



Mental Health Awareness Week: Kindness

A guide for children and young people during the Covid-19 lockdown

Mental Health Awareness Week is taking place from 18-24 May 2020, and in response to the coronavirus outbreak, this year's theme is "Kindness".

What is kindness?

Kindness is defined by doing something towards yourself and others, motivated by genuine desire to make a positive difference. We know from the research that kindness and our mental health are deeply connected. The research shows that kindness is an antidote to isolation and creates a sense of belonging. It helps reduce stress, brings a fresh perspective and deepens friendships. Kindness to ourselves can prevent shame from corroding our sense of identity and help boost our self-esteem. Kindness can even improve feelings of confidence and optimism.

Staff

Why is kindness important right now?

Being kind to ourselves and others is important for our mental health, especially during challenging times. Kindness helps us to connect with people and communities, which helps us cope with difficult situations.

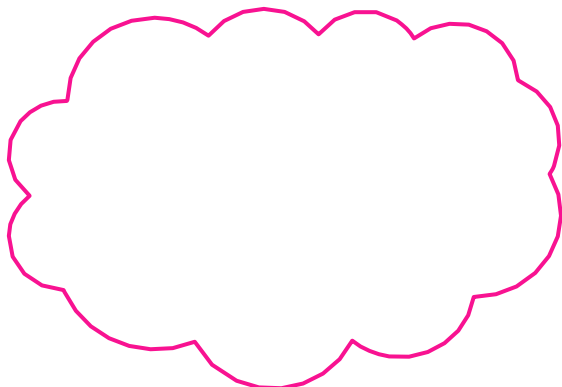
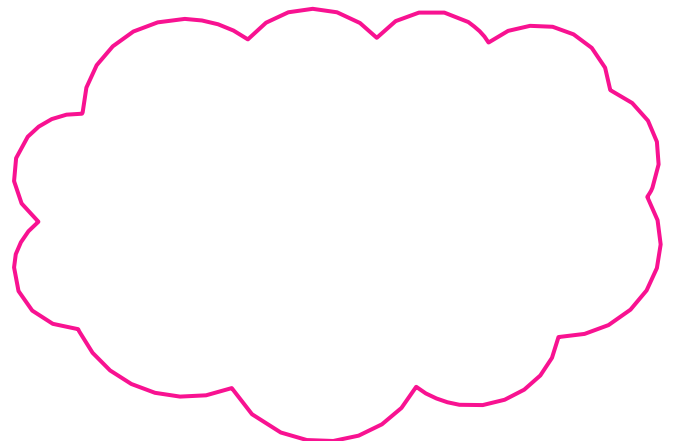
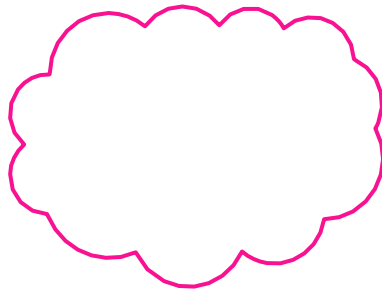
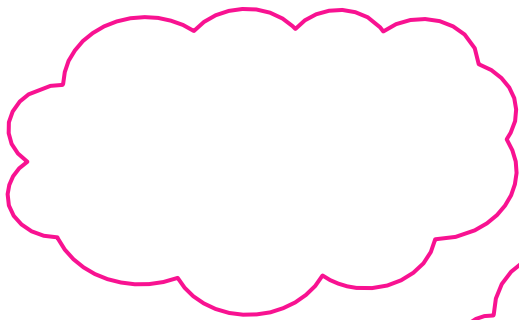
Being kind and helping others helps to reduce stress and improve emotional wellbeing



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Counting Kindness

Sometimes we can find it easier to pay attention to the difficult things in our lives. This counting kindness challenge encourages us to be aware and alert to all the acts of kindness that also surround us. In the bubbles below, why not try to write down one act of kindness for each day this week. It may be something you see on tv, online, at home or even something you've done yourself! e.g. a kind message from a friend, helping from a loved one, a positive news story.





Make a cup of tea for someone you live with



Make and send a care package to someone who needs it



Call a friend that you haven't spoken to for a while



Send a letter to a grandparent



Make a nice meal for someone you live with



Tell a friend or family member why you are thankful for them

Acts of Kindness during Lockdown



Send a **funny meme** to cheer up a friend



Send an interesting article to a friend



Help your parents with household



Offer to skill share with a friend via video call - you could teach guitar, dance etc



Arrange to watch a film at the same time as a friend and video call



Spend time playing with a pet

Print this page and stick it on your fridge for inspiration -or you could set it as the background of your phone as a reminder!

Write down three acts of kindness that you would like to do over the next week:

1.
2.
3.

[Click here](#) to see how other young people are spreading kindness at this time.

Positive affirmations

Being kind to ourselves is really important for our mental health and wellbeing. But sometimes we can find this hard to do. So, it can be helpful to practise celebrating the things we like about ourselves.

Positive affirmations are a great way to build our confidence and self-esteem by taking time to name the things we're proud of and that we like about ourselves. Each day this week try finishing the 'I am' statements below with kind words and phrases.

e.g. funny, a good friend, creative...

I am...	I am...	I am...	I am...
I am...	I am...	I am...	I am...

Remember: be kind to yourself

Giving and the 5 ways to wellbeing

If you would like more information on the role of giving in relation to worries, anxiety and the 5 ways to wellbeing, click or scan this link to watch a video:



Click here or scan this code

Click the icons to access more information:



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