

## Lesson 2: Feel-Good Hormones

 Each activity  
30 minutes

### Learning Intentions

Pupils will:

- discover that our experiences cause our brains to produce chemicals and hormones that affect how we feel;
- learn that there are four types of brain signals, which are sometimes called our 'feel-good hormones';
- recognise that a balance of these 'feel-good hormones' promotes our wellbeing; and
- understand that making choices that create this balance is part of self-control.

What you need:

- *Resource 2: What Do You Know About Your Feel-Good Hormones?*
- Highlighters

### Learning for Life and Work: Personal Development

Key Concept: **Personal Health**

Pupils should have opportunities to investigate the influences on physical and emotional/mental personal health.

### CCEA Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Post-Primary Guidance

SEL Competency: **Self-Management**

### DENI Children and Young People's Emotional Health and Wellbeing in Education Framework

Key Aspect:  
**Self-Control/Self-Regulation**

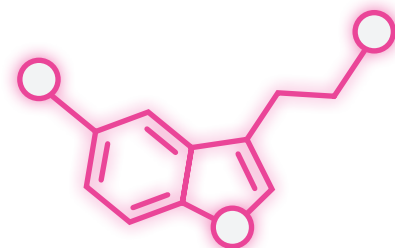


### Activity 3: What Do You Know About Your Feel-Good Hormones?

1. Explain to the class that the brain produces hormones, chemicals and signals all the time in response to our experiences, which affect your whole body and wellbeing.
2. Give out *Resource 2: What Do You Know About Your Feel-Good Hormones?* and discuss the four 'feel-good hormones' as outlined in the Pupil Information section.  
**Please note:** This is a simplification of much more complex scientific information.
3. Divide the pupils into small groups. Give each group a copy of *Resource 2: What Do You Know About Your Feel-Good Hormones?* and ask them to talk about the activities listed on it (the same ones listed on *Resource 1: Which Activities Do You Enjoy?*). Place ticks to show which 'feel-good hormone/s' are most likely to be triggered by them.
4. Debrief the activity as a class. Ask the pupils to record their findings on a collective sheet for future use. **Please note:** Brain chemistry is a complex area of scientific study, so there are no definitive correct answers here!

### Activity 4: Are Your Feel-Good Hormones Balanced?

1. Give pupils time to reflect on their own favourite leisure activities.
2. Ask them to find the activities they enjoy on their resource sheet. They should highlight each one, continuing the highlight across all the 'feel-good hormones' columns and add up their feel-good hormones total at the bottom of each column.
3. Finally, ask them to indicate which 'feel-good hormone/s' they have too many of, and which they need more of. If they are balanced, they can tick the box.



## What Do You Know About Your Feel-Good Hormones?

### Pupil Information

Your brain constantly produces chemicals, hormones, and neurotransmissions (brain signals) in response to what you are experiencing. These affect your wellbeing.

The four brain signals below are sometimes called 'feel-good hormones' because they are released when you enjoy yourself.

#### Dopamine

The **Reward Chemical** is released when you are:

- completing a task;
- eating food;
- celebrating little wins;
- learning something new;
- getting enough sleep; or
- practising self-care.

#### Oxytocin

The **Love Hormone** is released when you are:

- playing with a dog or cat;
- physically with family and friends;
- hugging and holding hands;
- helping others; or
- listening to music.

#### Serotonin

The **Mood Stabiliser** is released when you are:

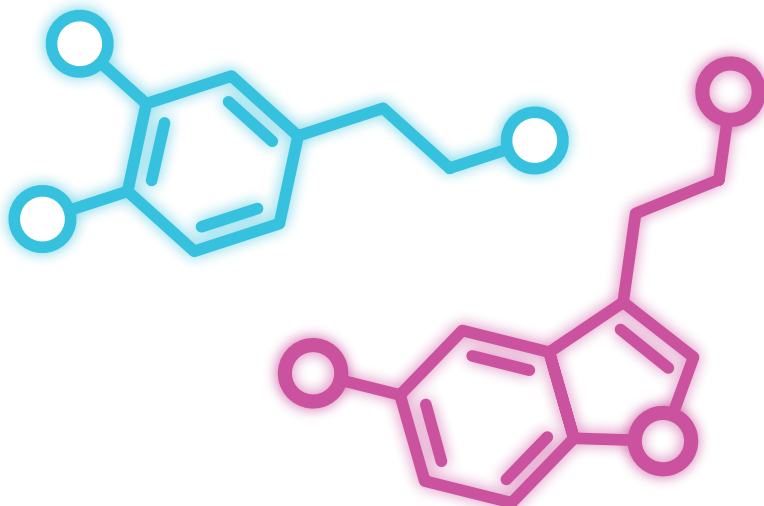
- spending time outdoors;
- relaxing;
- in the sunshine;
- achieving a goal; or
- eating healthy food.

#### Endorphins

The **Pain Killer** is released when you are:

- laughing or crying;
- creating something;
- exercising;
- listening to music; or
- dancing.

Brain chemistry is a very complex area of scientific study so the information included here is a very simplified version. If you want, you can explore more about it for yourself.



Resource 2

What Do You Know About Feel-Good Hormones? (Continued)

Activity	Feel-Good Hormones			
	Dopamine	Oxytocin	Serotonin	Endorphins
Sleeping				
Reading				
Being with friends				
Watching sports				
Eating				
Playing the lottery				
Gaming				
Listening to music				
Helping at home				
Playing gaming machines				
Exercising outdoors				
Learning a new skill				
Being with family				
Sunbathing				
Going to the gym				
Making something				
Looking after pets and animals				
Taking care of yourself				
My 'feel-good hormones' total				

Just for your own information: Highlight the activities you enjoy and total each column to find out how often they might trigger each hormone.

Do you think your 'feel-good hormones' are balanced? Yes  No

If not, complete the sentences below.

I need some more .....

I'm getting too much .....