



# CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS WEEK

This is my place

Secondary Schools



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# WHO ARE CHUMS?

- CHUMS is a Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Service that supports
- children, young people and their families.
- We work across Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes - Offering a mixture of support including Group sessions, Workshops and some 1:1s.



# IMPORTANCE OF MENTAL HEALTH

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Everybody has mental health, and it refers to our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. Our mental health affects how we think, feel, and act within our lives. Mental health awareness week brings attention to ways that we can keep mentally healthy.



# THIS IS MY PLACE

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Today's assembly has been inspired by Place2Be's Children's Mental Health Week. The theme this year is **'This is My Place'** which is based around belonging and how we can feel a sense of belonging and help others feel like they belong.



**SO, WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BELONG?**



# HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF WHAT OTHER YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE SAID:

- 'It's like a place, your home, you belong with your family and friends'
- 'Feeling that you have a place where you are always welcome and valued as either place or set of people'
- 'Feeling included, not left out'
- 'Belonging means feeling a connection with something, feeling like I am meant to be there with no stresses or worries. It's all about feeling safe.'
- 'Feeling a part of something e.g. A group or society'
- 'Feeling like there are people similar to you as well as different.'
- 'Feeling like you fit in and feeling comfortable'
- 'It means that I feel happy and included where I am'.



# BELONGING

- **Belonging is emotional safety.**
- It's the knowledge that you can be yourself without being judged.
- **Belonging is participation.**
- It's having access to activities, conversations, decisions, and rituals that shape the group.
- **Belonging is recognition.**
- It's being known for who you are and having that matter to others.

**Belonging is not the same as fitting in. Fitting in asks you to change to match the group. Belonging asks the group to change so you can be yourself.**



# A STORY...

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Imagine arriving here on your first day. You know no one. You stand in the hall holding your timetable and watch groups talking, laughing, moving like a tide you can't join. For hours you walk between classes feeling invisible. Then someone asks, "Are you okay?"

They show you where to go, introduce you to a friend, and later you sit with them at lunch. The feeling that follows is immediate and powerful. That single small action turns a day of fear into a day of possibility.



# WHY BELONGING MATTERS

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- Adolescence is when identity is being built. Belonging gives people permission to try new things and fail without being crushed.
- Young people who feel they belong are more likely to engage in learning, take healthy risks, and reach out for help when they need it.
- Exclusion creates loneliness, anxiety, and can push people toward harmful behaviours and ideologies simply to stop feeling alone.



# WAYS TO FEEL WE BELONG

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## Top tips from other young people:

‘Finding a place where you feel valued and welcome or people that make you feel this way’

‘By engaging in activities that you enjoy’

‘Try and make friends’

‘Have an adult to talk to when not happy’

‘Spending time with friends.’

‘By being more kind to people and pushing yourself outside of your comfort zone to try new things and meet more people.’

‘By talking to people about feelings.’

‘Being around people you enjoy being with’



# HOW CAN WE HELP OTHERS TO FEEL THEY BELONG?

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- Talk to new people in clubs and classes. I always try to do this.
- Introduce them to fun activities where they can meet new people and find new interests.
- Talk to them, ask them what would make them feel like they belong, leave them alone if they want to be left alone, but do some things with them. Make sure your day doesn't revolve around everyone else belonging, though.
- Be kinder and help them feel included.
- Being there to support someone so they don't feel like they're on their own.
- By supporting others and
  - showing an interest, by being kind and not bullying others, include and invite others. Understand others, if they are new be a buddy to show them around school and keep them company at break and lunch.
- Putting yourself in others' shoes.
- By asking people how they are and if they are okay.



# ACTIVITY

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1. Turn to the person next to you.
2. Exchange names and say one thing you like that surprises people.
3. Say "Thanks" to each other.



# WHEN BELONGING IS COMPLICATED -

## BELONGING CAN BE HARMFUL WHEN

- Groups pressure members to hurt themselves or others to “prove” loyalty
- Real belonging never costs your dignity, values, or safety. If a group asks you to compromise those things, it is not belonging; it is coercion.

