



EXPRESS YOURSELF

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH
WEEK 2021

PRIMARY SCHOOL & HOME RESOURCE

#CHILDRENSMENTALHEALTHWEEK

EXPRESS YOURSELF

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

Competition

In the build up and during Children's Mental Health week we are holding a School Games Dance competition.

We would like your school, bubble, family or individual to design and perform a dance routine based on the theme 'Express Yourself'.

Find more details on [page 3](#)

Webinar - 3rd February at 8pm

As part of the week, Stride Active are hosting a webinar for parents:

Join Tim and Shell from 'Imagine for Schools' as they discuss emotional wellbeing and resilience in children.

- How to be with your child in their emotions and encourage them to talk about them.
- Walking with your child as they encounter and deal with struggle and challenge.
- Helping your child to begin to control their emotions.

Book your place [HERE](#)

Activity Ideas

With the help of Place2Be, Young Minds and Strong Young Minds (Herefordshire), we have pulled together a booklet of activities that can help young people to think about how they can express their thoughts, feelings and emotions.

You can find these on [pages 4-8](#)

Further Information and Support

[Pages 9 and 10](#) have links to further information and support.

Be aware that if a child discloses safeguarding issues during these activities, schools should follow their normal safeguarding procedures and should make sure that the child involved is told who needs to be talked to and what will happen next.

EXPRESS YOURSELF

INTRODUCTION

Expressing yourself is about finding ways to share feelings, thoughts, or ideas, through creativity. This could be through art, music, writing and poetry, dance and drama, photography and film, sport and doing activities that make you feel good.

For Children's Mental Health Week 2021 we will be encouraging children (and adults) to explore the different ways we can express ourselves and the creative ways that we can share our feelings, thoughts and ideas.

What is self-expression and why is it important?

Self-expression is about communicating your individuality! This can be through words, clothing and hairstyle, or through art forms such as those listed above. Self-expression can help you to showcase YOU – your story, thoughts, feelings and emotions!

But we know this can also be a daunting prospect, so you might want to take things one step at a time. It's important that we all create the right environment, either in school, home, or virtually so that everyone can express themselves with freedom and safety.

Self-expression through creative experiences is a great way for you to express and cope with feelings. It can help you to reflect on things happening in life, such as lockdown, alongside actions, decisions and thoughts – rather than keep them buried deep down.

Let's celebrate uniqueness and individuality this Children's Mental Health Week!

DANCE

SCHOOL GAMES DANCE COMPETITION INFORMATION AND RULES

This activity can be done in school or at home.

Theme: Express Yourself

Format: whole class/group, family or individual from any year group

Judging: Performances will be judged based on

- Idea - originality/innovation
- Performance - Focus/enthusiasm
- Movement - Different actions/dynamics/space

Time: The routine should be no longer than 1 minute

Entries: Parents, please send your dance videos (recorded landscape) to your school.

Schools: Please choose a winner from your school and send the final video to Stride Active (1 entry per school)

by 3 pm on Thursday 4th February. You can email to kieram@strideactive.org

Please ensure that you have consent for all children used in the video to be on social media and for other promotion.

HOW AM I FEELING?

AN ACTIVITY TO ALLOW YOUNG PEOPLE TO EXPLORE EMOTIONS AND HOW THEY FEEL

This activity can be done in the classroom or at home.

Think of an emotion...

Can you mime / act out an emotion for your class or your family to guess? e.g. joy, sadness, worry, love, embarrassment. fear, peace, anger.

Why did you choose to act out that emotion?

How does that emotion make you feel? You could think about 3 different areas:

Physical: how does your body feel when you are feeling that emotion? Do you have shaky legs, does your heart beat faster, are you relaxed?

Thoughts: What is going through your head? Do you struggle to concentrate? Do you think things are going to go wrong?

Behaviours: How do you act when you are feeling that emotion? Are you very excited and can't sit still? Do you worry and go very quiet?

Can you write or draw these on your paper?

My emotion is

Physical

How does your body feel when you are feeling that emotion?

Thoughts

What is going through your head?

Behaviours

How do you act when you are feeling that emotion?

Remember: Everyone feels differently - what one person might feel, might not be the same as someone else.

CIRCLE TIME

AN ACTIVITY TO ALLOW YOUNG PEOPLE TO EXPLORE THEIR THOUGHTS

This activity can be done in the classroom or at home.

Sitting in a circle (or online if children are not physically in the same space), everyone takes a turn sharing something with the group. Warm up with simple ideas, like asking children to share their likes, dislikes and something about themselves. For example, go around the circle saying:

My favorite colour is...

If I had an hour of free time
then I would

One food I don't like is

When I am older, I would like to

Something you might not
know about me is

Next, ask the children in your class to imagine they got stuck on an island for a day (don't worry, a ship comes to rescue you). Take turns or ask for volunteers to answer the following questions:

What food would you like to
find on the island?

What music would you like
to hear playing?

How would you spend the
day?

If you could have any art materials with
you, what would they be and
what would you make?

Everyone is encouraged to be supportive and attentive when others share.

Children could do this as a writing or art exercise as part of their home learning

Remember: Everyone thinks differently and has different likes and dislikes. There are no right or wrong answers.

