



CONNECT WITH NATURE



Mental Health Awareness Week 2021

May 10 to 16th May



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



30 Days Wild Challenge



Every June the Wildlife Trusts runs a **30 Days Wild Challenge** – completing one Random Act of Wildness every day.

How can we connect with nature?

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?



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



How can we connect with nature?

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
class walk



Visit local heritage
spots



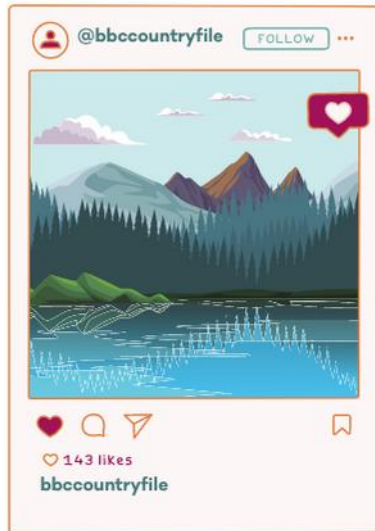
Have a picnic



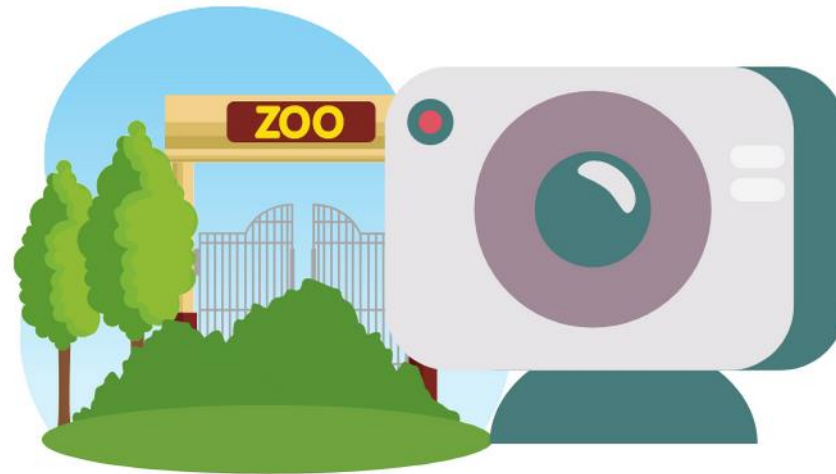
Do gardening with
my class or family

How can we connect with nature?

Connecting with others: From home



Follow a nature-focused Instagram account like @bbccountryfile



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 (Northycote Farm & Park)



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



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



How to engage with Mental Health Awareness Week



WWF provide a series of fun 'make-it' activities that have been designed to encourage wildlife into your local area and explore your love of nature.

[Get creative! | WWF](#)



Register your class for a free live learning opportunities, whether it is to learn more about how penguins and polar bears are adapted to their polar environments or to explore the themes within the David Attenborough's A Life on Our Planet film.

<https://www.wwf.org.uk/get-involved/schools/calendar>

How to engage with Mental Health Awareness Week



Wildlife Photography
Competition

Photography is one of the many ways you can get out and embrace the wilderness. Why not encourage pupils to submit a photograph to a wildlife photography competition? There are plenty to choose from.

[Enter a photography competition | The Wildlife Trusts](#)



Thriving
with
Nature
guidebook

The Mental Health Foundation and WWF produced a guide on making the most of our natural spaces for our mental health and wellbeing. Take a look at the ideas to connect with nature during each season.

[Thriving-With-Nature-compressed.pdf \(mentalhealth.org.uk\)](#)



As the UK's leading school grounds educational charity, access free outdoor learning ideas and lesson plans.

[Outdoor learning ideas | Outdoor Lesson ideas | LtL](#)