Mental health matters.



Supporting our children

Safe. Heard. Loved.



Small moments of care can help children feel understood, connected and ready to grow.

Every feeling matters. Every day.

Little people.
Big feelings.

Mental health is part of how we think, feel, learn and connect with others. Children need care for their minds and emotions, just as they do for their bodies.





It is okay to have a difficult day.

Feeling sad, worried or frustrated does not mean a child is doing something wrong. Caring adults can help them understand their feelings and find support when they need it.

Children do not need to be happy all the time to feel loved and supported.

Notice the changes.
Make space to listen.

Children may show a difficult feeling before they can explain it. Look for changes from what is usual for that child.

1. **Sleep or appetite**

   Sleeping or eating noticeably more or less.

2. **Mood**

   More tears, irritability or outbursts.

3. **Connection**

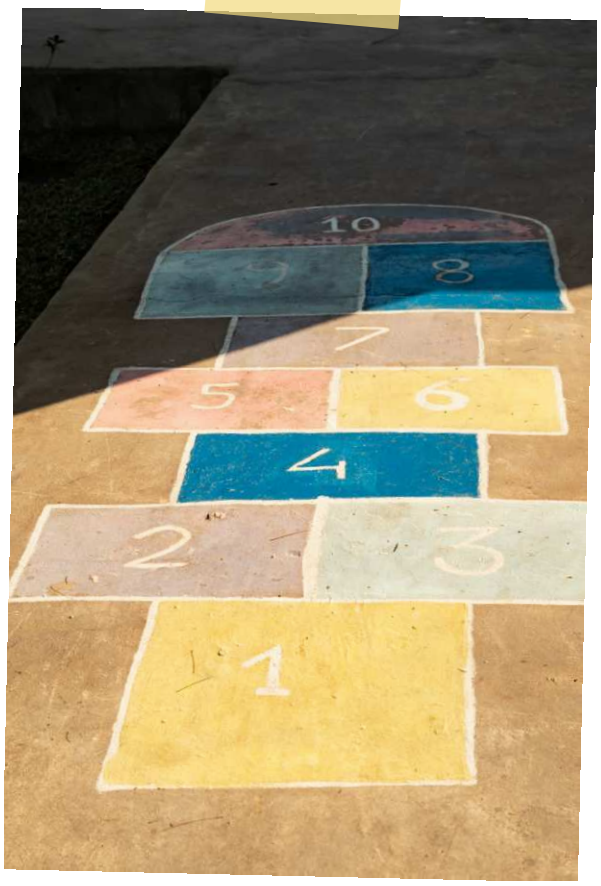
   Pulling away from friends, family or play.

4. **Interest**

   Losing interest in favourite activities.

5. **Concentration**

   Finding everyday tasks harder to manage.



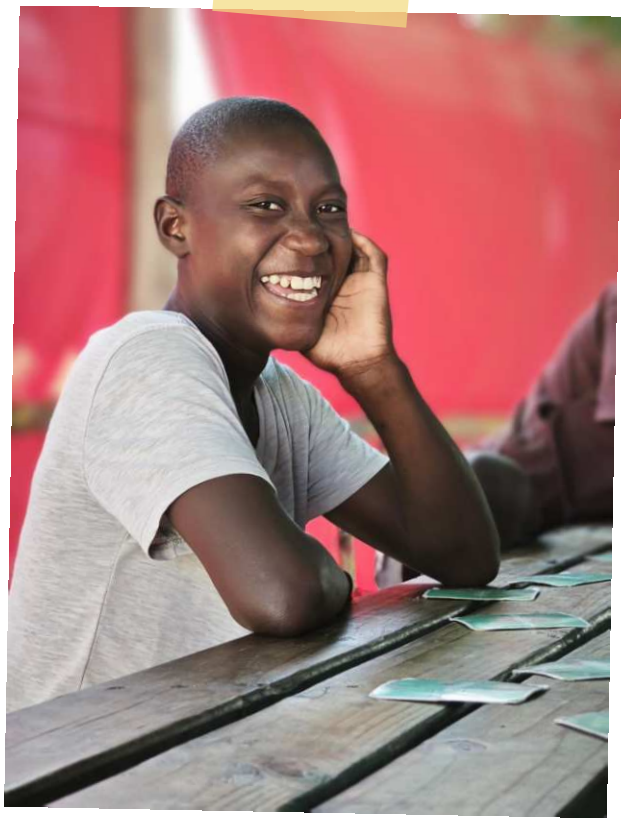
Notice patterns.
Be curious.
Stay kind.

These signs are a reason to check in, not a diagnosis. If changes persist, worsen or disrupt daily life, seek professional advice. See page 11.

Small moments.
Room to breathe.

There is no single way to feel better. Offer a few gentle choices and let children discover what helps them.





Create
Draw, paint or use colours to show a feeling.

Move
Dance, stretch, run or play a favourite game.

Explore
Enjoy fresh air and time outdoors together.

