



# **BEHIND THE BANDANA**

**BBC CHILDREN IN NEED'S  
MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS WEEK CAMPAIGN**

**RESOURCES FOR SCHOOLS**



# THE ACTIVITY

## To mark Mental Health Awareness Week, BBC Children in Need has launched the ‘Behind the Bandana’ campaign, because mental health issues can be harder to see.

For mental health awareness week, Pudsey’s temporarily removing his iconic bandana to show that mental health issues can be less visible on the outside, and to encourage conversations that can help.

We want to empower the trusted adults in children’s lives to start conversations that can help keep a child’s mental wellbeing on track.

Across the week, BBC Children in Need will talk about the importance of early intervention and provide resources to support children across the UK, including conversation-starters for adults to open up dialogue with the children they support.

## GET INVOLVED

### We would LOVE you to be part of this campaign.

We want you to get involved to help open-up conversations about mental wellbeing in your school and reach as many children as possible.

At the end of this pack, we’ve provided you with free-to use resources, which we will be launching on Mental Health Awareness Week (15th-21st May).



# WHY WE NEED YOUR HELP

**The last few years have seen unprecedented challenges that are affecting children's mental health. Covid-19, then the cost-of-living crisis, have increased feelings of anxiety, depression, and hopelessness.**

Over a million children and young people across the UK have a mental health issue and almost 12% of children and young people in the UK have low emotional well-being.

The A Million & Me programme (funded by BBC Children in Need) was developed in recognition that many children who go on to have mental health problems later in life have

started to show signs of illness before the age of 14.

We believe that mental health issues can be prevented from escalating with early help, which starts with the right conversations between children and the trusted adults in their lives.

## **MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES CAN BE HARDER TO SEE**

Pudsey's removed his bandana to show that some issues aren't visible on the outside. But conversations can help keep a child's mental health on track.

For tips and tools: [bbc.co.uk/pudsey](https://bbc.co.uk/pudsey)

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**CHILDREN  
IN NEED**





# SCHOOLS RESOURCES

## WHAT'S INCLUDED

- > **Behind the Bandana campaign copy and assets** for your school's Social Media
- > **Conversation starters**, for you to use with your classes
- > **Signposting:** A list of organisations your school can share with anyone who might need further support in this area
- > **Blog post** from BBC Children in Need, helping you and your staff understand the importance of early conversations



# SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT

**We've got a host of big name influencers lined up to support this campaign and get conversations going across the country.**

Join in by snapping a photo of you and your school taking part in a conversation inspired by Pudsey and this 'Behind the Bandana' campaign (please be wary of any permissions you may need in place for this). We've also included digital assets you can share.

**A note on hashtags: Please use the hashtags detailed below and any of your own school ones.**

Please post the images provided [in this link](#) on to your school's social media pages - this can be in addition to any images you decided to take and share of your classes taking part in the activity too!



Suggested post copy (Feel free to adapt):

**We're supporting @BBCiN's the 'Behind the Bandana' campaign, because mental health issues can be harder to see.**

**Simple conversations can help to keep a young person's mental health on track.**

**For tips and tools to help, head to [bbc.co.uk/pudsey](https://bbc.co.uk/pudsey)**

Hashtags to use:

**#cin #mentalhealthawarenessweek #MHAW #MHAW23**



# CONVERSATION STARTERS

Just like adults, children can have daily worries. Listening to how young people feel and supporting them to seek help when they need it, can all begin with an ordinary conversation. Starting these conversations and helping young people to work out problems by talking about them, can really help to keep a young person's mental health on track.

We know it can be tough to know what to say though. So if you're looking for ways to start a healthy discussion, try some of our simple conversation starters below.

**What made you feel happy today?**

**Where do you feel safe and calm?**

**What would your ideal day be like?**

**Is there anything that's on your mind when you're trying to go to sleep?**

**It's okay to ask for help and you can always ask me if you need any.**

**What difficult things are you going through at the moment?**

**How are you feeling about.....?**

**What colour/animal represents how you feel today?**

**These conversation starters are available for you to print or download on our website as a [powerpoint](#) or [PDF](#) for you to share and use in the classroom.**

Cut them up and pop in a hat to pull out and talk through, or use however you and your class prefer! Use them to help start conversations and see which ones work best for your pupils.

