

## World Mental Health Day

World Mental Health Day, on 10 October, is a day to raise awareness of mental health issues around the world. Read the article to learn more.

### Before reading

Do the preparation task first. Then read the article and do the exercises to check your understanding.

### Preparation task

Match the definitions (a–h) with the vocabulary (1–8).

Vocabulary	Definition
1. .... to support someone	a. a strong feeling in society that something is wrong or embarrassing
2. .... depression	b. to increase people's knowledge or understanding
3. .... stigma	c. to help someone to solve a problem
4. .... a theme	d. a subject or topic
5. .... to socialise	e. a mental health problem where a person feels unhappy for a long time
6. .... to raise awareness	f. material in food and drink that you need for good health
7. .... to volunteer	g. to meet and talk to other people, for fun
8. .... nutrients	h. to do work, especially helping other people, without getting paid

## World Mental Health Day

If your arm or leg hurts, you see a doctor. Simple. But if your mind is where the pain is, what do you do? People rarely talk about mental health problems because there is still a lot of stigma around it. However, mental health problems are actually very common, affecting about 13 per cent of people aged between 10 and 19 around the world. In a class of 30 students, that's about four people.

### The day

World Mental Health (WMH) Day is on 10 October. It was created to raise awareness of mental health issues, fight against stigma and support people with mental health problems. Each year has a different theme – for example, mental health at work, young people's mental health, and mental health and older people.

## Mental health at school

School life isn't always easy. Exams are stressful, lessons can be hard and it's also hard to make good friends sometimes. Schools can help, though – for example, by giving you extra help with your learning or by planning social activities where students can meet others and make new friends. If you don't feel good at school, talk to a teacher you trust.

## Get some exercise

Most people know that exercise is good for your body, but did you know it's good for your mental health too? Regular exercise can help reduce anxiety and depression. Why not exercise by going for a walk in the park or countryside? Spending time in nature also makes people relaxed and reduces stress.

## Eat well

Your diet can also change how you feel. If you eat a lot of crisps, cake, chocolate, etc., your blood sugar will rise and fall, which could make you feel angry or tired. You should eat enough vegetables and fruit, or you may miss nutrients that your body and brain need to make you feel well. Drink enough water too – otherwise, it's difficult to think clearly.

## Keep social media under control

Social media can be interesting and inspiring, but also annoying and stressful. Remember that people's messages and photos are only the things that they want to show you – they don't show you their bad days or worries. Always stay away from anything stressful or unpleasant, and check how long you spend online and keep it under control so that you enjoy your offline time too!

## Spend time with others

Everyone needs time alone sometimes, but it's healthy to socialise. Spend time together with people you like, trust and who make you feel good. If you feel lonely, try volunteering. It's a good way of meeting new people, and you'll feel good about helping others. One survey showed that 48 per cent of people who volunteered for more than two years said they felt less depressed as a result.

## What can I do on World Mental Health Day?

WMH Day encourages us to be more aware of mental health. On this day, do something that really makes you happy, such as having your favourite food or chatting with your best friend. Also, take some time to ask yourself: How do I feel right now? Is everything OK? How can I look after myself better? If you need support, talk to somebody you trust. Also, think about

how you could support other people. You could try to notice how the people around you are feeling, or inform yourself about common issues such as depression so that you'll understand friends' problems better.

Anything you do on WMH Day, even just talking to people about it, will help us all to understand and support people better.

Source: [http://www.who.int/mental\\_health/world-mental-health-day/en/](http://www.who.int/mental_health/world-mental-health-day/en/)

## Tasks

### Task 1

Circle the best answer.

1. Why don't people talk much about mental health problems?
  - a. Because they are not important.
  - b. Because people think they are wrong or embarrassing.
  - c. Because they are not very common in the world.
  
2. What changes every year?
  - a. The date of World Mental Health Day
  - b. The name of World Mental Health Day
  - c. The theme of World Mental Health Day
  
3. What should students do if they feel unhappy at school?
  - a. Talk to a teacher about it.
  - b. Learn at home.
  - c. Don't tell anybody about it.
  
4. What type of exercise does the article recommend?
  - a. Exercising in your room at home.
  - b. Exercising at school.
  - c. Exercising in a green area.
  
5. What could make you feel worse?
  - a. Eating vegetables.
  - b. Drinking water.
  - c. Eating sugary food.

6. What does the article recommend about social media?
  - a. Don't use it too much.
  - b. Stop using it.
  - c. Use it more often.
  
7. What does the article recommend if you feel lonely?
  - a. Spend more time on social media.
  - b. Do some work to help other people.
  - c. Spend time alone.
  
8. What does the article recommend you can do on World Mental Health Day?
  - a. Look after yourself and other people.
  - b. Start volunteering.
  - c. Stay away from social media.

## Task 2

Complete the sentences with words from the box.

spend	reduce	support
affect	raise	keep

1. Mental health problems ..... about 13 per cent of teenagers.
2. World Mental Health Day hopes to ..... awareness of mental health issues.
3. We should try to ..... people who are facing problems.
4. Regular exercise can help to ..... stress.
5. If you ..... time in nature, it helps you to relax.
6. Most people use social media every day, but it's important to ..... it under control.

## Discussion

What are your tips for staying healthy and happy?

## Answers

### Preparation task

1. c
2. e
3. a
4. d
5. g
6. b
7. h
8. f

### Task 1

1. b
2. c
3. a
4. c
5. c
6. a
7. b
8. a

### Task 2

1. affect
2. raise
3. support
4. reduce
5. spend
6. keep