

CELEBRATING DIFFERENCES - WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY TOOLKIT

World Mental Health Day is coming up on Saturday 10th October, and the theme for this year is 'mental health for all'.

In this toolkit, we've created and curated a set of resources focusing on inclusivity and celebrating our differences - all with a mental health focus.

These resources provide specialised knowledge and support for diverse groups of children, and celebrate the unique and different qualities each child brings to your school community.

The same, but different resource set

We've created a set of resources all about celebrating diversity and difference. There's an assembly plan, tips from teachers, and three lesson plans for different age groups. You can use these resources in the week leading up to World Mental Health Day, to help you create a mentally healthy culture in your school.



THE SAME, BUT



Assembly

Run a World Mental Health Day assembly in your school using our plan, which helps children of all ages think about the differences and similarities that make us special.



Lesson plan for ages 4 to 5

Using the book *The Same but Different Too!* by Karl Newson & Kate Hindle, and some simple activities, this lesson plan helps children explore how our emotions connect us.



Lesson plan for ages 5 to 8

Through a 'design your own monster' activity, children will learn that we may often feel similar emotions, but we often may feel different to each other too.



Lesson plan for ages 9 to 11

This lesson encourages older children to think about the things that make them special and different. It will help them think more about other cultures and why diversity is important.



20 activity ideas for World Mental Health Day

We've put together some ideas for brief activities you can run in your school in the lead up to World Mental Health Day in your school, with ideas suggested by practising teachers.



Further resources to support diverse groups of children

The following resources have been chosen to be delivered to, or inform your work with, groups of children who may need more support with their mental health.

While being mindful to avoid generalisations, evidence shows that some children may need more support with their mental health due to their past experiences. Being part of a group who may experience discrimination can be one reason why children may need more support with their mental health.

Identifying the particular need in your school through a whole-school approach is vital to developing a sensitive and proactive culture which supports all children. Find out more about how to do this with our [5 Steps tool](#).

We have included information here on children who are at higher risk and may need more specialised support. You can find lots more information and resources for other groups, and further things that effect children's mental health, in the [risks and protective factors](#) section of Mentally Healthy Schools.

Children who identify as LGBTQ+

LGBTQ+ children and young people are at greater risk of experiencing poor mental health if they feel they aren't accepted, understood or given the right support. These resources can help school staff and pupils understand how better to support LGBTQ+ children, and create an LGBTQ+-inclusive culture.

LGBT primary assembly – LGBT Youth Scotland

This assembly introduces children to LGBTQ+ issues and the different ways we talk about LGBTQ+ people.



Getting started toolkit – Stonewall

A toolkit for preventing and tackling homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying in primary schools.



Trans equality in schools – NASUWT

Detailed guidance for teachers and school leaders on trans equality in schools, with good practice suggestions for when a teacher or pupil transitions.



What is gender? video - Inspiring Equality in Education

A video created by young people, for young people, which explores how diverse gender can be.



Children from ethnic minorities

Children can experience discrimination due to their ethnicity, as well as their faith, beliefs, culture or language. Working to eradicate discrimination in your school, as well as taking time to understand the lived experience of ethnic minority children, is vital.

A parent's guide to Black Lives Matter – Yoopies

A detailed, helpful resource for parents to help explain and explore the Black Lives Matter movement with children.



Understanding racism and racial bullying – Childline

Guidance to help support children who experience racism or racial bullying.



Talking with children about race and racism – British Red Cross

This resource helps teachers and parents to create a safe space for children and young people to ask questions and discuss race and racism.



Tips for tackling discrimination – Mentally Healthy Schools

A helpful tick list for how your school can make children and families feel included, and work towards preventing - and tackling – discrimination.



Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities – Mental Health Foundation

Learn more about how different ethnic groups have different rates and experiences of mental health problems. Although this focuses on adults, it may inform your work with children.



Children who are refugees and asylum seekers

Leaving one country to live in another unfamiliar one is intrinsically stressful, even if the choice to leave was a positive one. Children with disrupted or different experiences of school life may find joining a new education system extremely challenging and are likely to need extra support.

Asylum seeker and refugee children – Mentally Healthy Schools

Learn more about the stresses associated with migration, the impact it may have on children's mental health, and things schools can do to mitigate the risks.



Supporting refugee children in your school – SecEd

A useful article for schools, with information about how to spot if a refugee child is struggling, and interventions to implement to support them.



Refugee toolkit – The Children's Society

The refugee toolkit is for all practitioners who support young refugees, asylum seekers and those who are young carers. It helps practitioners stay informed about the needs, rights and entitlements of young refugees and asylum seekers.



Positive images toolkit – British Red Cross

This toolkit provides teaching resources that aim to reduce stigma associated with migrant experiences. Although the lesson plans are targeted at secondary school children, the toolkit and guidance may be useful for staff training/ induction or in guiding school staff involved with younger children.



Children who are looked-after

Because of their experiences both before and during care, looked-after children are at much greater risk of poor mental health than their peers. Schools play a powerful role in improving the quality of life, educational experiences and attainment of looked-after children.

What works to improve the emotional wellbeing of children in care? – NSPCC

A 5-minute video exploring the impact of being in care on children's mental health, and discussing what works to improve the emotional wellbeing of children in care.



10 things children looked after want you to know – Achievement for All

A webpage which summarises some of the more common things around looked-after children that schools should be aware of, based on focus groups with care leavers and existing research.



Information for children living in care – Childline

A website for children explaining how the care system works and sharing useful, child-friendly information on the emotions they may feel and how to manage them.



Strengths and difficulties questionnaire – Youth in Mind

The SDQ can be a useful tool to help identify the emotional strengths and weaknesses of looked-after children. It can be completed by pupils, foster carers and teachers.



Primary school audit of the support children looked after receive in school – Achievement for All

A simple audit tool for schools to assess their current provision for looked after children, and identify areas for improvement.



Young carers

Many young carers have trouble juggling school and home responsibilities. They may experience more stress, anxiety, low self-esteem, depression, eating or sleeping problems and self-harm than other children. Schools play an important role in helping support young carers.

Young carers – Mentally Healthy Schools

An overview of the mental health concerns young carers may have, and suggestions of things schools can do to support them.



Young carers benchmarking tool – Carers Trust

An easy-to-follow checklist to enable schools to review their current provision for young carers.



Supporting young carers and their families – The Children’s Society

Help, advice and resources for children and young people who care for parents, siblings or others who suffer from chronic illness or disability.



Chronic disability and child carers – MindEd

A short online course which looks at the experience of children with chronic illness or disability, and of care giving, and the impact that these experiences have on their mental health. It also explains how you can best support these children.



Further information

If you need further support for vulnerable children in your school, there are lots of organisations who are experts in working with these groups.

- **The LGBT Foundation** have a free helpline which is open from 10am-10pm daily: 0845 330 3030 or 0161 235 8035.
- **The Refugee Council** offer mental health services for refugees and asylum seekers, and support and advice for children and young people.
- **Kids of Colour** is a platform for young people of colour to explore their experience of race, identity and culture.
- **Become** are a charity dedicated to helping children in care or young care leavers. They have an advice line on 0800 023 2033 or advice@becomecharity.org.uk, which is open 10:30am-5pm on weekdays.
- **The Carers Trust** have lots of advice and resources for supporting young carers, and their directory can signpost you to support for carers in your local area.