

Children's Mental Health Week

1-7th February 2021



THEME: Express yourself



Children's mental health charity Place2Be has set up Children's Mental Health Week 2021. Its aim is to highlight the importance of mental health within children and young people.

This year's theme is Express yourself!

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, and doing activities that make you feel good.

Free resources on the Place 2be website

<https://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk/>

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

VIRTUAL ASSEMBLY



You and your students can access The Place2Be's free virtual assembly hosted by Blue Peter's Lindsey Russell and CBBC Presenter Champion Rhys Stephenson. The assembly will be available to all schools and families at 9am on Monday 1st February.

As the majority of pupils are now at home, the assembly will provide an easy way to bring the nation's children together (virtually) with a positive message about the power of creative self-expression.

[Click here for further information](#)



Share how you're getting involved and inspire others around the UK and beyond by [filling in ThePlace2Be's short form](#) and adding yourself to their interactive Children's Mental Health Week map.

You can also post pictures and talk about your event or activity on social media using the hashtag **#ChildrensMentalHealthWeek**. Download their free social media guide with template posts, downloadable images, and more ideas to inspire you.

[Click here for more information](#)



CIRCLE TIME

- 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 FAVOURITE
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.

<https://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk/>

DRESS TO EXPRESS



Hold a '**DRESS TO EXPRESS**' day (<https://bit.ly/3mliHwR>) and encourage the children to express themselves through their clothes, hair etc. while raising vital funds for Place2Be. Pupils could wear their favourite colour or choose a range of colours that express how they're feeling. Colour can be very personal and mean different things to different people, so this is a great opportunity to encourage self-expression and celebrate a diverse range of emotions.

Provide opportunities at school for children who may not have resources for this at home. For example, you could provide access to the fancy dress box in the classroom.

Then try the following activity:

- ask the children about what they have chosen to wear and why
- discuss how we can use colour to help make sense of how we're feeling, who we are and the world we live in

<https://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk/>

2. PICK A QUOTATION THAT MEANS SOMETHING TO YOU

Encourage students to choose a quotation about self-expression that resonates with them. This could have been said by a famous person, or selected from a song or book etc.

Here are some examples you could use:

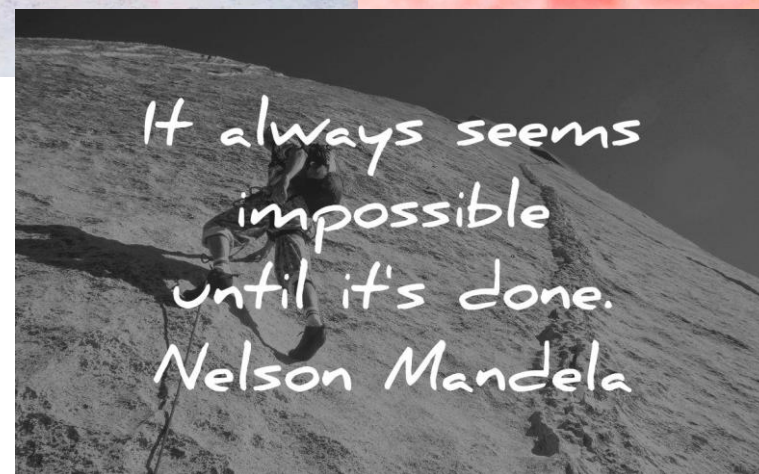
- Brenda Ueland: "Everybody is talented because everybody who is human has something to express."
- Fay Weldon: "The desire for self-expression afflicts people when they feel there is something of themselves which is not getting through to the outside world."
- Deeyah Khan: "Self-expression should not be a challenge that demands extraordinary talent but should be a right accessible to all."
- Criss Jami: "Everyone has their own ways of expression. I believe we all have a lot to say, but finding ways to say it is more than half the battle."
- Mahatma Gandhi: "I want freedom for the full expression of my personality."
- Maya Angelou: "There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you."

Ask your students to put their quotation in the middle of a large piece of paper. Allow them to use art and craft materials to express themselves creatively around the text. You might want to use some of the following questions as prompts: How does this quote make you feel? What does it make you think of? What colours or shapes reflect how you feel when you read this quote?



People will forget
what you said, people
will forget what
you did, but people
will NEVER forget
how you made
them feel.

MAYA ANGELOU



3. MAKE A PHOTO MONTAGE OR SHORT VIDEO THAT EXPRESSES WHO YOU ARE AS A PERSON

Encourage your students to make a short video or photo montage about themselves. This could include their current likes and dislikes, strengths, interests, dreams and passions.

Alternatively, you may like to challenge your students to complete a 7-day photo challenge during **Children's Mental Health Week**, for instance taking one photo a day that captures expresses some aspect of themselves, either literally or in abstract form.



Links to Place2Be's Resources



Primary



Secondary

[Click here to take you to primary and secondary resources](#)



Express yourself - Children's Mental Health Week toolkit

[Click here to access Anna Freud toolkit](#)



[Click here to watch video](#)

Lockdown time capsule ideas

- All about me worksheet
 - My favourites
 - My best friend/friends
 - When I grow up I want to be
- Handprints/drawings of people living at home
- Letter to myself
- How I am feeling?
 - Words to describe how I feel
 - What have I learned from this experience
 - What I am most thankful for
 - The 3 things I am excited to do when lockdown is over
- Interview your parents/carers
- What am I doing to keep busy at home?
- Living through history, journals, local newspaper articles, pictures
- Alternative ways to celebrate special occasions?



