



Peer Education Project



Assembly





Introduction to Mental Health Awareness Week 2021



The theme is **Connect with Nature.**





Introduction to 'Connect with Nature'



Connecting with nature is about building a relationship with nature by noticing and becoming sensitive to the environment around us.

This has benefits for our physical and mental health.





What is mental health?



Mental health is made up of our thoughts, feelings, mood and behaviour.

We all have mental health, just like we all have physical health.

Our mental health can change depending on our experiences and circumstances throughout our lives.





Why is connecting with nature good for our mental health?



Feeling happier



Feeling less stressed or angry



Having more and better- quality sleep



Feeling less worried



Being more environmentally aware and engaged



Increasing self-esteem and self-confidence



Improving attention and concentration



Encouraging participation in physical activities



Increasing social contact with other people and animals



Finding your own space in nature: **Bring nature in**



Eat breakfast in front of the window, observing the nature outside.



Grow vegetables from your windowsill



Open a window and listen to the different sounds.



Watch a wildlife programme.





How can we connect with nature?



Visit the Grange



Explore nature at The Railway Land



Go for a bike ride on the South Downs





How can we connect with nature?



Go for a walk,
run or cycle



Stretch or practice yoga
outside



Play football with
your friends





How can we connect with nature?



Finding your own space in nature: **Take a moment to be mindful**

Mindfulness is the skill of paying attention to what is happening in your mind and body right now, without judgement. You could take a mindful moment as you:



Walk in your local natural space



Water indoor or outdoor plants



Draw or paint the view from your window



Finding your own space in nature: **Get creative**

Creative activities you could try:



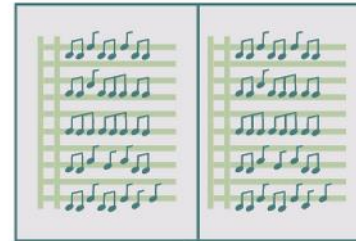
Take photographs of landscapes and natural objects



Write some creative sentences



Do a quick sketch of a natural object



Write a poem or song lyrics



Collect natural objects and make a handmade card for a loved one



Play music outside





How can we connect with nature?



Connecting with others: **Outdoors**



Play sports with friends



Go for a group walk



Visit local heritage spots

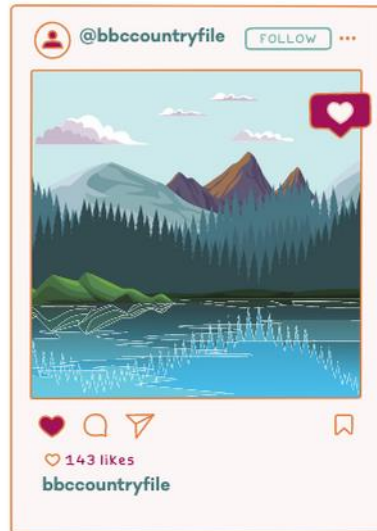


Have a picnic

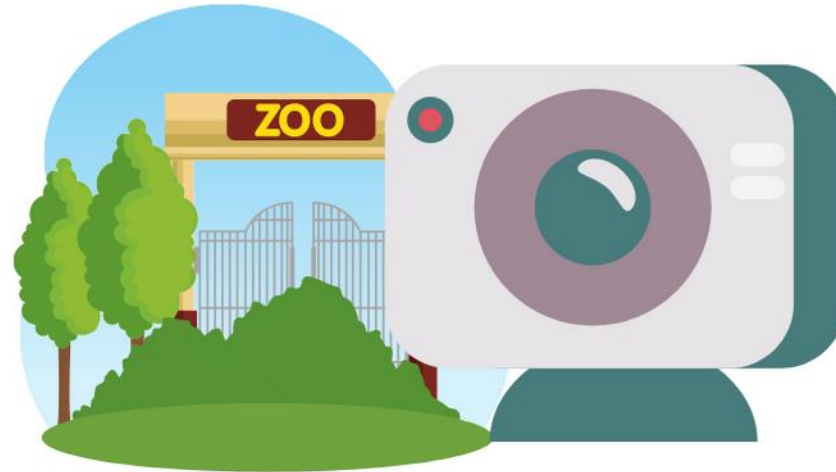


Do gardening with family

Connecting with others: From home



Follow a nature-focused Instagram account like @bbccountryfile



Visit Kew Gardens or watch live webcams from zoos across the UK, all from the comfort of your sofa!



Run a competition with your friends – who can grow the tallest sunflower or the most tomatoes?



How can we connect with nature?



Connecting with others: **At school**



Go on a class nature walk in the local area



Organise a big litter clean-up of the school grounds or a local park

(Here are a couple of suggestions. Add to the slide anything you are currently doing in school)



Sign up to the RSPB Big Schools' Birdwatch





How can we connect with nature?



Being part of something bigger, taking action



Use reusable drink bottles



Recycle as much as possible



Turn off lights when you leave the room



Donate old clothes to charity or the clothing bank



Grow flowers on your windowsill that are good for bees



Pick up litter when you are out for a walk



Sign up and share a petition or campaign about protecting our environment





What impacts how we connect with nature?



There are many circumstances that can limit people's level of access and opportunities to connect with nature in a meaningful way. Some of these include:



Health conditions or disabilities



Limited or no access to green (garden, park, woods) or blue (river, sea, lake) spaces



The cost of taking part in different activities



Living in an urban location where the air is more polluted



Feeling unsafe in the local outdoor spaces



Listen to people's experiences, work together to come up with new ideas and campaign for changes, such as:



Improving lighting in public spaces such as parks



Developing wheelchair accessible paths in natural spaces



Encouraging the use of public transport to limit air pollution from vehicles



A leader of the future? Be a leader of now! Join the #iwill campaign and see what difference you can make!





How to engage with Mental Health Awareness Week



Twitter: [@mentalhealth](https://twitter.com/mentalhealth)

Facebook: [@mentalhealthfoundation](https://www.facebook.com/mentalhealthfoundation)

Instagram: [@mentalhealthfoundation](https://www.instagram.com/mentalhealthfoundation)

LinkedIn: [@mental-health-foundation](https://www.linkedin.com/company/mental-health-foundation)

#ConnectWithNature

#MentalHealthAwarenessWeek

