

READING WELL

What is Reading Well?

Reading Well is a national scheme supporting people to understand and manage their health and wellbeing using helpful reading. The books on our reading lists can be recommended by a health professional and taken free of charge from a local library, or users can self-refer and borrow the titles as they would any other library book.

The books are all [chosen and recommended by health experts](#), as well as by people with lived experience of the conditions and topics covered and their relatives and carers. **There are five booklists available that are targeted at different age groups:**



- [Reading Well for mental health](#)
- [Reading Well for long term conditions](#)
- [Reading Well for dementia](#)
- [Reading Well for children](#) (primary schools)
- [Reading Well for teens](#) (secondary schools)

The books for children and young people aim to support good mental health and wellbeing, with titles dealing with specific conditions like anxiety and depression as well as difficult experiences including bullying, exam stress and bereavement.

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) has funded a universal roll out of the reading lists: [Reading Well for mental health](#) and [Reading Well for children](#) to **every library service** across England to support public mental health and wellbeing. Welsh Government have funded every library authority in Wales to deliver the schemes for children and teens bilingually in [Welsh](#) and [English](#).

Where can I find the books?

Visit the [books page](#) for our booklists. You can borrow books from the collections from your local library. Reading Well is part of the [Universal Public Library Health Offer](#). Many of the Reading Well titles are available to borrow as e-books and audiobooks. [Visit your local library website](#) to find out how to join the library and access books electronically.

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The need

There is **enormous need** for quality assured health information, advice, and stories to support children and young people to understand and manage their mental health and wellbeing:

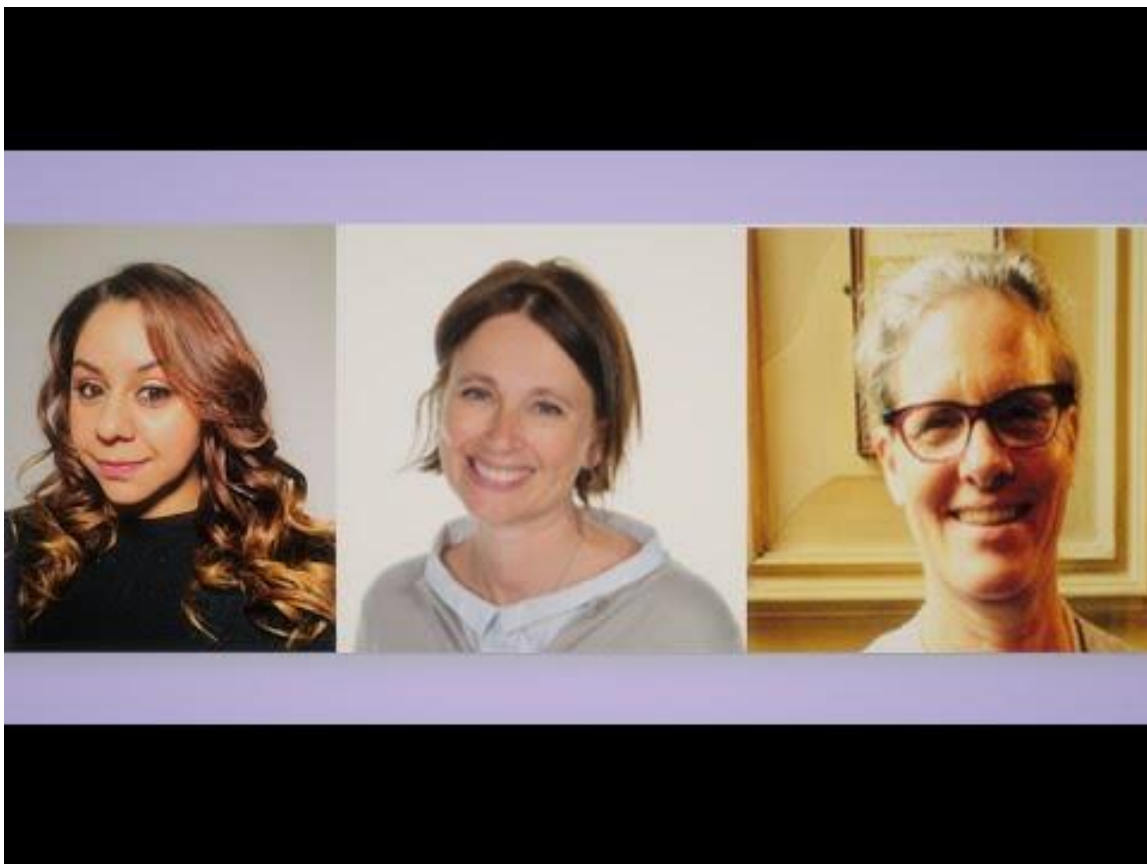
- **One in eight** (12.8%) 5 to 19 year olds had **at least one mental health condition** when assessed in 2017.
- **Over a third** of parents of children aged 4-11 (34%) **worry about their child's mental health** at least once a week, and these worries appear well placed as almost two thirds (60%) of children aged 8-11 say they feel stressed, sad or worried at least once a month.