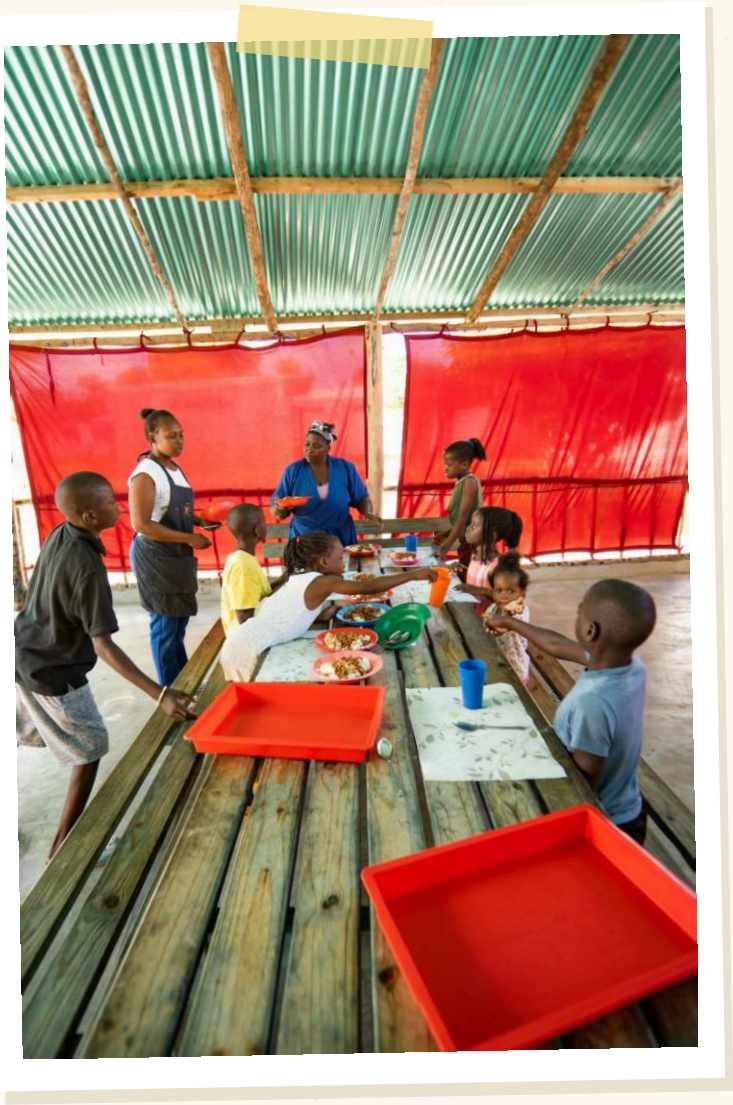
Connect
Talk to someone who feels safe and kind.

Pause
Try a few slow, comfortable breaths together.

Enjoy
Listen to music, share a story or have quiet time.

Everyday care.
A stronger sense of safety.

A safe space grows through ordinary moments of patience, predictability and connection.



Listen with your full attention

Put distractions aside and make room for their words.

Keep a gentle rhythm

Simple routines for meals, rest and play can offer reassurance.

Notice the effort

Celebrate trying, kindness and small steps forward.

Name feelings together

Use stories, pictures or play to explore emotions.

Be a calm example

Show how you pause, ask for help and repair mistakes.



Offer comfort in a way the child welcomes. Ask before a hug, and respect when they need space.

A little question can open a big conversation.

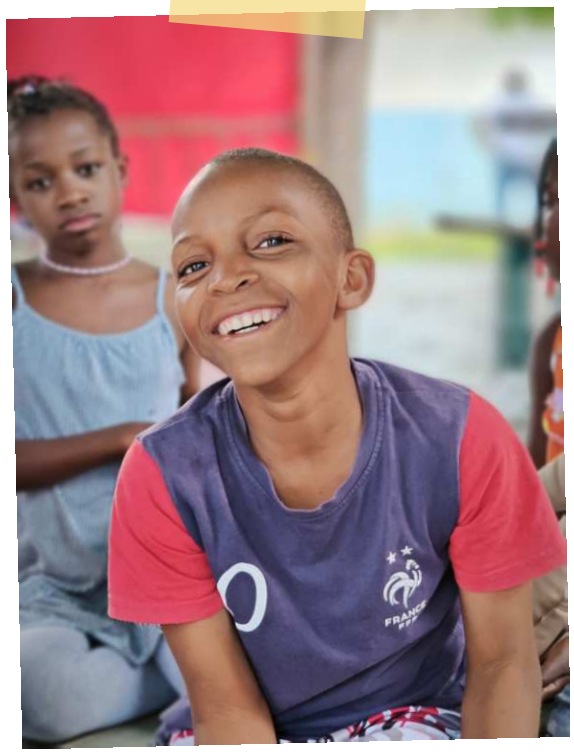
Choose a calm moment. Ask one question, listen without rushing and let the child set the pace.

What made you smile today?

What felt difficult today?

If your feeling had a colour, what would it be?

Would you like me to listen, or help you think it through?





