

Mental Health Awareness Week 2021

Library Toolkit

Coordinated by the Mental Health Foundation on 10-16 May

The Week is an opportunity for people to talk about all aspects of mental health, with a focus on providing help and advice. This year will focus on **Nature and the Environment**.

This theme has been chosen to reflect the evidence that access to nature is of crucial benefit to our mental health, something which millions of people re-discovered during lockdowns. It is important to note that this was not the same for all of us. Ensuring everyone is able to share in the natural world and experience the mental health benefits is vital.



Mental Health Awareness Week 2021

What's included?

- Information on Mental Health Awareness Week and key mental health and wellbeing facts.
- Ideas to support libraries to deliver activities and campaigns around mental health, wellbeing, nature and the environment.
- Information on The Reading Agency's Read, Talk, Share campaign and template social media copy to help you spread the word.

Many of the [Reading Well](#) titles are available to download as e-books and audiobooks for FREE via library e-lending services



Key facts on mental health and wellbeing

Adults

- Approximately **one in four** people in the UK will experience a mental health problem each year.
- Feelings of loneliness have **more than doubled** over the lockdown period. One in four adults (24 per cent) in the UK have felt lonely. More than four in ten (44 per cent) of 18-24 year olds said they felt lonely.
- **More than four in five** (84.2%) Brits are worried about the effect that the Covid-19 pandemic is having on their life, with over half (53.1%) saying it was affecting their wellbeing and nearly half (46.9%) reporting high levels of anxiety.



Key facts on mental health and wellbeing

Children & young people

- Research shows that 50% of mental health problems are established by the age of 14 and 75% are established by 24.
- More than one in ten children aged 10-15 say they have no one to talk to or wouldn't talk to anyone in school if they feel worried or sad.
- Almost two thirds of children aged 8-11 say they feel stressed, sad or worried at least once a month. Over a third of parents of children aged 4-11 worry about their child's mental health at least once a week.

Download Reading Well booklists

You can download detailed overviews of the titles in Reading Well collections (including ISBN, page extent, available formats, jacket images and blurb) here:



✓ [Reading Well for mental health](#)

✓ [Reading Well for young people](#)

✓ [Reading Well for children book guide](#)

✓ [Reading Well for children: interactive user leaflet to help people use the collection.](#)




Libraries, nature and wellbeing

Get inspired!

| Library | Activity | Extra |
|---|---|---|
| Kingston Libraries @kinglibheritage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Nature video series with Biodiversity Officer Elliot Newton, discussing various aspects of nature with the aim to get people out and able to read the nature around them. • The Think Green Project is a creative environmental project bringing communities together, making art from recycled materials. 1. People send in green pledges, written on a handmade leaf, which is put up in libraries for people to see once libraries reopen. 2. Make a collage out of recycled materials relating to the environment such as an endangered animal - take a photo and post online or email to library contact. | Kingston Libraries conversation with Elliot Newton about how reconnecting with nature improves your wellbeing . |
| Staffordshire Libraries @StaffsLibraries | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Wild About Perton’ Spring Festival at Perton Library is an annual festival offering a range of wildlife-themed recreational and learning activities that provide positive and shared experiences which help develop and empower our communities and support improved health and well-being. • Burton Library Words for Wellbeing (poetry or reading aloud with a walk) and outdoor family events with Staffordshire Wildlife Trust. | Perton Library Garden (open when browsing is allowed and tended by Wild About Perton group). |

Libraries, nature and wellbeing

Get inspired!

| Library | Activity | Extra |
|---|---|---|
| Staffordshire Libraries @StaffsLibraries | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cannock Chase Libraries – Summer Reading Challenge Storytrails. In the summer of 2020, Cannock Library developed a series of Storytrails that appeared in parks and green spaces to ensure that families who did not have access to the internet, could still take part in the Summer Reading Challenge. To accompany the stories, videos of silly challenges across library and partner websites, were signposted to on the storyboards. Find out more in the blog ‘Summer Storytrails with Cannock Chase Libraries’ on Reading Well’s website. |  |
| Leicestershire Libraries @leicslibraries | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unlocking Our Sound Heritage project: using sound to connect to memories, helping to develop conversations and maintain someone’s identity (nature sounds features on the Great Outdoors section and Holidays section). Simply Sounds is a unique sounds collection to help improve wellbeing, with free resources, to enable reminiscence and relaxation. | |

Reading, books, and nature can bring us together

Activities to promote

For
children



1. In the [Chatterbooks Nature and Wildlife activity pack](#) you'll find reading recommendations and activity ideas featuring books about the natural world, wildlife and our environment plus discussion prompts and further reading suggestions.

2. In [The Lost Words by Robert Macfarlane - an Activity Pack](#) (created by Hamish Hamilton) you'll find activities relating to the joyful celebration of nature words and the natural world they invoke.



Read, Talk, Share campaign

**THE
READING
AGENCY**



**READING
FRIENDS
READING
WELL**

The Reading Agency's latest initiative [Read, Talk, Share](#), is tackling loneliness and supporting mental health during the COVID-19 recovery through the proven power of reading.

Enabled by a £3.5 million award by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS), Read, Talk, Share will expand The Reading Agency's successful [Reading Well](#) and [Reading Friends](#) programmes.



We want to ensure that everyone that would benefit from the chance to read, talk and share knows about the availability of the [Reading Well](#) book collections and the [Reading Friends](#) activity happening in their area.

