



Mental Health Awareness Week

Bringing Nature into Our Lives



Aim

- To explore how nature can help us to look after our mental health.
- To think about ways that we can bring nature into our lives.

This resource is fully in line with the Learning Outcomes and Core Themes outlined in the PSHE Association's [Programme of Study](#).

Mental Health

Just like our bodies, it is important we look after our minds too.

What does 'mental health' mean?

Mental health is all about how we are feeling, the thoughts we are having and how this affects the choices we make and how we behave. It is also about how able we are to cope with what is happening in our daily lives.

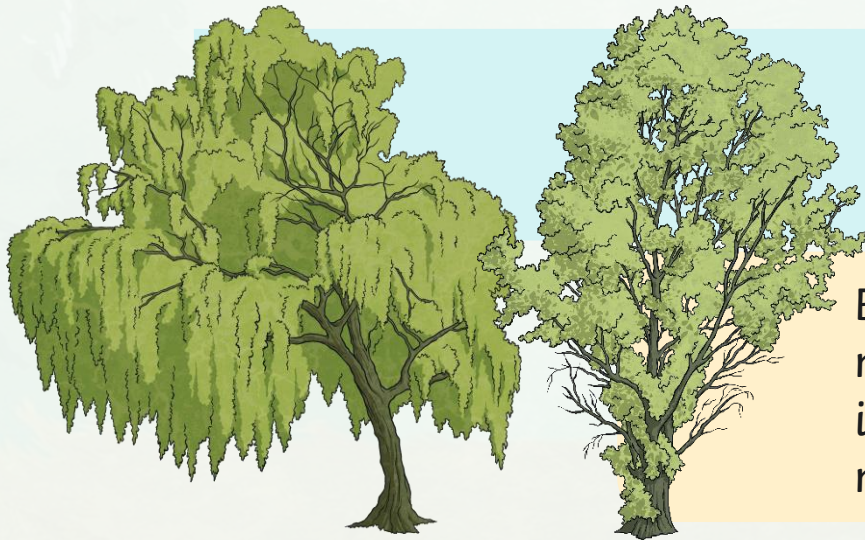


Mental Health



There is a lot we can do to look after our mental health, to help our minds feel well and to feel better if we aren't feeling so good.


Each year, Mental Health Awareness Week is held to help people of all ages learn about what mental health is, learn what we can all do to look after our own and each other's mental health and understand that it is good to talk about how we are feeling.



This year's theme is 'Nature' and how it can help us all to feel well.

Being able to access nature and the natural environment is incredibly important in looking after our mental health.

Nature and Mental Health



Why do you think nature
and the natural
environment can help to
keep our minds healthy?

Nature and Mental Health

Spending time in nature, or bringing nature into our lives in any way we can, helps us to do many things, including:



Feel happy, calm, settled and relaxed.



Keep our bodies healthy, which helps our minds to feel good.



Learn a new skill or gain new knowledge and therefore feel good about ourselves.



Manage uncomfortable feelings like worry and stress.



Make connections with others and the world around us.

Bringing Nature into Our Lives

What could we do to help us feel close to nature?

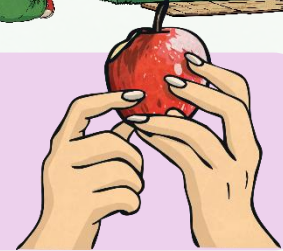


Bringing Nature into Our Lives

We could grow plants. This could be in our own outdoor space or in a shared space, like an allotment or community garden.



We could go fruit picking and then make something out of the fruit that we bring home.



We could bring nature into our homes. This could include having potted plants, buying fresh flowers, putting up pictures of nature, listening to natural sounds, having objects made of natural materials around us or watching nature documentaries.



Bringing Nature into Our Lives

We could look out of our window and see what signs of nature we can spot. We might install a bird feeder in our garden or on our window and see who visits.



We could spend time outdoors. This might be going for a walk or a bike ride. It might include drawing, painting or taking pictures of what we see while we are outside. Just appreciating the natural world can make us feel good.



We could help the environment. This might be as part of a community group or a lifestyle choice we make.

We could connect with animals. This might be learning more about the natural world, spending time with our own pets or interacting with animals that we are allowed to visit.



Bringing Nature into Our Lives

However you decide to bring nature into your life, it has to feel right for you.

Make a choice that works for you and those who look after you and one that makes you feel good on the inside.

How are you going to bring nature into your life?

How could you encourage others to bring nature into their lives?

Reflection

Help to Feel Better

It is perfectly normal to experience a wide range of feelings — some of these feel good and others feel uncomfortable.

However, if uncomfortable feelings affect our thoughts and behaviour in a way that hurts us or others, it is important that we take action and make choices to feel better by talking to someone we trust and asking for help.

We might also need to ask for help for a friend or family member to feel better too.

In this moment of quiet, think of an adult at home or in school that you could talk to and ask for help if you needed to. This needs to be someone you trust and feel comfortable sharing things with.