Listen more.
Leave pauses.
Stay curious.

If talking feels hard, offer drawing, play or simply sitting together. Try again gently later.

How do you feel today?

Point to a feeling, name it or tell your own story. You can feel more than one thing at a time.



happy



loved



calm



proud



sad



worried



angry



hopeful

There is no wrong answer.
Your feelings can change, and that is okay.

All feelings are welcome.

Children need to know that they can share difficult feelings without losing our care or acceptance.

Make room for the feeling.

You might say:

**"I can see this is hard.
I am here with you."**



Keep behaviour safe.

"It is okay to feel angry.
It is not okay to hit.
Let us find a safe way to show it."



**Accept the feeling. Set a calm limit.
Help the child choose what to do next.**

A place to belong.
A space to grow.

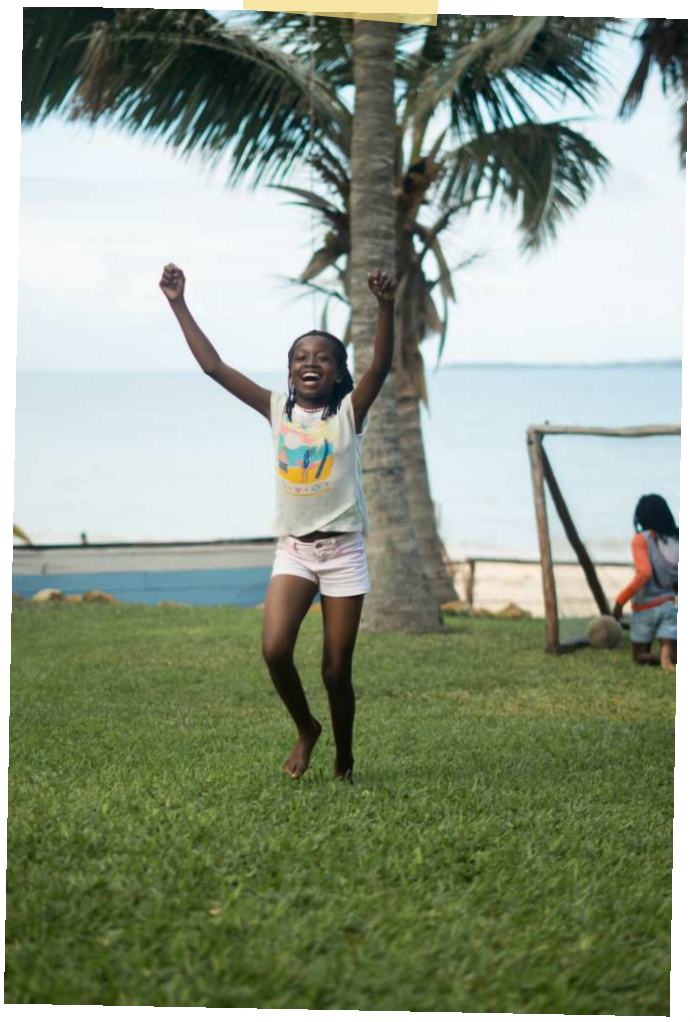
At Goodwill Mozambique, we believe every child deserves to feel safe, heard and supported, every single day.

Care is in the everyday.

In a familiar routine. In a shared story. In time to play, create and simply be a child.

Through caring relationships, creative play and daily support, we help children build confidence and a sense of connection.

Our team is here to listen, guide and care. Emotional wellbeing belongs at the heart of our home.



Together, we nurture more than a childhood.
We nurture a feeling of belonging.

Care works best together.

Parents, caregivers, teachers, volunteers and friends all have a part to play. Small, consistent acts of care matter.



Check in.

Ask how they are doing.

Offer steady care.

Be patient and predictable.

Celebrate effort.

Notice small steps.

You do not have to figure it out alone.

Everyday care matters. Sometimes a child also needs support from a qualified professional.

When to reach out



Ask for advice if changes in mood or behaviour persist, get worse, or affect sleep, eating, school, play or relationships. You can seek help sooner whenever you are concerned.

Start with a trusted health professional.

A doctor, nurse or qualified mental health professional can help you understand what is happening and discuss next steps. A school counsellor, where available, may also help.

If there is an immediate safety concern

If a child talks about harming themselves or someone else, or you cannot keep them safe, stay with them and seek urgent help at the nearest health facility or emergency service.

Caregivers need care, too. Take breaks, share the load and ask for support when you need it.

Every child deserves to feel they belong.





Thank you for being part of our family.

Every kind word, patient moment and open conversation helps our children feel supported.

To every person who supports Goodwill Mozambique: thank you for walking this journey with us.

Further reading for caring adults

UNICEF: Mental health and wellbeing
UNICEF: Talking with children about mental health
UNICEF: Supporting children with stress and anxiety
UNICEF: When to seek more support for a teenager

General information, not a diagnosis or individual treatment plan. Photographs show everyday life at Goodwill and do not indicate any child's mental health. Redesigned edition.