

Children's Mental Health Awareness Week 2021

*Express Yourself*

*"Mental Health Monsters"*

*Campaign*



# Our inspiration

Toby Allen is an artist and illustrator who “expressed himself” with a piece of creative work entitled “Mental Health Monsters” following his own experiences with Mental Health issues.

His work has been used by multiple Mental Health organisations, teachers and therapists to support awareness around Mental Health and support recovery.

To find out more visit:

[www.zestydoesthings.com](http://www.zestydoesthings.com)





# Our inspiration



Using the Toby Allen examples as inspiration we would like you to design a mental health inspired monster or set of monsters to explore the effects of Covid and the Lockdown on Young People's Wellbeing





# Important Information

- Any young person at CODA can enter (young at heart can too but for fun)
- Your monster needs an explanation or short back story
- You can use any expressive medium to create your monster (art, creative writing, film or photo, dance, drama, etc...)
- A PDF version of this information will be available on the Student Wellbeing at CODA Teams page
- Deadline for entries is Monday 1<sup>st</sup> March
- Entries to be sent to [etomblin@cityofderbyacademy.org](mailto:etomblin@cityofderbyacademy.org) or [Mlowe-bird@cityofderbyacademy.org](mailto:Mlowe-bird@cityofderbyacademy.org) or uploaded to the Student Wellbeing at CODA Teams page



# Benefits!

- The most reflective and expressive entry will receive a wellbeing “Buddybox” from the Mental Health Charity Blurt Foundation ([www.blurtitout.org](http://www.blurtitout.org)) full of wellbeing goodies!
- Suitable entries will be shared on a separate channel on the Student Wellbeing at CODA Teams page (with or without names) to share and celebrate creativity and expression
- Runner up prizes will also be available for all suitable entries that appear on the Teams page
- Creativity and expression is good for your mental health!
- Enjoy expressing!







# Anxiety

The anxiety monster is small enough to sit on its victim's shoulder and whisper things in to their unconscious, eliciting fearful thoughts and irrational worries. The anxiety monster is often seen as weak in comparison to others, but it is one of the most common and is very hard to get rid of.

They often carry small objects linked to their victim's anxieties such as clocks which represent a common but irrational fear of things that might never happen. No-one has ever seen the face of the anxiety monster for it always wears a skull as a mask.





# Depression

The depression monster floats around endlessly, always covering his eyes to hide itself from the outside world. Because of this it always bumps into people or other monsters causing more distress to itself each time.

Its only relief is to wrap its fluid tail around a victim and share its depression with them. The victim is unaware of the monster but will register a heaviness and will develop a state of deep depression. Meanwhile the monster absorbs any positive emotion from its host until it has had its fill and moves onto another host.





# Paranoia

The paranoia monster uses its tall ears like a radar, scanning the area for any activity. In fact, the monster's ears are almost useless due to the tight curled up cartilage and thick fur, so the sounds often get confused and muffled meaning paranoia almost often hears the wrong thing, which it then passes onto its victim.

They feed upon feelings of anxiety of fear which they unintentionally create within their victims and they work with other monsters such as schizophrenia and anxiety, of which they share a similar biology.





# Social Anxiety

The social anxiety monster spends most of its life underground or in secluded sheltered areas. Because of this their skin appears pale and anaemic apart from hard plates that serve as an unnecessary means of defence. They are from the same biological family as the anxiety and paranoia monsters but due to their extreme way of life they have evolved to look quite different.

The monster spends most of its time in hibernation but will project their auras into human hosts in the hope of living out the ordinary lives they can never have. In the process, the monster passes its own anxieties to its victim so both monster and the human host experience similar irrational social fears or worries.





## Obsessive Compulsive Disorder

The obsessive compulsive monster is a cruel and manipulative puppeteer that uses fear to control its victims. It repeatedly pounds its staff on the ground and uses its patterned feathers and many eyes to hypnotise its victim, creating intense and frightening obsessions often linked to the safety of themselves or people close to them. Victims develop compulsions to carry out repetitive tasks or mental acts to prevent the obsession from coming true or to attempt to temporarily reduce the fear.

The monster is almost never seen but its presence is almost always there. Anxiety and Depression monsters are often used by the OCD monster to keep a hold on its victim.





## Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

The post traumatic stress monsters were once part of a race of benevolent guardians who became corrupted by a painful and unknown malady. Left a twisted shell of their former selves, the monsters began to crave the intense rush of fear and trauma to dull their own pain much like a drug.

The monsters can be found stalking battlefields or lurking near traumatic events and natural disasters, feeding off the collective trauma and fear. They will then seek out individuals involved and stalk them, becoming a constant reminder of that pain. Victims are forced to relive the terrifying moment over and over again while the monster feeds on the destructive energy. The PTSD monster is part of the same family as the anxiety monster.





# Sleep Disorder

The Sleeping Disorder Monster is a playful creature that never rests. It will seek out a playmate, or victim in the middle of the night and keep them awake to satiate its eternal boredom. Most often, the victim will get very little sleep, if any at all, stressing the victim and encouraging other monsters to join in with its games.

If the monster finds its playmate already asleep, it will become enraged and will play a variety of nasty or harmful tricks on its victim. It can induce nightmares or night terrors by burning incense from its tail. It can cause sleep apnoea by wrapping its tusk around the victim's neck. It can even sit on various body parts to temporarily paralyze its unwilling playmates. These are just a few of the many tools at this monster's disposal.





# Anorexia Nervosa

As a parasitic assassin, Anorexia Nervosa slowly kills its victims from the inside. This monster is almost invisible, thanks to its translucent body, but it casts its shadow on those it inhabits, causing its victims to see a warped image of themselves. It manipulates and controls its victim, convincing them to maintain a minimal body weight by restricting food intake and encouraging excessive exercise to lose what it perceives as "extra" weight.

The ultimate goal of Anorexia Nervosa is to make its victims destroy themselves through starvation and other health complications that arise due to its manipulation. The main powers of this monster are control and secrecy which cause its victims to try and hide their extreme habits. In order to defeat Anorexia Nervosa, its existence must be acknowledged, only then can its powers be rendered useless. It is common for Anorexia and Body Dysmorphia to work together.





# ADHD

The ADHD monster is a tricky fiend that usually makes its presence known in childhood and in many cases likes to stay with its host into adulthood. The monster's fast movement, bright colouring and fluttering wings echo audio and visual stimulus to distract and draw the host's attention. This makes it hard for the host to concentrate on everyday tasks and disrupts basic or complex thought processes as their attention and thoughts jump from one thing to the next.

The monster can also magnify and focus on a certain audio or visual clue or even a thought, making it hard to focus on anything outside of that one thing. ADHD's overflowing energy can also have an affect on the host, making them feel restless and agitated, further providing an distraction to everyday activities.





# Nightmare Disorder

Nightmare Disorder is a cruel creature that takes pleasure in crafting vivid nightmares for its host. These hand-crafted nightmares are far more frequent than what is considered normal and can be very disturbing or terrifying. These nocturnal ordeals are emotionally and physically exhausting, usually staying with the host throughout their day and leading to anxiety, stress, and difficulty maintaining concentration.

Fear of the Nightmare Disorder monster returning often turns into a fear of sleep itself, leading to insomnia and a disrupted sleep schedule. This in turn, can lead to more nightmares, fulfilling a cycle that's hard to break, and feeds the monster. Relaxation, taking off the pressure to maintain a good sleep schedule, and cognitive therapies can help deal with this monster.