

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH Week



Background

In 2025, Children's Mental Health Week took place from 3-9 February with the theme **Know Yourself, Grow Yourself**. The purpose behind the theme is to encourage young people and adults to embrace self-awareness and explore what it means to them. This will help children grow and develop resilience to cope with lives' challenges [1].

Covid-19 had a detrimental effect on children's mental health in the UK. Children from low income households, those with educational needs and/or neurodevelopmental challenges were most affected [2]. Previous research demonstrated that supportive relationships are a key protective factor against poor mental health in children, particularly amongst those who have experienced adversity [3].

Emotional and mental health literacy programmes have been proved to have a positive impact on children's wellbeing, academic performance and peer-relationships [4,5]. At Healing for the Heart, we work with school-aged children to raise awareness around mental health, enhance emotional literacy and support wellbeing.

Healing for the Heart

Healing for the Heart is a small mental health and wellbeing charity that bases their practice on the tools from the Community Resiliency Model (CRM) [6]. We aim to increase resilience, compassion and kindness in communities by raising awareness around mental health and teaching people healthy strategies to support their own (and others') wellbeing. During Children's Mental Health Week, we wanted to empower pupils by delivering fun, creative and educational sessions to explore the topic of mental health.

Scottish Priorities

We want to empower future minds by aligning our initiatives with national policies. We are closely following the development of:

- the National Performance Framework, most specifically the indicators of *Children's Voices, Children having Positive Relationships* and *Resilience in Children and Young People*.
- Scotland's Mental Health Strategy (2017-2027)
- Getting It Right For Every Child.

We continuously reflect and evaluate how our charity can work with people to achieve the Scottish priorities in creating healthier, happier and more resilient communities.



"I feel so relaxed now"

"I want to do it again!"

"This is the first time this week I've seen him smile"

1. Place2Be, 2025. About Children's Mental Health Week.

2. Waite et al., 2021. How did the mental health symptoms of children and adolescents change over early lockdown during the COVID-19 pandemic in the UK? *ACAMH*. 1(1).

3. Butler et al., 2022. The Contributing Role of Family, School, and Peer Supportive Relationships in Protecting the Mental Wellbeing of Children and Adolescents. *School Mental Health*. 14(1).

4. Aktepe et al., 2022. Emotional Literacy Skills and Educational Activities on Affective Education Process. *Journal of Erciyes Academy*. 36(2).

5. Amado-Rodriguez et al., 2022. Effectiveness of Mental Health Literacy Programs in Primary and Secondary Schools: A Systematic Review with Meta-Analysis. *Children*. 9(4).

6. Trauma Resource Institute, n.d. Community Resiliency Model.

"I feel better now!"

Impact

We designed a session to **create a safe, nurturing and compassionate space for pupils to learn more and discuss mental health.** Based on previous feedback from teachers, pupils and parents: **we believe it is essential to empower children's autonomy and confidence by improving their emotional literacy.** We teach them how to help themselves and others. **Our mission is to create a culture in which children do not feel like they have to suffer alone or in silence.**

We based the session on skills from the CRM. The 'Help Now!' tools are designed to help bring people back into the OK zone when they are either too amped up or too checked out. Concepts like the high zone, low zone and OK zone. We also discussed some wellbeing strategies and encouraged the children to use their voices and confidently speak about issues that bother them. **The aim of the session was to teach children quick, simple, practical activities that they can use to calm themselves when they feel overwhelmed.**

"I'm brave!"

To encourage the kids to experiment with various wellbeing techniques and reflect on how these felt, a Wellbeing Bingo was developed. Afterwards, we provided a certificate because **we believe it is important for children to feel a sense of achievement and be proud for wanting to learn more about mental health.** It is also important to highlight their new ability to identify healthy coping strategies to support themselves and others when feeling overwhelmed or anxious.

"I'm gonna go home and show my parents!"



"I'm a champion!"

Future Goals

Healing for the Heart wants to work with parents, teachers, schools, children and communities to support children's mental health. We aim to enhance creativity, foster compassion and strengthen community bonds through learning. Our mission is to create as many 'Help Now! Champions' in schools as possible! Ultimately we are changing the culture of stigma around mental health and creating a healthier, happier and more resilient future. **If you are interested in learning more about what we do or want us to come to your school, please email: emma@healingfortheheart.co.uk**



"Pushing against the wall is my favourite!"

"I'm smart!"