## COMMON BARRIERS TO BELONGING

- Cliques and status signalling that make groups hard to join.
- Casual exclusion: jokes, inside references, or group chats that leave people out.
- Assuming silence means consent: not speaking up lets exclusion continue.
- Pressure to perform a particular image to be accepted.



SHINING A LIGHT ON MENTAL HEALTH



# PICK ONE ACTIVITY TO COMPLETE THIS WEEK

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- Invite one person you've never sat with to join you.
  - Interrupt exclusion once when you hear it.
- Check in with someone who seems quieter at least twice this week

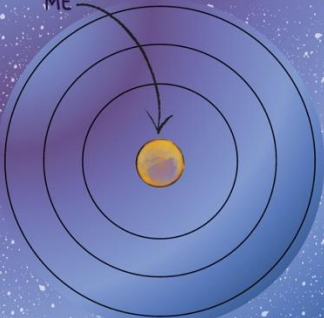
# Activities

we have created some activities for you to do






## MY UNIVERSE

ME



- This is your universe – you are right at the centre.
- Who features in your universe? Where do they belong?
- Are they close by or further out in your universe?
- Think about all the people that are in your life – where are they in your universe?



## visualisation




Imagine an outdoor place where you can feel calm, peaceful and safe. It may be a place you've been to before, somewhere you've dreamt about going to, or maybe somewhere you've seen a picture of.

Focus on what you can see in this peaceful place

- Notice colours, shapes, movement, light and texture in this place
- Now notice the sounds that are around you.
- Think about any smells you notice there.
- Then focus on any skin sensations – the earth beneath you, the temperature, any movement of air, anything else you can touch.

Now whilst you're in your peaceful place, you might choose to give it a name, whether one word or a phrase that you can use to bring that image back, anytime you need to.

You can choose to linger there a while, just enjoying the calm and peace. You can leave whenever you want to, just by opening your eyes and being aware of where you are now.



## WHAT ARE MY VALUES?

 <h3>Fun</h3> <p>Do you like having fun with your friends or family? What do you do for fun?</p>	 <h3>Sports</h3> <p>Do you like playing sports? Do you like watching sports?</p>
 <h3>Friendship</h3> <p>Do you like spending time with friends? Do you like making friends?</p>	 <h3>Religion/spirituality /faith</h3> <p>Do you identify with a religion? Do you follow a faith? Are you spiritual?</p>
 <h3>Family relationships</h3> <p>Is spending time with your family important to you?</p>	 <h3>Kindness</h3> <p>Is being kind important to you? Do you want people to be kind to you?</p>
 <h3>Cultural traditions</h3> <p>Is there cultural traditions you think are important to you? What parts of your culture are important to you?</p>	 <h3>Humour</h3> <p>Do you think it's good to be funny? Do you enjoy making others laugh? Do you like when others make you laugh?</p>



# WHAT CAN I DO IF I AM FEELING WORRIED OR FEEL I CAN'T TALK TO OTHERS?

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It can be hard to share our voice with family, friends and teachers, but we still need to be heard and supported

Sometimes we need help from healthcare professionals and services, e.g. CAMHS, CHUMS, Kooth - They will have expert knowledge in supporting young people struggling with their wellbeing.

- There are lots of ways to talk to health professionals - parents/carer, teacher, trusted adults can help you access this

Helplines:

- Young Minds - 24hr crisis support, 85258 text, connects you to a trained practitioner, ([youngminds.org.uk](http://youngminds.org.uk))
  - Samaritans – 116123, 24hr telephone support, ([samaritans.org](http://samaritans.org))
    - Childline - 0800 1111, ([childline.org.uk](http://childline.org.uk))
      - The Mix – Essential support for under 25s, ([themix.org.uk](http://themix.org.uk))
- Shout - In a crisis? Anxious, Worried, Stressed? Get 24/7 help. Text 85258, ([giveusashout.org](http://giveusashout.org))



**Belonging grows from ordinary choices: the name you use, the invite you offer, the time you give. Small actions add up and change what this school feels like. Choose one small action now and help make this place somewhere more people can belong.**



**Thank-you for Listening 😊**