Design your own T-Shirt

You will need

- An old T-Shirt

Some suggested decorating materials

- Fabric Pens
- Needle and thread
- Tie dye and elastic band – (you can also use vegetables such as beetroot)
- Fabric glue and pompoms, sequins, glitter, etc
- Fabric paint and Paintbrush
- Scissors

You may have other things you want to try this is fine remember it is about expressing yourself!



Postcard Art Activity

POSTCARD

FROM: _____

TO: _____

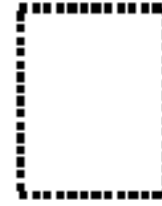
Provided by TherapistAid.com © 2013

The printout depicts the back of a basic postcard— it's a bit of a blank canvas.

Here's how we use it: Children write a short message to someone who they miss, someone who they are frustrated with, or to someone with whom they want to share something. On the back of the paper (the side without any print), the children can represent their feelings or a message through artwork.

You can use this template on the next slide as you see fit.

POSTCARD



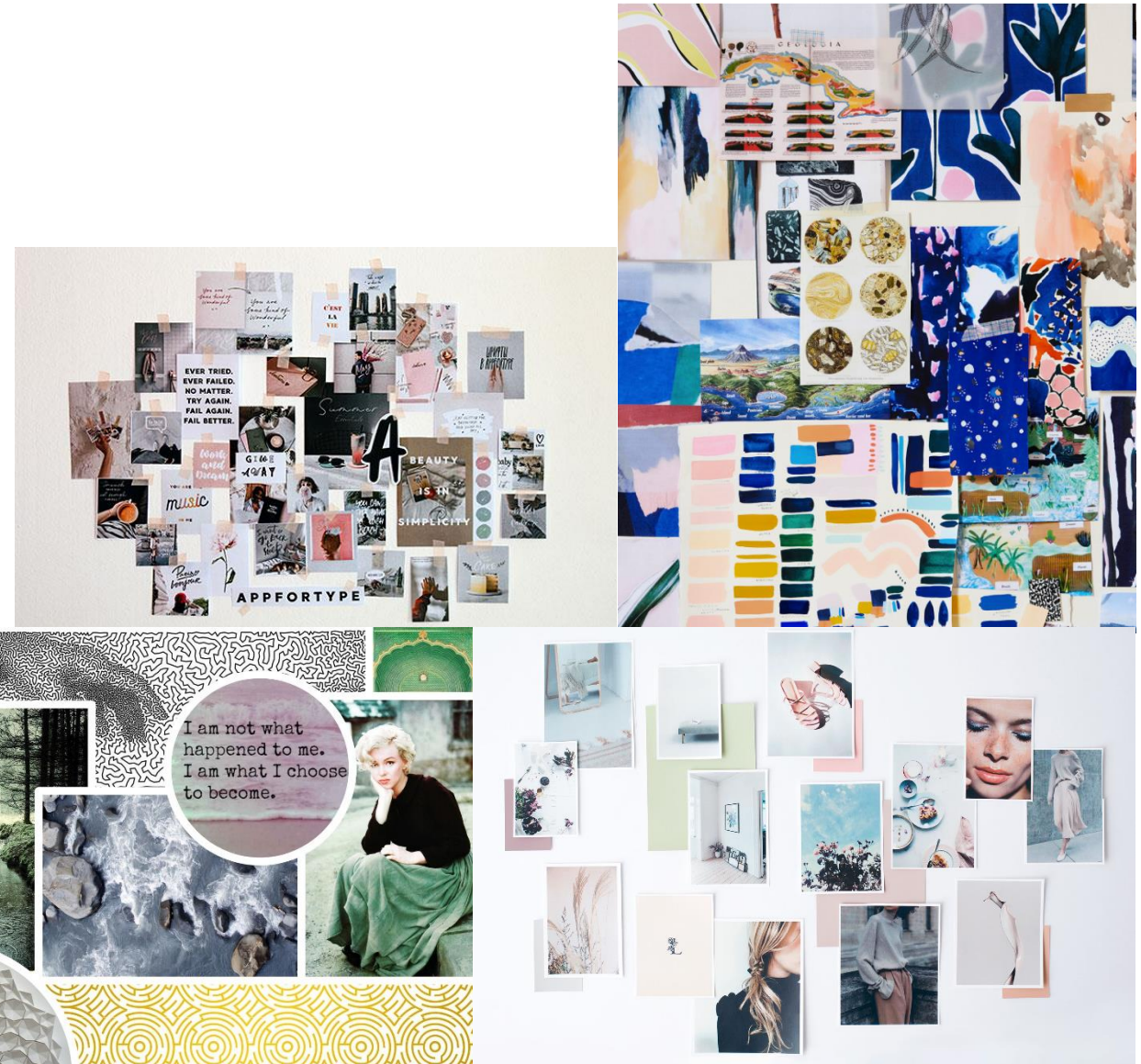
FROM:

TO:

Provided by TherapistAid.com © 2013

Create a mood board

Express yourself by creating a mood board. You can use it as a way to express your goals, or you can put up pictures that make you happy or remind you of happy memories



Upcoming Mental health awareness days



1 st to 7 th February	Children's Mental Health Week
Thursday 4 th February	Time to Talk Day
Tuesday 9 th February	Safer Internet Day
1 st to 7 th March	Eating Disorder Awareness Week
Monday 8 th March	International Women's Day
Friday 12 th March	World Sleep Day
Friday 19 th March	Disabled Access Day
Friday 19 th March	Red Nose Day (alternates with Sport Relief)
Tuesday 30 th March	World Bipolar Day

<https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/media/2296/mental-health-wellbeing-calendar-spring-term-2021.pdf>