

EXPRESS YOURSELF

#ChildrensMentalHealthWeek

Place2Be's

CHILDREN'S
MENTAL HEALTH
WEEK

1 - 7 FEBRUARY 2021

ASSEMBLY GUIDE FOR PRIMARY-AGE CHILDREN

These ideas can be adapted for use in school, for home-schooling, online lessons or independent learning.

AIMS



1. To explore the theme of **'EXPRESS YOURSELF'** in all its different forms.
2. To make links between healthy self-expression and good mental health.
3. To explore healthy ways of expressing ourselves.

TIME REQUIRED



30 MINS

MATERIALS REQUIRED



- Assembly slides for primary-aged pupils.
- Images, videos, songs and stories about creative self-expression, e.g. this clip by Pond5: <https://bit.ly/2S8kQin>
- Stories and examples of the benefits of creative self-expression in difficult times, e.g. this clip by Apple: <https://bit.ly/3iat4kB>
- A story to illustrate self-expression, e.g. Beautiful Oops by Barney Saltzberg: <https://bit.ly/2S6iJLM>
- An example of a short creative challenge, e.g. e.g. this two-minute origami challenge: <https://bit.ly/3ieWwFO> or this one-minute Squiggle game: <https://bit.ly/3jJBdxV>





BIG QUESTION:

WHAT DOES 'EXPRESS YOURSELF' MEAN?

[corresponds to slide 2]

TEACHING POINT

'EXPRESS YOURSELF' is about finding creative ways to share feelings, thoughts, or ideas, through things like art, writing, music, dance and doing things that make you feel good.

NB. Being able to express yourself is not about being the best at something or putting on a performance for others. It is about finding a way to show how you are feeling that can help you feel good about yourself.

INTRODUCE AND EXPLAIN THE THEME FOR CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH WEEK:

This Children's Mental Health Week we are exploring the different ways we can express ourselves, and the creative ways that we can share our feelings, our thoughts and our ideas.

(If possible try to give a real example of something creative you and other staff enjoy — such as dancing or baking for example — and how it makes you feel.)

Watch this short video (*corresponds to slide 3*) and see if you can spot the different ways people are expressing themselves (or find a story or clip of your own): <https://bit.ly/2S8kQin>

What did you spot?

Share ideas and reinforce examples of the many different ways that we can be creative and express ourselves.



BIG QUESTION:

WHY DOES FINDING HEALTHY WAYS TO EXPRESS YOURSELF MATTER?

[corresponds to slide 4]

TEACHING POINT

Finding creative, enjoyable ways to share our thoughts, feelings and ideas can make us feel good and help our mental health, especially when we face tough situations or difficult times.

It matters because when we feel good about ourselves, it can help our mental health and wellbeing.

Step 2 continued

RECAP: WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?

Remember, just as we look after our physical health (our bodies) by doing things like exercising, eating well and getting enough sleep, we also need to look after our mental health (our minds).

One way of caring for our mental health is to notice and share how we are feeling. Expressing ourselves in creative ways can help us do this.

If appropriate, remind pupils of a challenging time (like lockdown) that saw lots of people finding creative ways to help them through it (such as gardening or growing

plants, mindful colouring, drawing, reading or writing stories, making models, dancing, baking, etc.).

OPTIONAL — show this short video from Apple called "Creativity goes on": <https://bit.ly/3iat4kB>

Have a go at thinking of your own example or story that can be used to highlight the benefits of creative expression during difficult times.

Reinforce the understanding that finding ways to express ourselves creatively can be a good way to look after our minds.

BIG QUESTION:



HOW DOES BEING CREATIVE AND EXPRESSING YOURSELF MAKE YOU FEEL?

TEACHING POINT

[corresponds to slide 5]

We are all different and will find different creative ways to express ourselves.

Finding healthy ways to express ourselves can make us feel good, happy, relaxed, excited, connected ...

Ask staff and pupils (if possible) to share the creative things they do to feel good and express themselves.

Read or share the story "Beautiful Oops" (or find one of your own) to reinforce the idea that we can find creativity in many different ways.

Remember, (corresponds to slide 6) when we express

ourselves we don't have to be a great artist or a wonderful dancer. It's not about being the very best at something or putting on a performance. Let's encourage each other to find lots of different ways to get creative and express ourselves.

Watch this animated video of "Beautiful Oops": <https://bit.ly/2S6iJLM>

BIG QUESTION:



HOW CAN WE HELP AND SUPPORT EACH OTHER TO GET CREATIVE AND EXPRESS OURSELVES THIS CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH WEEK?

TEACHING POINT

[corresponds to slide 7]

Finding healthy ways to express ourselves creatively is one way of looking after our mental health.

EXPLORE YOUR CREATIVITY

Ask pupils to think about what they are going to try this week. They might want to try something different, or they might want to share with a friend something creative that makes them feel good.

OPTIONAL - invite pupils to have a go at the one-minute Squiggle game by Place2Be's Art Room team. Watch the demo: <https://bit.ly/3jJBdxV>

OPTIONAL - invite pupils to have a go at this two-minute creative challenge with you (or you can find one of your own). For this origami challenge, each child should have their own piece of paper. The challenge is to make a dog!

Watch and follow these instructions: <https://bit.ly/3ieWwFO>

Provide some basic materials and encourage your pupils to individualise their origami dogs, for example, by colouring it, making it from magazine paper, decorating it, making the tiniest dog or the biggest dog they can etc.

For both of the options above, discuss with your pupils how, given the same basic task, they all came up with their own individual ways of expressing themselves through that task. Celebrate effort rather than success, and draw attention to positive emotion, e.g. laughing, connecting, and enjoying a challenge.

SUPPORTING THIS YEAR'S CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

Ask pupils to come up with their own creative challenges this week. This could be using art materials, music, words, dance, digital design, or growing and planting seeds (creating an indoor garden), and creating recipes etc.

How are they going to support their friends to try something creative?

Invite pupils to share their creative ideas and experiences this week by drawing, doodling or writing about them on the doodle wall (or virtual wall).

OTHER WAYS TO SUPPORT CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

1. Hold a '**DRESS TO EXPRESS**' day to raise vital funds for children's mental health [\[https://bit.ly/3mliHwR\]](https://bit.ly/3mliHwR)
2. Take part in '**THE BIGGEST SING**' world record attempt youngvoices.co.uk/biggestsing
3. Try some of our **suggested class / group activities** from our free schools resources pack
4. Spread the word by sharing how you plan to take part on social media! Don't forget to use #ChildrensMentalHealthWeek