



Peer  
Education  
Project



Mental Health  
Foundation



Assembly

## This assembly will cover:

- How connecting with nature can be good for our mental health and wellbeing.
- The ways we can connect with nature.
- The challenges we may face accessing nature.

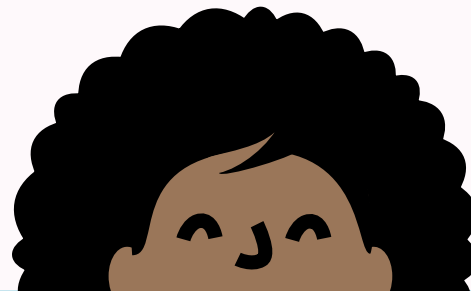
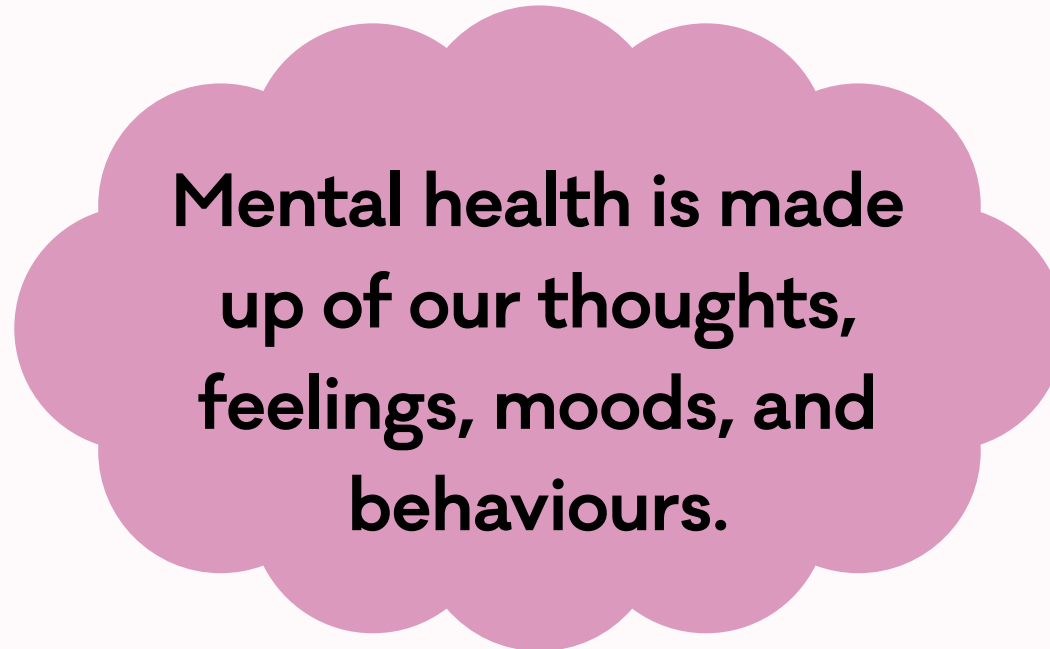


# What do we mean by 'connect with nature'?



Connecting with nature is noticing and becoming sensitive to the environment around us.

# What is mental health?



# How is connecting with nature good for our mental health?



## Connecting with nature can have mental health benefits such as:

- Increased happiness
- Reduced stress
- More and better-quality sleep
- Reduced anxiety
- Increased life-satisfaction
- Increased self-esteem and self-confidence
- Improved attention and concentration



# The pathways to a new relationship with nature



# Finding your own space in nature



**Bring nature in.** We can bring nature indoors by:

- 🌿 Eating breakfast in front of the window, observing the nature outside.
- 🌿 Growing vegetables from your windowsill.

- 🌿 Watching a wildlife programme.
- 🌿 Opening a window and listening to the different sounds.



# Finding your own space in nature



Explore your local nature spaces.





# Finding your own space in nature



**Stay active.** We can stay active by:

- 🌿 Going for a walk, run or cycle.
- 🌿 Playing football with friends.
- 🌿 Stretching or practising yoga outside.

**GO  
RUN**



# Finding your own space in nature



## Take a moment to be mindful.

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:

Writing creative sentences about a natural object or landscape.



Playing music outside.

Doing a sketch of a natural object.

Writing a poem or song lyrics about your favourite nature spot.



Taking photographs of landscapes and natural objects.



Collecting natural objects and making a handmade card for a loved one.

# Connecting with others



**Nature often provides a great space to connect and socialise with family, friends, and the wider community.** You could:

- Have a picnic.
- Go for a group walk.
- Do gardening with others.
- Visit local heritage spots.



# Connecting with others



**It is not always possible to connect with nature and meet with others outdoors.**

Here are ideas of how we can connect with others through nature from inside our own homes:

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

**Watch live webcams from zoos across the UK.**

**Follow a nature-focused social media account like @bbccountryfile.**



# Connecting with others



## We can also connect with nature together as a school by:

- 🍃 Going on a class nature walk in the local area.
- 🍃 Organising a big litter clean-up.
- 🍃 Signing up to the RSPB Big Schools' Birdwatch.



## Being part of something bigger, taking action



**We all have the potential to make a difference to the nature around us. We could:**








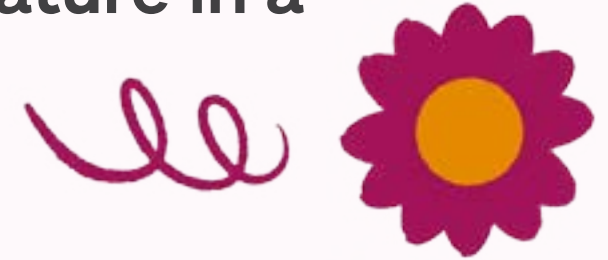
- Put a birdfeeder in the garden or leave seeds on windowsills for the birds.
- Use reusable drink bottles.
- Recycle as much as possible.

- Grow flowers on windowsills that are good for bees.
- Pick up litter.
- Sign and share a petition or campaign about protecting our environment.



**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.
-  Living in an area with limited or no access to green or blue spaces.
-  The cost of taking part in different nature-based activities.
-  Living in an urban location where the air is more polluted.
-  The nearby outdoor spaces might not feel safe.





# How can we help improve access to nature for everyone?



If we come together, we can use our collective voice to 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.



## Final thoughts



Our relationship with nature is reciprocal, which means that we can protect and look after each other.



## Further information and support



SLIDE 19