beacon of light!!” - Sarah, Mum of 2

"Your program was amazing! My son has a lot of trouble identifying and understanding emotions, but he has learnt so much through your program. You are helping so many young people to grow up more resilient" – Chantell

"By opening up this dialogue he no longer has separation anxiety, his outbursts are less, and he has tools to deal with his anger. It changed mine and my little dude’s life. Thank you” - Melissa

Resources

Books

Inspiring Kids @ Home Program.

Josh Langley
Inspiring Kids
@ Home

Or the ultimate wellbeing book and program bundle.