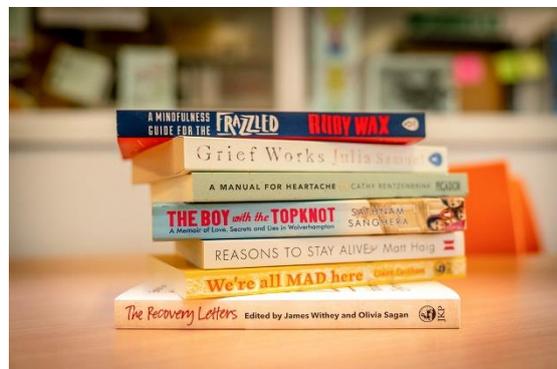


# READING WELL

## What is Reading Well?

Reading Well is a national scheme that supports people to understand and manage their health and wellbeing using helpful reading.

The scheme is quality assured and the books are selected by health professionals through a [selection protocol](#) that follows NICE guidelines. The books are all [endorsed by professional health bodies](#), as well as by people living with the conditions and topics covered and their relatives and carers.



There are currently five booklists available:

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

## How does it work?

The books on our expert endorsed reading lists can be recommended by a link worker or other health/social care/voluntary sector professional and taken free of charge from a local library, or users can self-refer and borrow the titles like any other library book.

The booklists provide:

- Information and advice for managing conditions or dealing with difficult feelings and experiences
- Support following diagnosis
- Suggestions for shared activities
- Support and practical advice for carers
- Personal accounts of people with lived experience and their relatives and carers

Reading Well is run by The Reading Agency in partnership with Libraries Connected as a key strand of the public library [Universal Health Offer](#). The scheme is available in 99% of English public library authorities.

## Why are public libraries important for health and wellbeing?

Evidence shows that people see their library as a safe, trusted and non-stigmatising place to go for health information. As well as Reading Well, they offer:

- Health information and signposting
- Social and recreational activities such as reading groups and self-help groups
- Reminiscence collections
- Assisted digital access

# READING WELL

## Impact

"I learned so much from these books - how to raise and maintain my self-esteem, to problem-solve successfully, to manage stress and how to take care of myself. I took notes, so I could keep reminding myself of what to do."

*Reading Well participant*



[reading-well.org.uk](http://reading-well.org.uk)

ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND  
Libraries Connected  
THE READING AGENCY

Since 2013, a total of over 1.2 million people have borrowed 2.3 million Reading Well titles from their public library, and the scheme has been endorsed 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, 90% of those who borrowed a book from the Reading Well lists said it had been helpful, and 89% of health professionals valued the scheme as a resource that helps them support people outside of consultation time. Find out more about the most recent evaluation of the scheme (2018/19) [here](#).

## How can health professionals and link workers get involved?

- ✓ Signpost people to the books using [promotional material](#) or [our website](#) or [contact us](#) to be linked up with your local public library.
- ✓ Read our [delivery model](#) for guidelines on delivering the scheme.
- ✓ Encourage your Primary Care Network to signpost people to the scheme and their library service.
- ✓ [Download digital resources](#) to help you deliver the scheme, e.g. social media artwork/toolkits
- ✓ Email us at [readingwell@readingagency.org.uk](mailto:readingwell@readingagency.org.uk) to:
  - Register as a Reading Well partner
  - 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](http://reading-well.org.uk/get-involved) or email [readingwell@readingagency.org.uk](mailto: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.



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**



**Libraries  
Connected**

**THE  
READING  
AGENCY**