



Children's Mental Health Week 5-11th February 2024

My Voice Matters

Article 12, the right to be heard.

every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously.

Family life can be very busy and it is often difficult to spend time really listening to each other. This year's theme for Children's Mental Health Week is 'My voice matters'. The aim is to support children to express themselves.

The Place2Be are a children's mental health charity who do a lot of work in primary and secondary schools. There are a lot of resources and information on their website

<https://www.place2be.org.uk/>

Thinking about children's emotional needs

Follow this link to find out what support children have identified is helpful from their parents

<https://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk/media/vxgdpw3x/cmhw-24-top-tips-for-families.pdf>

My VOICE MATTERS

TALKING TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

Are you a parent or carer who wants to talk to your child about mental health?

This Children's Mental Health Week we want all children and young people, wherever they are, and wherever they are in the world, to be able to say... and believe... 'My Voice Matters'.

We asked primary and secondary schools to ask students what they wanted from this week - to help make the activities we created for schools, the messages we give to teachers, the tips we give to other children, and the advice we give to parents, carers and families.

LOOKING FOR FREE PRACTICAL ADVICE TO HELP YOU SUPPORT YOUR CHILD?

Place2Be's free advice site for parents and carers, is full of expert advice and tips on supporting primary age children, and managing their behaviour, and on their views.

<http://www.place2be.org.uk>

Here's what children and young people told us they need from you:

- 1 We don't need to have 'one-off' conversations about our mental health - sometimes a chat on a journey or at bedtime is enough.
- 2 I need to know it's okay to talk to you about any and all of my feelings. Please hear what I have to say, without interrupting me.
- 3 Please listen to me carefully and acknowledge how I am feeling - it might seem silly to you but what I am going through is important to me.
- 4 Playing with pets can make me feel better. Same with playing football, basketball or whatever type of sport I am into.
- 5 Don't compare my experiences to your own when you make a child.
- 6 Sometimes I just need you to listen and hear what I'm saying - I don't always need answers (or help).
- 7 Please don't worry about trying to fix things for me - I often just need to know you are there for me and understand what I am going through.
- 8 If you are open with the about your feelings, this can help me to be more open about mine.
- 9 Sometimes I don't want to talk. Please make that clear to you so I don't feel grown up or someone is over-protecting me. I'm busy. Sometimes it's easier for me to talk to someone younger than me like - my siblings, cousins, friends, younger teachers at school - because they 'get it'.
- 10 Sometimes a hug is all it takes to make me feel supported.

WHAT MATTERS TO YOU? CREATIVE VIDEO ACTIVITIES FOR FAMILIES

These wellbeing activities can help children and young people think about and share what matters to them.

For primary children: bit.ly/3P2D208

For secondary children: bit.ly/3B2D208

CHILDRENSMENTALHEALTHWEEK.ORG.UK



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Conversations about emotions can be difficult. Often children have difficulties they would like to speak about but are unsure how to. This means they can keep their difficulties to themselves. The link below takes you to some conversation starters.



We would love to hear whether these conversation starters have been helpful. Please let us know by posting on the Teams Channel.

Thinking about what matters to children

If you are a family that like to do activities here is one that would give your child/children an opportunity to think about what matters to them and to be able to communicate this to you.

Activity: What matters to you collage

<https://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk/families/what-matters-to-you-activity-for-4-11-year-olds/>

And finally!

Here is a link to some Place2Be resources on Parenting advice from their child mental health experts.

<https://parentingsmart.place2be.org.uk/>