# SIGNPOSTING TO MORE SUPPORT



## **OLLEE**

**A digital friend for ages 8-11 which helps children explore feelings**

Ollee asks how you're feeling and offers ideas about what to do. If you're not sure, Ollee will help you figure it out. Children and parents can both create and connect accounts - to share advice together. Try in a web browser or download the app.

[app.ollee.org.uk](http://app.ollee.org.uk)



## **WELLREAD**

**Builds children's emotional wellbeing by reading great stories together & having interesting conversations.**

You can create an account and start reading and exploring together.

[mywellread.com](http://mywellread.com)



## **SHOUT**

**Free, confidential, 24/7 text support service for anyone in the UK who is struggling to cope.**

To start a conversation, text the word 'SHOUT' to 85258. Trained volunteers are there to listen at any time of day or night, and messages won't appear on the phone bill.

[giveusashout.org](http://giveusashout.org)



## **CHILDLINE**

**Free, confidential support and advice, 24 hours a day on 0800 1111**

[childline.org.uk](http://childline.org.uk)



## **YOUNG MINDS**

**Free, confidential online and telephone support, including information and advice, to any adult worried about the emotional wellbeing or mental health of a child or young person up to the age of 25. Call 0808 8025544.**

[youngminds.org.uk](http://youngminds.org.uk)



## **BBC CHILDREN IN NEED - A MILLION & ME PROGRAMME**

£10m fund, dedicated to supporting children (age 8-13) with their emotional wellbeing and mental health. A Million & Me funds projects which work across the UK, locally and digitally. The Million & Me Hub has links to tools and resources to support children's emotional wellbeing.

[A Million & Me Programme](http://A Million & Me Programme)

## **BBC CHILDREN IN NEED**

Fund projects across the UK that support children and young people's emotional wellbeing. You can find out what we fund near you here.

[bbc.co.uk/cin](http://bbc.co.uk/cin)



# THE POWER OF CONVERSATIONS

## Why conversations are a brilliant way to keep a child's mental health on track

by Sophie Charles, BBC Children in Need

Many children and young people are already or will, experience challenges to their mental health. There are ways we can all help them to cope. It may seem like a simple ask, but having a trusted adult who engages in supportive, open conversations with children and young people, is a great way to support keeping their emotional wellbeing on track.

BBC Children in Need know that taking early steps to support children and young people's mental health can help them when they begin to experience challenges, before things worsen. Through BBC Children in Need's mental health programme, A Million & Me, we learned that this is particularly important for those going through the transformative years of 8-13, as it's during these years that many concerns around emotional wellbeing first emerge.

Emotional wellbeing of young people is at the heart of what we do here at BBC Children in Need, with the majority of funded projects helping children and young people to build positive relationships and to have conversations that support their emotional wellbeing. These projects range from having fun and enjoyment at an after-school sports club to exploring the management of feelings during a drama therapy session to dealing with the effects of distress through a group therapy programme. But it's not just formal youth work settings that provide young people with trusted adults, it could be a family support worker, a playworker, or a parent/carer. All of these trusted adults play a key role in the system of children's mental health.

Conversations help young people to acquire the emotional language to talk about the things that matter to them and explore how they are feeling. We know that young people value positive relationships with trusted adults, whether that's at home, in the classroom or in the community. It's through these positive relationships that young people can engage in conversations about emotional wellbeing so that they know who to turn to when they need to seek help. It's important young people feel equipped to do this before things escalate.

Just like adults, young people can have daily worries. Starting a conversation and helping young people to work out problems by talking about them, can contribute to feelings of resilience – a key strength we all need to cope with life's adversities. Listening to how young people feel and supporting them to help-seeking when they need it, can all begin with an ordinary conversation.

We believe that there is power in these ordinary, supportive conversations with young people which can take place through every day, positive relationships with trusted adults. It's never too early to start a conversation about feelings and trusted adults should be reminded to have the confidence to do just that... Just ask.

**This article lives on our website as a blog, [the link is here.](#)**

Please feel free to repost it to share it on your websites and social media channels to spread the message.



**BBC Children in Need  
believes that every child  
should have the chance to  
thrive and be the best they  
can be. We are committed  
to being there for children  
across the UK when they  
need us most.**





**THANK YOU SO MUCH  
FOR BEING A PART OF  
THIS CAMPAIGN**

