

Children's Mental Health Week

2020: Find Your Brave

Children's Mental Health week in 2020 takes place between the 3rd and 9th February and this year's theme is 'Find Your Brave'. It is a week where schools and other organisations can do activities and provide services that focus on helping children to try something new and to ask for help.

The Organisation behind It

Children's Mental Health Week is organised by a charity called Place2Be, who help children in schools all over the UK build up self-esteem and tackle any issues they might face. Children's Mental Health Week began in 2015 and has grown in its six years, helping many young people feel more positive about themselves. In the past, the themes have included kindness and resilience.

HRH The Duchess of Cambridge has been Place2Be's Royal Patron since 2013 and she recorded a video message to launch the week. HRH The Duchess of Cambridge takes a special interest in issues of mental health facing children today. She would like children to be given the opportunity to be the best versions of themselves.



HRH The Duchess of Cambridge says in her video message:

"Childhood is an incredibly important moment in our lives.

It is the time when we explore our personalities, discover the potential that lies within us and learn how to be ourselves.

Our experience of the world at this early stage helps to shape who we become as adults and how we begin to feel comfortable in our own skin."

Difficulties Faced by Children

Children encounter many different issues in their day-to-day lives, from family issues, to bullying, negative self-image and the effect of social media on self-esteem. 80% of children who come into contact with Place2Be are affected by low self-esteem.

Many children that work with Place2Be do not know where or how to ask for help when dealing with these challenges and therefore often feel hopeless about the situation that they are in and cannot see a way out.

Things can then worsen and children's mental health may begin to deteriorate as the individual feels a sense of futility. The theme of 'Find Your Brave' tries to make children and young people see that it's OK to find things challenging and that more importantly, it's important to open up and talk about things as well as asking other people for help and support.



What Is Being Done?

Place2Be and Children's Mental Health Week work towards making a difference in how people deal with issues and challenges that they face in life. They do not claim to wave a magic wand and make everything OK but they do work towards making a difference in people's lives by using positive thinking. This is done through activities that help people talk about problems and encourage them to ask for help. Place2Be also encourage children to push themselves out of their comfort zone and try something new as they believe this will help build their confidence and self-esteem.

Find Your Brave

The Theme of 'Find Your Brave' for 2020 looks at supporting people and giving them the confidence and tools to deal with problems and challenges in life. The theme aims to highlight the fact that although life can sometimes be challenging, if we are brave, we can overcome these challenges. Being brave is not about trying to deal with problems on your own or holding things in. Instead, bravery is about finding positive ways to deal with things that might be difficult such as asking for help from others, trying something new or pushing yourself outside your comfort zone.

Place2Be have suggested these tips for finding your brave:

- Make a list of times when you have done something brave. Think about the emotions you felt at this time and write them down.
- Decide on one new brave thing that you could do at school or in another social situation such as speaking up in class, standing up for someone or volunteering to do something. Start with something small and then try something scarier or more challenging next time.
- Consider learning a new skill or starting an activity that you've never done before. Remember that it is OK to feel nervous about trying something new – everyone has to start somewhere. Why not ask a friend to do it with you?
- When you are with other people, ask them what they do to Find Their Brave. They might come up with some good ideas that you could try!