

DARLLEN YN WELL 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 health and social care professionals, teachers or anyone else offering support to children and families. The books can be 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 three booklists available bilingually in Welsh and English:**



- [Reading Well for children](#) (ages 7-11)
- [Reading Well for mental health](#) (adults)
- [Reading Well for dementia](#)

Reading Well is delivered by The Reading Agency in partnership with the Welsh network of Libraries Connected, the Society of Chief Librarians Cymru, with funding from the Welsh Government and Arts Council England. The bilingual booklists are available in all Welsh public library authorities.

The books for children aim to support good mental health and wellbeing, with titles dealing with topics from anxiety and grief, bullying and internet safety, to how to cope with events in the news. The booklist also explores living well with a range of diagnosed conditions including Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), dyslexia, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) and physical disabilities.



View our short video here: https://youtu.be/H_gs-5TX3eA

Can schools get involved?

Yes! Many schools deliver the scheme already and we are keen to support more. You can:

- [Visit our website](#) to browse the [booklist](#).

- You can contact readingwell@readingagency.org.uk or your local library authority to access booklist leaflets and promotional materials in order to signpost students to their local library service where they can access the books for free.
- Acquire the book collections via your usual suppliers. Many suppliers allow all the titles in a collection to be purchased together. You can [download a spreadsheet](#) containing all the book titles as ISBNs from our [resources bank](#).
- You could also **link up with your local public library to borrow a collection** for your school. [Email us](#) if you would like us to facilitate this for you.
- Download [free supporting resources](#) from our bank, including an [assembly presentation](#) and [classroom activities](#).
- If you are seeking funding for book collections or supporting resources, many schools have secured local public health funding. We recommend using the information below on need and impact to secure funding.

The need

There is enormous need for quality-assured health information, advice and stories to support children in understanding and managing their mental health and wellbeing:

- 1 in 10 children in Wales between the ages of 5 and 16 has a mental health problem and many more have behavioural issues¹
- 50% of mental health conditions are established by age 14²
- Over a third of UK 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 month³

As the demand for children's mental health support has grown, so have pressures on treatment pathways:

- 70% of children and adolescents in the UK who experience mental health needs have not had appropriate interventions at a sufficiently early age⁴

How reading can help:

- 2 in 5 (39%) children aged 8-11 said they find it difficult to talk about their feelings or emotions, but 9 in 10 of parents (90%) aged 4-11 do agree that reading together is a useful tool to help open up

¹ Welsh Government (2019). [Together for Mental Health: A Strategy for Mental Health and Wellbeing in Wales](#).

² Kessler RC, Berglund P, Demler O, Jin R, Merikangas KR, Walters EE. (2005). Lifetime Prevalence and Age-of-Onset Distributions of DSM-IV Disorders in the National Comorbidity Survey Replication. Archives of General Psychiatry, 62 (6) pp. 593-602. doi:10.1001/archpsyc.62.6.593.

³ BookTrust, (2019). ['New BookTrust research shows half of children in the UK don't discuss their mental health and wellbeing with their parents.'](#)

⁴ Children's Society (2008) The Good Childhood Inquiry: health research evidence. London: Children's Society.

conversations with their child, however almost 70% stopped reading to their children by the time they started at Key Stage 2 (7 years old).⁵

- Evaluation has shown that bibliotherapy is cost effective, elicits a positive response from people, improves self-management and results in better person - doctor relationships.⁶ Reading Well collections can support people with quality-assured, evidence-based resources outside of clinical settings, or while they await treatment.⁷

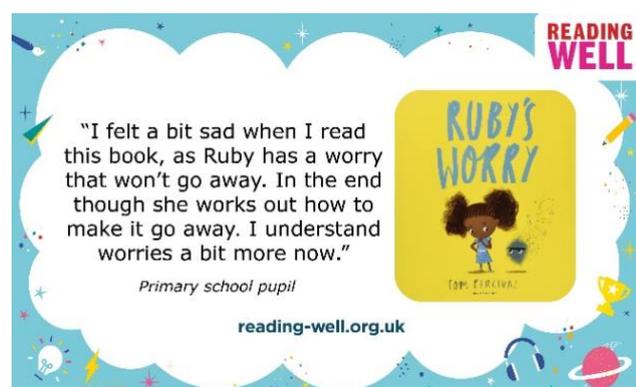
How do schools benefit?

- Reading Well for children supports key priorities outlined in the Welsh Government's strategy for mental health and wellbeing in Wales, [Together for Mental Health](#) including early intervention and children accessing information about mental health in the right format in the places they go.
- 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.

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, **90%** of young people would recommend their Reading Well book for support with dealing with difficult feelings and experiences.

Further detail on the findings of external evaluations and our case studies are [available on our website](#).



⁵ BookTrust, (2019). ['New BookTrust research shows half of children in the UK don't discuss their mental health and wellbeing with their parents.'](#)

⁶ 'Evidence Review of BOP and Creative Bibliotherapy Projects in Libraries', *Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing*, D Chamberlain, vol 15 (2008)

⁷ BookTrust, (2019). ['New BookTrust research shows half of children in the UK don't discuss their mental health and wellbeing with their parents.'](#)

What do I need to do next?

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

- ✓ Order [the book collection](#) from your usual suppliers or contact your local library to refer pupils to their collections
- ✓ Obtain leaflets and promotional materials from your local library authority and download the [digital leaflet here](#).
- ✓ Read our [delivery model](#) for guidelines on delivering the scheme
- ✓ Encourage your student support services to signpost students to the scheme using the user leaflets
- ✓ [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
 - Sign up to our newsletter for more information & resources to help you deliver Reading Well
 - Contact 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.