

EXPRESS YOURSELF

#ChildrensMentalHealthWeek

Place2Be's

CHILDREN'S
MENTAL HEALTH
WEEK

1 - 7 FEBRUARY 2021

ASSEMBLY GUIDE FOR SECONDARY-AGED YOUNG PEOPLE

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 develop healthy ways of expressing ourselves and supporting others to do so.

TIME REQUIRED



30 MINS

MATERIALS REQUIRED



- Video clips, images, lyrics or stories that provide examples of self-expression, such as this clip by Pond5: <https://bit.ly/2S8kQin>
- An inspiring story, such as "Incredible Trash Fashion". Listen to how Kiki, a transgender young person, finds self-expression through fashion design: <https://bit.ly/3jdwMLD>
- A video clip that explains what creative wellbeing is, e.g. <https://bit.ly/348D74z>
- Video clips and stories that illustrate diverse creativity and self-expression, such as this spoken word piece by George the Poet: <https://bit.ly/2GawSFh>
- A two-minute creative challenge, such as this origami activity: <https://bit.ly/3I3mIW5> or this one-minute Squiggle game: <https://bit.ly/3jJBdxV>



BIG QUESTION:

WHAT DOES 'EXPRESS YOURSELF' MEAN?

TEACHING POINT

[corresponds to slide 2]

"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.

Engage in a discussion about what **"express yourself"** means and what it can look like — share definitions and examples.

OPTIONAL

— to reinforce the discussion, share this video clip by Pond5 showing a number of different ways that you can express yourself: <https://bit.ly/2S8kQin>



BIG QUESTION:

WHY DOES FINDING HEALTHY WAYS TO EXPRESS YOURSELF MATTER?

TEACHING POINT

[corresponds to slide 3]

Finding healthy ways to express ourselves creatively is one way of looking after our mental health. When we are able to find creative, enjoyable ways to share our thoughts, feelings and ideas, this can make us feel good and help our mental health, especially through challenging times.

Step 2 continued

DISCUSS

We often get told by our family, friends, school, communities and through social media how we 'should' look, think, speak, and act. These constant messages about what we ought to do, and who we ought to be, can make it difficult to let go of expectations and express our true selves. But being able to do so is important for our wellbeing.

SHARE AN INSPIRING STORY

Share a story such as "Incredible Trash Fashion" - a story about Kiki, a transgender young person, finding self-expression and a creative outlet through fashion design, or share one of your own.

Watch the story: <https://bit.ly/3jdwMLD>

Discuss how creativity helps to support Kiki's wellbeing. You could pose some of the following questions:

- How does society often expect young people to look, think, speak and act? And where do these ideas come from? (point out that expectations may vary depending on race, culture and religion)
- Do these expectations stop you from expressing your true self?
- How does that make you feel?

Try and find an example of your own to illustrate the importance of being able to express yourself creatively.

ALTERNATIVE OPTION

Discuss how self-expression can help boost and support your wellbeing.

Watch this video illustrating the different ways in which creative self-expression can help to support your wellbeing: <https://bit.ly/348D74z>

Link to research or evidence about mental wellbeing and creative self-expression.

Here are a few things you could mention:

- Being creative and expressing yourself can help you to relax and de-stress. This can generate "feel-good" endorphins which can lift your mood, help you feel empowered, and create a sense of identity and achievement.
- Creative self-expression can also help to boost your self-esteem, connect with others, and give you purpose and meaning.



BIG QUESTION:

WHAT CAN CREATIVE SELF-EXPRESSION LOOK LIKE?

TEACHING POINT

[corresponds to slide 4]

We are all different and will find different creative ways to express ourselves. This year Children's Mental Health Week encourages you to explore possibilities and find what works for you.

EITHER:

Watch this video clip of George the Poet performing a spoken word piece about the theme of "possibilities". Use this to start a discussion about the possibilities for each of us to explore our own creativity this Children's Mental Health Week: <https://bit.ly/2GawSFh>

OR

Invite students and staff to reflect or share examples of how they, or others, have expressed themselves creatively.

Reinforce that this is not about performance or being the best at something.



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 5]

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

Step 4 continued

EXPLORE YOUR CREATIVITY

Challenge students to explore their self-expression and to try something new. They can also share with a friend something creative that helps them.

Invite students to take part in a two-minute creative challenge, or share some examples of a creative challenge of their own.

For example, you could invite students to join in with this origami challenge to make a paper duck! For this challenge, each student should have their own piece of paper.

Watch and follow these instructions: <https://bit.ly/3I3mIW5>

Alternative option: You could invite students to try this one-minute Squiggle game by The Art Room at Place2Be.

Each student will need their own pen/pencil and paper.

Watch the demo: <https://bit.ly/3jJBdxV>

SUPPORTING THIS YEAR'S CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

Share the things that work for you and how self-expression can support your wellbeing.

Invite students to share their creative ideas and experiences this week by 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>
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**