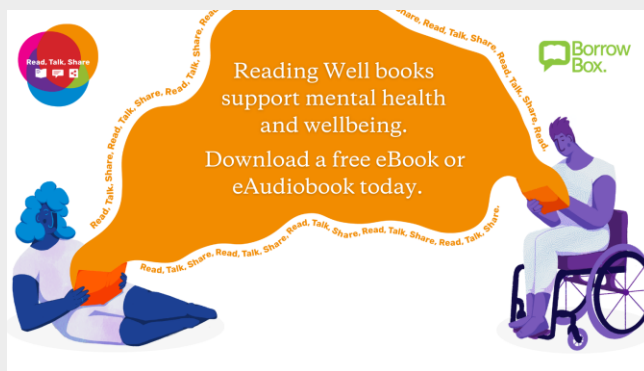
**READING
WELL**

Find more information and resources on the [Reading Well](#) and [Mental Health Foundation](#) websites

Promote eBook lending in your library

Download visual assets

- Visual assets to support the campaign can be found in the [Dropbox folder here](#) or on [OneDrive here](#).



Promote eBook lending in your library with the **downloadable social media images** for Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Options with each lending partner logo: BorrowBox, OverDrive or CloudLibrary.

Also included:

- Banner Image for Newsletters
- Read, Talk, Share Logo
- Announcement Assets
- Images for Reading Well/Reading Friends
- Text Cards for Reading Well/Reading Friends

Reading Well book collections are in all libraries and available as eBooks



- Libraries can download a series of [customisable publicity flyers](#) to support Reading Well collections in libraries and access [more resources here](#).

Template social media copy

Get involved
online!

- 🌸 #MentalHealthAwarenessWeek is an opportunity to talk about all aspects of mental health. Advice and support for all ages can be found in #ReadingWell books at our library – many as e-books and audiobooks. #ReadTalkShare and find the help you need to support your health and wellbeing in uncertain times.
- 🌸 How are you marking #MentalHealthAwarenessWeek @mentalhealth this year? Take some time to #ReadTalkShare with helpful reading that supports your mental health and borrow a #ReadingWell book from your local library
- 🌸 One of the feelings millions of us are experiencing is loneliness. Coronavirus may have kept us apart but reading, books, and nature can bring us together. Expert endorsed #ReadingWell booklists from @readingagency are available at your local library @mentalhealth #LetsTalkLoneliness for #MentalHealthAwarenessWeek
- 🌸 Stories can be a powerful source of comfort, solace and escapism – as can nature, which is the theme of this year's #MentalHealthAwarenessWeek led by @mentalhealth. Find support at your local library with expert endorsed #ReadingWell booklists – it's easy, free and you can access online! #ReadTalkShare
- 🌸 Almost two thirds of children aged 8-11 say they feel stressed, sad or worried at least once a month. #ReadingWell for children helps children understand feelings & cope with tough times. #MentalHealthAwarenessWeek @mentalhealth
- 🌸 It's #MentalHealthAwarenessWeek and at [insert name of library service] we are doing [your local library activity]



Social prescribing infographic

Customizable for a local service context

Download here



Evidence-based impact at the national and local level

| Impact on the person | Impact on the health and care system | Impact on community groups |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 91% of Reading Well users found their book helpful • Rhyme times have a positive effect on the mood and mental wellbeing of mothers (increased by 18%) • 76% said that library use encouraged them to improve their qualifications | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research has shown that use of public libraries is associated with higher personal wellbeing as well as fewer GP visits. • Health professionals say Reading Well support people outside consultation time (89% agree) to understand more about their condition (89% agree) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Friends participants and volunteers feel more connected to other people after taking part (+16% for participants and +18% for volunteers) • Reading group members feel more connected to other people because of being part of a reading group (84% agree) |



Healthier, Happier, Connected



Looking for help right now?

If someone needs support urgently or are in crisis, the following organisations are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week:

childline

Call: 0800 1111
[email](#) | [online chat](#)

Childline's trained counsellors are there to help anyone under 19 in the UK with any issue they're going through.

Childline is free, confidential and available any time, day or night.

SAMARITANS

Call: 116 123
[email](#) | [write](#)

Samaritans is a safe place to talk about whatever's getting to you.

Samaritans is free, confidential and available 24/7 for people of any age across the UK and Republic of Ireland.

Emergency Services

Call: 999

If you are concerned that your life or the life of someone else is in danger, you can call 999 anywhere in the UK for an ambulance, police, fire brigade or any other emergency service any time of the day or night.

AFC Crisis Messenger

Anna Freud
National Centre for
Children and Families

shout

In crisis?
Need support?

24
hours a day
7
days a week

Text AFC to 85258

Text the free, anonymous crisis textline

All texts are answered by trained volunteers,
with support from experienced clinical specialists

This is a free, confidential, 24/7 text message support service for anyone who is feeling overwhelmed or is struggling to cope. If you need support, you can **text AFC to 85258**.

You can find details of more organisations that offer help and support for young people about a variety of issues on the Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families' website here: annafreud.org/on-my-mind/urgent-help

THE READING AGENCY

Find out more:

www.readingagency.org.uk

Follow us @readingagency



TACKLING LIFE'S BIG CHALLENGES THROUGH THE PROVEN POWER OF READING