

Wellbeing Poster

This week's wellbeing poster looks at how connection with nature benefits our mental health taken from the Mental Health Foundation.



Nature is an important need for many and vital in keeping us emotionally, psychologically and physically healthy.

Our relationship with nature – how much we notice, think about and appreciate our natural surroundings – is critical in supporting good mental health and preventing distress.

Thankfully, Nature has a very wide definition. It can mean green spaces like parks, woodland or forests and blue spaces like rivers, wetlands, beaches or canals. It also includes trees on an urban street, private gardens, verges and even indoor plants or window boxes. Surprisingly, even watching nature documentaries is good for our mental health. This is great news as it means the mental health benefits of nature can be made available to nearly every one of us, no matter where we live.

Research shows that people who are more connected with nature are usually happier in life and more likely to report feeling their lives are worthwhile. Nature can generate many positive emotions, such as calmness, joy, and creativity and can facilitate concentration.

Nature connectedness is also associated with lower levels of poor mental health, particularly lower depression and anxiety.

Perhaps not surprisingly, people with strong nature connectedness are likelier to have pro-environmental behaviours such as recycling items or buying seasonal food. This is likely to lead to further benefits if these pro-environmental activities can lead to natural improvements that we can then go on to enjoy. At a time of devastating environmental threats, developing a stronger, mutually supportive relationship between people and the environment will be critical.

As we move into Autumn, now may be a good time to spend more time with nature to discover connectedness for yourselves.

