

OUTRIGHT

Speak out on children's rights

SUPPORT WORKSHOP 1

15th September 2021

Thank you to everyone for joining, it was great to see so many of you! This is the first of two support workshops.

We've typed up the questions participants asked and the answers shared, below. There are some other key things we ask you to remember too:

- You know your settings, the children and young people – better than we ever will and we welcome your feedback, always!
- Do what works, when it works, for you and your setting
- We are here to make suggestions and offer guidance so please [get in touch](#) with your queries

Q&A SESSION

How are mental and physical health linked to children's rights?

The links between children's rights and their mental health are covered in the *Activity 1: Know Your Rights* for children aged under 12 years, and *Activity 1: All Children's Right to a Healthy Mind* for young people age 12+ years.

- Article 24 of the UNCRC has a clear link to children's mental health. It states that healthcare for children should be as good as possible and that they have the right to access information on staying safe and healthy. This covers both their mental and physical health, which are closely intertwined.
- As always article 12 is central to OutRight, stating that young people have a right to use their voice and for it to have influence in the decisions that affect their lives. Articles 2, 3, 13 and 29 also have strong links to this year's theme.

How can we launch OutRight, especially those new to the campaign? What are some practical ideas of how to run OutRight with COVID-19 restrictions?

There are lots of ways to get things started. Here are a few ideas:

- You can introduce the campaign through a whole school assembly, or first to a smaller pupil voice group like the School Council. Make use of the introduction video message from Cel Spellman and PowerPoint presentation that's easily shared virtually!
- Ask your Pupil Voice group where they think OutRight could fit: encourage them to take a leading role in advocating for others to take part.
- World Mental Health Day (10th October) and Antibullying week (15-19th November) are approaching and could be useful moments to launch, if you've not started yet.
- Given the strong link to the pastoral work in schools, talk to form tutors and year heads about getting involved.
- Link OutRight activities to what you're doing already on mental health and wellbeing, e.g. check-in activities.
- You could use a focus on Article 29 of the UNCRC, about a child or young person's right to an education that helps their mind, body and talents be the best they can, to start things off. Thinking about what makes us feel positive, and what doesn't, could be a good place to begin.

How can we make the campaign work for Early Years settings?

- We've worked really hard this year to make sure that there's clear signposting and recommendations for differentiation, throughout the resources. Check out the *Tips for those working in Early Years settings* at the start of each children's activity sheet.
- There's lots of video content and experiential activities included.
- Link OutRight activities to what you're doing already on mental health and wellbeing, e.g. check-in activities.

Is there a specific ask of Government for this year's campaign?

Not at present. This will come later down the line, so keep your eyes peeled!

How can we encourage and involve other colleagues?

Globally, children and young people's mental health is a priority for UNICEF and has been for some time.

There are children and young people's mental health organisations in the UK your school or organisation are likely working with already. We're interested in how these different initiatives can link together and have designed the OutRight resources with flexibility in mind.

If you're a Rights Respecting School, it might help when talking to colleagues, to refer back to the commitments you've made as part of this work. These can help guide how you implement the campaign in your setting.

OutRight 2021/22 is not about one specific aspect of mental health, it's about creating environments where children and young people feel safe to share how they're feeling, so they know there is someone who will listen and where to access support, should they need it.

The campaign doesn't require OutRight Leads to be mental health professionals. Although many of you likely have very relevant experience to run this campaign, we believe anyone can be part of reducing the stigma and discrimination around mental illness and support others to feel safe to talk.

The Rights Respecting Schools team often hear that when children know and can talk about their rights, it makes difficult conversations easier: we believe this year's OutRight can support that even further.

How can we model the impact of good mental health?

It's important to remember that no one feels great all of the time. Mental health is a spectrum, and we all move along it over time.

Facilitating these conversations can take a fair amount of emotional energy and have an impact on you too. We've provided links to Mind and Samaritans in the resources - please ensure that you are seeking the support you need.

We know that effective pupil voice mechanisms, where children and young people know that they will be listened to, builds trust, develops relationships and has positive impact on wellbeing.

How can OutRight be adapted for SEN schools?

Every year lots of SEN schools take part in OutRight. Each will run the campaign in a slightly different way so we can't recommend what will be best for you. However, there are lots of suggestions in the resources that will help you decide what will work best in your setting.

If you do adapt something and think it works, please share it with us so we can share it with others.

Keep in mind that taking part in OutRight doesn't require you to complete all the activities exactly as stated on the timeline: it's about choosing the bits that are most appropriate for your group.

The third advocacy action, released at the end of November, is about creating a Mental Health and Wellbeing Declaration for your setting. Something like that may seem like a very formal document to produce, but it's not really. While we've provided a template that can be populated, it can be created in a whole range of ways – using art materials, drama, or discussions: coming together to think about how everyone wants to feel, and what environment and behaviours would support that.

Do you have any recommendations for primary age books that look at different personality types, e.g. that it's okay to be quiet sometimes, or even all the time?

Participants on the call recommended the following titles:

Giraffes Can't Dance
The Boy, The Mole, The Fox and The Horse
Big Bear Little Bear
Winnie the Pooh
There's a Volcano in my Tummy
Guess How Much I Love You

Quiet Power: Secret Strengths of Introverts was recommended for adults.

Other suggestions included encouraging children and young people to write their own stories about difference, as well as using puppets and other expressive artforms to explore feelings and behaviours.

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES!

We'd love to explore **media and communications opportunities** with you: to amplify the voices of the children and young people you're working with.

These opportunities will be linked to:

- The launch of UNICEF's State of the World's Children report, on mental health
- Encouraging more schools and youth organisations to take part in OutRight
- World Children's Day

Please let us know if you're interested in being involved! outright@unicef.org.uk