WHAT MAKES YOU, YOU!

AN ACTIVITY TO ALLOW YOUNG PEOPLE TO THINK ABOUT WHAT MAKES THEM INDIVIDUAL

This activity can be done in the classroom or at home.

We are all unique and individual, but what makes you, you?

What do you love doing? Are there things that make you feel happier when you are low, or help you to relax when you are worried?

Make a piece of artwork expressing yourself. It can be a picture, a sculpture, a poem, a piece of textiles, a photograph or film or even a dance or a song.

Afterwards, discuss how given the same basic task, they all created very different pieces of work. If you're at home, parents, siblings or other family members could try it too and have the same discussion.

Celebrate effort rather than the best 'art'.

Pupils can also submit their artwork to Strong Young Minds who will either display the art in shop windows in Hereford's Maylords Orchards or online through SYM website and social media. **All submissions (photos or recordings) need to be sent to harry@thecldtrust.org by 10th February 2021.**

A LETTER ABOUT HOW I'M FEELING

SOME YOUNG PEOPLE MAY FIND IT
EASIER TO WRITE DOWN THEIR
THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS

This activity can be done in the classroom or at home.

This simple template may help young people to express their feelings and understand what may have triggered them. The template could be used with individual children at home or small groups in school; it's a good starting point for discussions.

It's important not to ask children to share these with others unless they want to. Some of their writing may be personal and private.

Dear _____

I have been feeling _____

I have been feeling this way because _____

I have also been feeling _____

Because _____

To help me feel better I think it might help if _____

From _____

Angry

Sad

Frustrated

Lonely

Nervous

Irritated

Scared

Stressed

Confused

MUSIC

AN ACTIVITY TO ALLOW YOUNG PEOPLE TO EXPLORE HOW THEY FEEL WHEN LISTENING TO MUSIC

This activity may need to be adapted by teachers to be done at home.

Watch this short video by Classical MPR with your group and discuss the different ways in which music can change how we feel and express ourselves: <https://bit.ly/2GjLRMW>

(Teacher/parent note: some children may be distressed by scenes of the toy breaking at around 2m30s. The toy is later fixed but please consider the age and needs of your group/child and perhaps listen to the audio instead if more appropriate).

Research shows that people feel more positive after singing to music, than they do just listening to music.

If safe to do so, try this activity:

- Choose a song from the suggestions below (or one of your own)
- Learn the words and sing it together (some children might prefer to join in by clapping, clicking their fingers, using percussion instruments, miming or dancing)
- Encourage some pupils to sign some of the key words/phrases.

Have a go using these songs:

- 'If you want to sing out, sing out' by Cat Stevens <https://bit.ly/3iesKBg>
- 'Express yourself' by Labrinth <https://bit.ly/3kSm8tS>

FURTHER INFORMATION AND IDEAS

The Grow Your Mindset Podcast

Brain boggling facts, animals on walkie talkies and how broccoli and friendship have more in common than you think. Hosted by an entertaining class of 12 year old students, The Grow Your Mind Podcast uses storytelling, interviews and humour to increase children's understanding of their mental health and ways to be resilient. Download the free episode-themed colouring-in sheets and relax while you listen to topics exploring gratitude, healthy friendships, courage, benefit mindset, the importance of movement and hope! Great for either school or home!

[Find out more](#)

ChildLine Calm Zone

There are lots of ways to feel calmer. It's about finding what works for you. Try some of these breathing exercises, activities, games and videos to help let go of stress.

[Find lots of ideas here](#)

'Like You: Mindfulness for Kids' podcast

10 minute mindful activities, for primary aged children. They use breathing, affirmations, music, and imagination to explore feelings, relieve anxiety, encourage self-esteem, and grow empathy, all while having fun!

[Find out more here](#)

SUPPORT



#CHILDRENSMENTALHEALTHWEEK

Strong Young Minds (SYM)

The SYM programme (Herefordshire) provide support for young people (10 - 26 yrs) to address issues which can have an adverse effect on their mental health and wellbeing, such as anxiety, depression, eating disorders, self harm, bullying, cyberbullying, relationship breakdown, employability, low self esteem, body image and loss.

Young people are offered the opportunity for 121 support, employability training, brief intervention therapy, workshops and groups in addition to peer listening and support. They also work with parents/carers and professionals.

-  01432 269245
-  symproject@thecldtrust.org
-  @StrongYMinds
-  @strongyoungminds

No Wrong Door (Herefordshire)

One to one support available for 11-25 year olds in Herefordshire. Whether you feel anxious and need someone to listen, or are in need of more specialist support, no wrong door can help.

-  nwd@hvoss.org.uk
-  NoWrongDoorHereford

NSPCC

Coronavirus (COVID-19) advice and support for parents and carers

[Taking care of children and young people](#)

MIND

The national charity has information to support children and young people

[MIND for children and young people](#)

Young Minds

Tips, advice and guidance on getting support for your mental health

[Coronavirus help and support](#)

Place2Be

National mental health charity supporting young people and schools

[Wellbeing activities for families](#)

Mental Health Foundation

National Charity working to support good mental health

[Advice to support your mental wellbeing while at home](#)