



# EXPRESS YOURSELF

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**CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH  
WEEK 2021**

**SECONDARY SCHOOL & HOME RESOURCE**

**#CHILDRENSMENTALHEALTHWEEK**

# EXPRESS YOURSELF

## ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

### Competition

In the build up and during Children's Mental Health week we are holding a School Games Dance competition.

We would like your school / families to design and perform a dance routine based on the theme 'Express Yourself'.

Find more details on [page 3](#)

### Webinars

As part of the week, Stride Active are hosting a webinar for parents:

Join Tim and Shell from 'Imagine for Schools' as they discuss emotional wellbeing and resilience in children and young people.

- How to be with your child in their emotions & encourage them to talk about them
- Walking with your child as they encounter and deal with struggle and challenge
- Helping your child to begin to control their emotions

Book your place [HERE](#)

### Activity Ideas

With the help of Place2Be and Strong Young Minds (Herefordshire), we have pulled together a booklet of activities that can help young people to think about how they can express their thoughts, feelings and emotions. Some activities you are able to share directly with young people, whilst others may need teacher facilitation.

You can find these on [pages 4-8](#)

### Further Information and Support

[Pages 9 and 10](#) have links to further information and support.

Be aware that if a child discloses safeguarding issues during these activities, schools should follow their normal safeguarding procedures and should make sure that the child involved is told who needs to be talked to and what will happen next.

# EXPRESS YOURSELF

## INTRODUCTION

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.

For Children's Mental Health Week 2021 we will be encouraging children (and adults) to explore the different ways we can express ourselves, and the creative ways that we can share our feelings, our thoughts and our ideas.

### What is self-expression and why is it important?

Self-expression is about communicating your individuality! This can be through words, clothing and hairstyle, or through art forms such as those listed above. Self-expression can help you to showcase YOU – your story, thoughts, feelings and emotions!

But this can also make us feel vulnerable, so you might want to take things one step at a time. 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.

Self-expression through creative experiences is a great way for you to express and cope with feelings. It can help you to reflect on things happening in life, such as lockdown, alongside actions, decisions and thoughts – rather than keep them buried deep down.

Let's celebrate uniqueness and individuality this Children's Mental Health Week!



#CHILDRENSMENTALHEALTHWEEK

# DANCE

## SCHOOL GAMES DANCE COMPETITION INFORMATION AND RULES

This activity can be done in school or at home.

**Theme:** Express Yourself

**Format:** whole class/group, family or individual from any year group

**Judging:** Performances will be judged based on

- Idea - originality/innovation
- Performance - Focus/enthusiasm
- Movement - Different actions/dynamics/space

**Time:** The routine should be no longer than 1 minute

**Entries:** Parents/students, please send your dance videos (recorded landscape) to your school.

**Schools:** Please choose a winner from your school and send the final video to Stride Active (1 entry per school) by **3pm on Thursday 4th February**. You can email to **kieram@strideactive.org**

Please ensure that you have consent for all young people used in the video to be on social media and for other promotion.

# WHAT MAKES YOU, YOU

## AN ACTIVITY TO ALLOW YOUNG PEOPLE TO EXPLORE WHO THEY ARE AS A PERSON

This activity can be done in the classroom or at home.

We are all unique and individual, but what makes you, you?

What do you love doing? Are there things that make you feel happier when you are low, or help you to relax when you are worried? This could include current likes and dislikes, strengths, interests, dreams and passions.

Make a piece of artwork expressing yourself. It can be a picture, a sculpture, a poem, a piece of textiles, a photograph or film or even a dance or a song.

For example you may like to challenge yourself to complete a 7-day photo challenge, taking one photo each day that captures/expresses some aspect of yourself, either literally or in abstract form.

Any student can submit their artwork to Strong Young Minds who will either display the art in shop windows in Hereford's Maylords Orchards or online through SYM website and social media. All submissions (photos or recordings) need to be sent to [harry@thecldtrust.org](mailto:harry@thecldtrust.org) by 10th February 2021

# DEFINE YOURSELF

## AN ACTIVITY TO ALLOW YOUNG PEOPLE TO EXPLORE WHO THEY ARE AS A PERSON

This activity may need to be adapted by teachers to be done at home.

Have a go at defining yourself!

Talk to your students about the idea of us all being a work in progress. You can use Psychiatrist Thomas Szasz's statement as a springboard for discussion:

**"The self is not something that one finds. It is something that one creates"**

Consider the following:

- Make sure that your definitions aren't overly narrow or limiting.
- Keep yourself open to new experiences, talents, interests, passions, and opportunities.
- Being an adolescent is all about creating our own identity and expressing it!

# QUOTATIONS

## AN ACTIVITY TO ALLOW YOUNG PEOPLE TO EXPLORE HOW THEY FEEL ABOUT SELF EXPRESSION

This activity can be done in the classroom or at home.

Choose a quotation about self-expression that resonates with you. 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."

Put the quotation in the middle of a large piece of paper. Use art and craft materials/drawings or words to express yourself creatively around the text.

Think about:

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?

# TALKING ABOUT FEELINGS

## AN ACTIVITY TO ALLOW YOUNG PEOPLE TO EXPLORE HOW THEY FEEL AND WHY IT IS IMPORTANT

This activity may need to be adapted by teachers to be done at home.