- There has been an **increase over time in the prevalence** of mental health needs in 5 to 15 year olds. Rising from 9.7% in 1999 and 10.1% in 2004, to 11.2% in 2017.
- Schools are on average making **183 Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) referrals** every school day. **Most referrals** (56%) came from **primary schools**.

How do schools benefit?

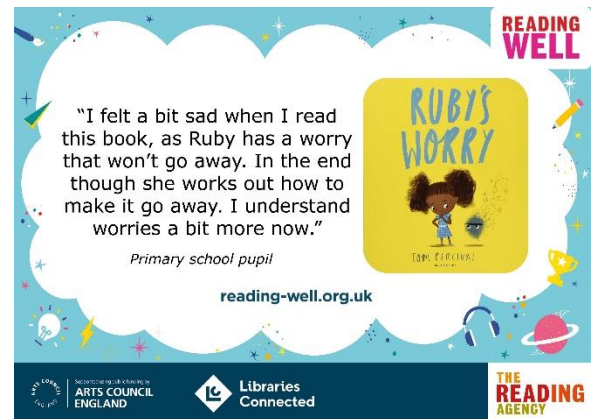
- Reading Well programmes are mapped against key priorities outlined in the **government Green paper** on Transforming Children's and Young People's Mental Health Provision including prevention and early intervention.
- The scheme provides evidence-based interventions for common mental health needs, e.g. anxiety, depression, behaviour problems, as well as support for children and young people who experience traumatic events, bereavement etc.
- Reading Well is a 'shelf ready' resource that has been clinically endorsed by experts; staff do not need to be familiar with the books themselves to feel comfortable recommending books from the list as part of their wellbeing provision.

Watch our free webinar with Libraries Connected to hear education, primary care, and mental health experts discuss the impact of the pandemic on children's wellbeing and how public libraries could support recovery:



Impact

The scheme has been supported by the public as well as by GPs, mental health professionals and government ministers as a helpful community-based health service. It has also delivered significant patient benefit; in a recent survey, **100%** of young people would recommend their Reading Well book for support with dealing with difficult feelings and experiences.



What do I need to do next?

Here's a checklist to get you set up to deliver Reading Well:

- ✓ [Get in touch with your local library](#) to signpost to the [Reading Well book collections](#) or you can order books yourself from your usual suppliers or via [bookshop.org](#)
- ✓ Visit our [resources bank](#) to download materials, artwork and training to support the scheme
- ✓ Read our [delivery model](#) for guidelines on delivering the scheme
- ✓ Encourage your student support services to signpost students to the scheme
- ✓ [Download digital resources](#) to help you deliver the scheme, e.g. social media artwork/toolkits
- ✓ Email us at readingwell@readingagency.org.uk to:
 - Register as a Reading Well school
 - Be put in touch with your local library to see [how you can work together](#) to deliver Reading Well

Visit reading-well.org.uk/get-involved or email readingwell@readingagency.org.uk for further guidance and information on delivering the scheme.



Reading Well is supported by the Anna Freud Centre, Anxiety UK, British Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies (BABCP), British Heart Foundation, British Lung Foundation, British Psychological Society (BPS), Carers Trust, Carers UK, Health Education England, IBS Network, Mental Health First Aid England, Mental Health Foundation, Mind, National Association of Primary Care, NHS England (IAPT), OCD Action, Public Health England, Royal College of General Practitioners, Royal College of Nursing, Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health, Royal College of Psychiatrists, Royal Society of Public Health, Self Management UK and Stroke Association.