



## 'Express Yourself'

# Mental Health and Place2be

Place2be is an organisation devoted to improving and taking care of young people's mental health as they believe it is essential, especially in these uncertain times. Every year, they host a 'Children's Mental Health Week' in which they embody different ways of tackling and promoting mental health. This year, for 2021 the week is engaged around the idea of 'Expressing Yourself'.

But what is this? 'Expressing Yourself' is a way of finding ways to share thoughts, feelings and ideas through creativity (like music, art or even physical exercise). However, expressing your creativity has to be enjoyable, or what is the point in doing it in the first place? Hobbies and talents should be encouraged by everybody because many believe that through expressing oneself to others it shapes a personality for later life and that is why this event is unbelievably important for young people.

The McAuley Buddies are promoting this event to our school community as we believe that 'Expressing Yourself' is definitely important especially in 'Lockdown' where young people can be so easily isolated from others. This event is certainly something that we should all consider getting behind whether you are a parent or a child. So, do something! Be something! And 'express yourself' to love yourself.

[See more @Place2be.org.uk]

Thank you! – Mackenzie

### How do our Buddies express themselves?

"In order to truly express myself, I first have to figure out who I really am. Through the art of music, I have managed to find out who I truly am. For me, music provides a way to reveal my creative side and helps me to become inspired and uplifted, to relax and relieve stress and tension. When playing with others in a group, it allows me to improve my social and emotional skills. Being involved with an ensemble of musicians really helps me to express my feelings through music as I feel like I have created an outlet which helps me to relax seen as though I don't feel I'm being judged by anyone.

In addition to this, I have also created my own safe space within my home. This helps me to express myself as I feel that when I am in this space, I feel in control and that I don't have to hold back from anything. Also, I have come up with activities to do, to help me de-stress. Some of these may include listening to music, watching a film and having a hot drink". (Yum!) - Amy

"It took me a while to figure out how I enjoy expressing myself. One of my favourite hobbies is cooking. Not only does it make me relax, but I get to enjoy delicious food with my family after I've finished! Another way I like to express myself is by sewing. Over lockdown I taught myself how to use the sewing machine that has been sat in the ward robe for goodness knows how long. I love experimenting with different patterns and creating new things – I find it so relaxing! Having a way to express yourself is important, because it allows your mind to take a breather, and is often a form of meditation for a lot of people". - Jemima

"We all feel down sometimes and that's normal. We're only human but it's important that you have a way to cope and are able to express yourself. For me, that's by singing or writing how I feel. Expressing yourself creatively is great help! Whether that's through art, literature or something else is not important - just do what helps you the most. Even something as simple as reading a book or self-care can be a great help. Everyone has a right to feel safe and happy and that can be tough sometimes, especially at the moment. Just try and do what you love, but even if all you do is get out of bed that's great. Stay safe guys and we're always here to help you if you're struggling". – Amelia

"To express myself, I need to relax. I often do this by walking with my three small dogs for an hour or so. Despite this, even the shortest walk can help. Also, I can express myself through creating things. Typically, I will take my camera out and do a photoshoot. This allows me to stop thinking about worrying and stressful parts of life and clear my mind. In addition, I can express myself through exercise. Even something as small as a run can take my mind of things and help me to become much more emotionally healthy".

"You don't always need a plan. Sometimes you just need to breathe, trust, let go and see what happens." Each day presents a new challenge, it's how we face those challenges and not run from them". - Sam



Take care and stay safe everyone! ☺

"A healthy mind is the greatest treasure to find".