



Introduction to Mental Health Awareness Week 2021

A collection of decorative elements including a green leafy branch, an orange swirl, a small green leaf, and a pink starburst flower.

This week is Mental Health Week

A large blue leaf with white veins and a green leafy branch.

What is mental health?





What is mental health?



Mental health is made up of our thoughts, feelings, mood and behaviour.

We all have mental health, just like we all have physical health.

Our mental health can change depending on our experiences and circumstances throughout our lives.





Introduction to 'Connect with Nature'



We are thinking about improving our mental health by **connecting with nature.**

Connecting with nature is about building a relationship with nature by noticing the environment around us.

This has benefits for our physical and mental health.





Why is connecting with nature good for our mental health?



Feeling happier



Feeling less stressed or angry



Having more and better- quality sleep



Feeling less worried



Being more aware and engaged



Increasing self-esteem and self-confidence



Improving attention and concentration



Encouraging us to be active



Helping us to be more sociable and friendly.



Finding your own space in nature: **Bring nature in**



Eat breakfast in front of the window, observing the nature outside.



Grow vegetables from your windowsill



Open a window and listen to the different sounds.



Watch a wildlife programme.





How can we connect with nature?



Enjoy reading outside on our reading benches



Walk in the garden area, listen to the birds and enjoy the fresh air



Walk along the pathways around the school field – notice all of the wild life around us.



Enjoy your class forest school sessions, tune into nature, what can you see, smell, hear and feel?





How can we connect with nature?



Go for a walk,
run or cycle



Stretch or practice yoga
outside



Play football with
your friends





How can we connect with nature?



Finding your own space in nature: **Take a moment to be mindful**

Mindfulness is the skill of paying attention to what is happening in your mind and body right now, without judgement. You could take a mindful moment as you:



Walk in your local natural space



Water indoor or outdoor plants



Draw or paint the view from your window



Finding your own space in nature: **Get creative**

Creative activities you could try:



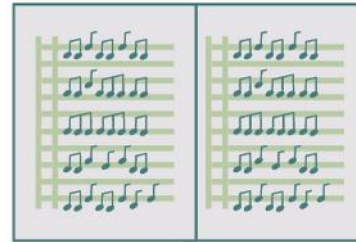
Take photographs of landscapes and natural objects



Write some creative sentences



Do a quick sketch of a natural object



Write a poem or song lyrics



Collect natural objects and make a handmade card for a loved one



Play music outside



Connecting with others: **Outdoors**



Play sports with friends



Go for a group walk



Visit local heritage spots



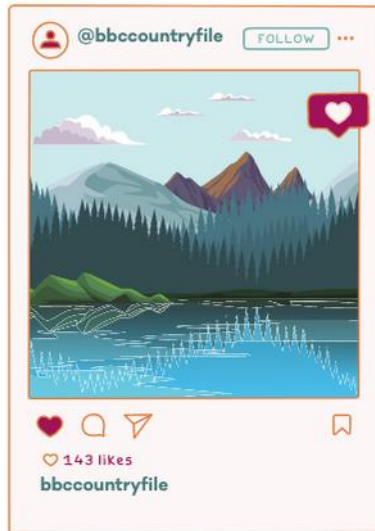
Have a picnic



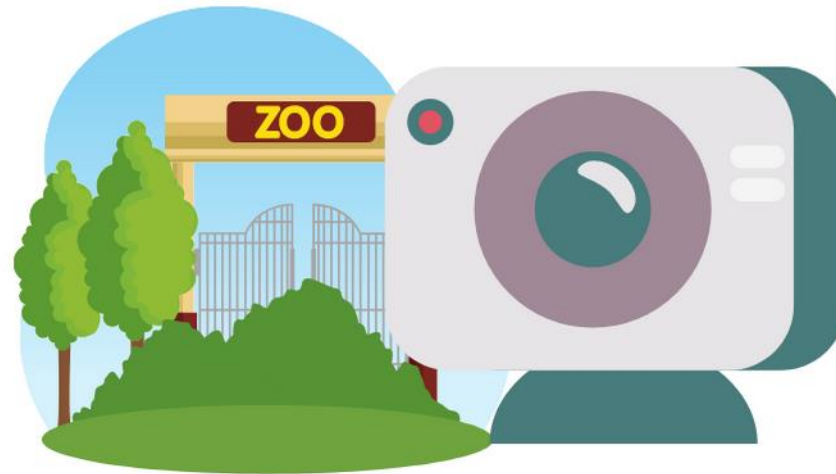
Do gardening with family



Connecting with others: From home



Watch nature programmes



Visit gardens or watch live webcams from zoos across the UK, all from the comfort of your sofa!



Run a competition with your friends – who can grow the tallest sunflower or the most tomatoes?





How can we connect with nature?



Connecting with others: **At school**



Go on a class nature walk in the local area



Organise a big litter clean-up of the school grounds or a local park



Sign up to the RSPB Big Schools' Birdwatch





How can we connect with nature?



Being part of something bigger, taking action



Use reusable drink bottles



Recycle as much as possible



Turn off lights when you leave the room



Donate old clothes to charity or the clothing bank



Grow flowers on your windowsill that are good for bees



Pick up litter when you are out for a walk



Sign up and share a petition or campaign about protecting our environment





How to engage with Mental Health Awareness Week



Twitter: [@mentalhealth](https://twitter.com/mentalhealth)

Facebook: [@mentalhealthfoundation](https://www.facebook.com/mentalhealthfoundation)

Instagram: [@mentalhealthfoundation](https://www.instagram.com/mentalhealthfoundation)

LinkedIn: [@mental-health-foundation](https://www.linkedin.com/company/mental-health-foundation)

#ConnectWithNature

#MentalHealthAwarenessWeek