Choose a video clip and discuss why it is important to acknowledge to ourselves and express to others, how we are feeling. Here are a few videos and podcasts you could look at:

Premiership football stars and Prince William discuss the importance of looking after your mental health:

<https://bit.ly/33bFOD1>

(Teacher note: please note the conversation touches on some serious issues including suicide)

Nadiya Hussian, the winner of The Great British Bake Off, talks about living with a panic disorder:

<https://bit.ly/2S65lYa>

Little Mix star Jade Thirwall talks about how she's exploring her Arab heritage on the No Country for Young Women podcast:

<https://bbc.in/2S7P4Si>

(You may choose to play an extract for example 11:54-14:01,

Teacher note: Contains strong language, adult humour and content of a sexual nature).



# JOURNAL

## WRITING A JOURNAL CAN HELP TO ORGANISE AND MAKE SENSE OF THOUGHTS

This activity can be done in the classroom or at home.

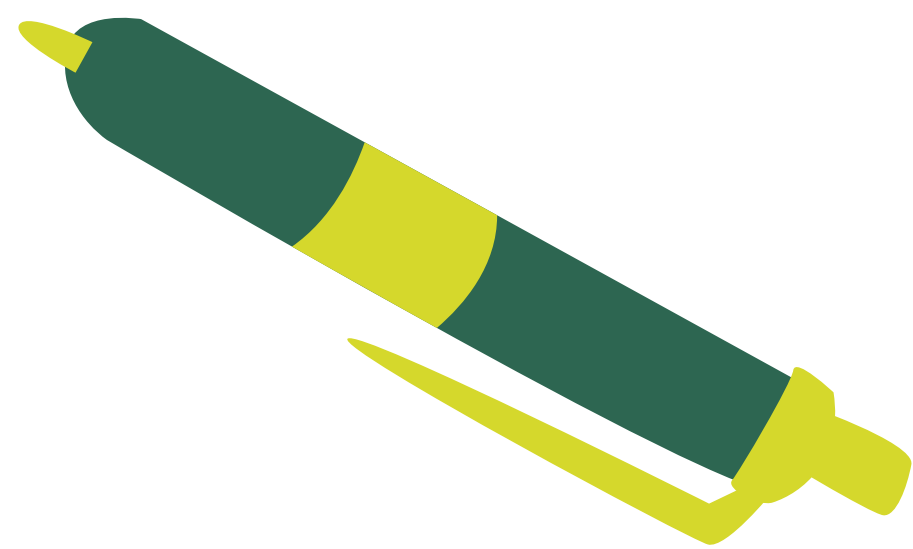
Have you thought about keeping a daily journal? In there you can write about whatever comes to mind!

It can be helpful to carry around an ideas book with you so you can jot things down as you go along.

Putting down your thoughts on paper can also help you to problem-solve – mind maps are a great tool for this!

Creating vision boards about your future dreams and aspirations can also help to motivate and inspire you.

Express yourself...



# FURTHER INFORMATION

## Strong Young Minds (Herefordshire)

The Strong Young Minds Champions are young people aged between 10-16. The project brings together passionate and inspiring young people who have an interest in mental health and wellbeing, who want to actively participate in reducing mental health stigma and provide support and help to their peers. By using their knowledge, talents, creativity and enthusiasm, they have an opportunity to work at the heart of the project enacting change and making a real difference to young people's mental health provision in Herefordshire.

✉ [symproject@theclldtrust.org](mailto:symproject@theclldtrust.org)

## Active In Mind

Youth Sport Trust have developed a great poster which allows young people to look at aspects of health and wellbeing and make a plan to how they can improve theirs.

### [Poster](#)

## Kooth

Kooth is an online mental wellbeing community for 11 to 18 year olds. It provides free, safe and anonymous support around a range of concerns, such as relationship or family problems, school or college worries, feeling low or depressed, drink, drug or money problems





### [Find out more](#)

# SUPPORT

## Strong Young Minds (SYM)

The SYM programme (Herefordshire) provide support for young people (aged 10 - 26) to address issues which can have an adverse effect on mental health and wellbeing, such as anxiety, depression, eating disorders, self harm, bullying, cyberbullying, relationship breakdown, employability, low self esteem, body image and loss.

Young people are offered the opportunity for 121 support, employability training, brief intervention therapy, workshops and groups in addition to peer listening and support. They also work with parents/carers and professionals.

-  01432 269245
-  [symproject@thecldtrust.org](mailto:symproject@thecldtrust.org)
-  @StrongYMinds
-  @strongyoungminds

## No Wrong Door (Herefordshire)

One to one support available for 11-25 year olds in Herefordshire. Whether you feel anxious and need someone to listen, or are in need of more specialist support, no wrong door can help.

-  [nwd@hvoss.org.uk](mailto:nwd@hvoss.org.uk)
-  NoWrongDoorHereford

## MIND

The national charity has information to support children and young people  
[MIND for children and young people](#)

## Young Minds

Tips, advice and guidance on getting support for your mental health  
[Coronavirus help and support](#)

## Place2Be

National mental health charity supporting young people and schools  
[Wellbeing activities for families](#)

## Mental Health Foundation

National Charity working to support good mental health  
[Advice to support your mental wellbeing while at home](#)