12 Top Tips PPORT

'Nature' is a superb choice as the theme of this year's Mental Health Awareness Week, as there's clear evidence that getting access to nature is excellent for our mental health. With Covid-19 restrictions beginning to ease, it's the perfect time of year to rediscover the natural world and give ourselves a calming, uplifting treat. You don't have to drag the family on a four-hour hike, either – just 10 minutes each day in the garden, in the local park or your nearest green space could really help. Here are 12 suggestions for ways you can benefit from nature ... both online and off.

ONLINE ?

Give something back to nature @

temet search should bring up detainservation projects you could voluniting events that you could enrol the thave to be a long-term commitmes are grateful for every bit of help!

Tranquil streams

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Give geocaching a go

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ve not heard of it, geo caching is a modern twist traditional treasure hunt. Participants look for

Share what you see

While you're out exploring nature, take a photo or video of anything you find that inspires you. Not only will it be a nice memory for you to look back on, but you could also share it safely on social media and maybe motivate others to engage with the natural world!

Watch the stars

Looking at the night sky can be incredibly calming. There are some comprehensive stargazing websites and apps to help you locate and recognise different stars. It can take 20 minutes or so before you can see stars fully in the dark, even on clear nights, so allow your eyes time to adjust.

Wildlife on the web

A Google search will bring up lots of sites that stream webcam footage of nature. From seals to barn owls, rabbits to badgers, you can get an intimate, heart-warming view of all kinds of animal communities from inside the comfort of your own home.

Meet Our Expert

Anna Bateman is possionate about placing prevention at the heart of every school, integrating mental wellbeing within the curriculum, school culture and systems. She is also a membe of the advisory group for the Department for Education, advising them on their mental health green paper.

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Ditch the phone

OFFLINE

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Put down some roots

vers, shrubs, herbs or vegetables can b swarding. Not only does it help us to h nature – it also provides an ongoing raw pleasure from. If your home doesn'

A different kind of tweet

lost gardens in the UK attracta wonderful variety of irds, and just watching them for a few minutes can e immensely therapeutic. There are some xcellent apps and sites to help you name any pecies you don't already know or even play a ame: identifying bird song, like bird song bingo!

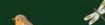
Feed your feathered friends

Park your worries

If you're lucky enough to live within easy travelling distance of a park, you'd benefit from using it. Whether it's to play ball games, get on your bike, walk the dog or just get some fresh air into your lungs, the

Art and soul

Younger children will enjoy drawing or painting animals or nature scenes, or writing a poem or song lyrics about nature. For extra art or crafting fun, you could collect natural materials – leaves, feathers, tre bark or seeds, for example – to use in your creations.

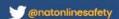




s: https://nhsforest.org/caranavirus-lackdown-we-need-nature-now-more-ever | https://www.nat .com/magazine/article/call-to-wild | 'Mental Health and Nature', Mind, 2018

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