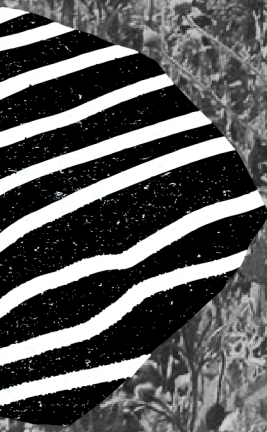
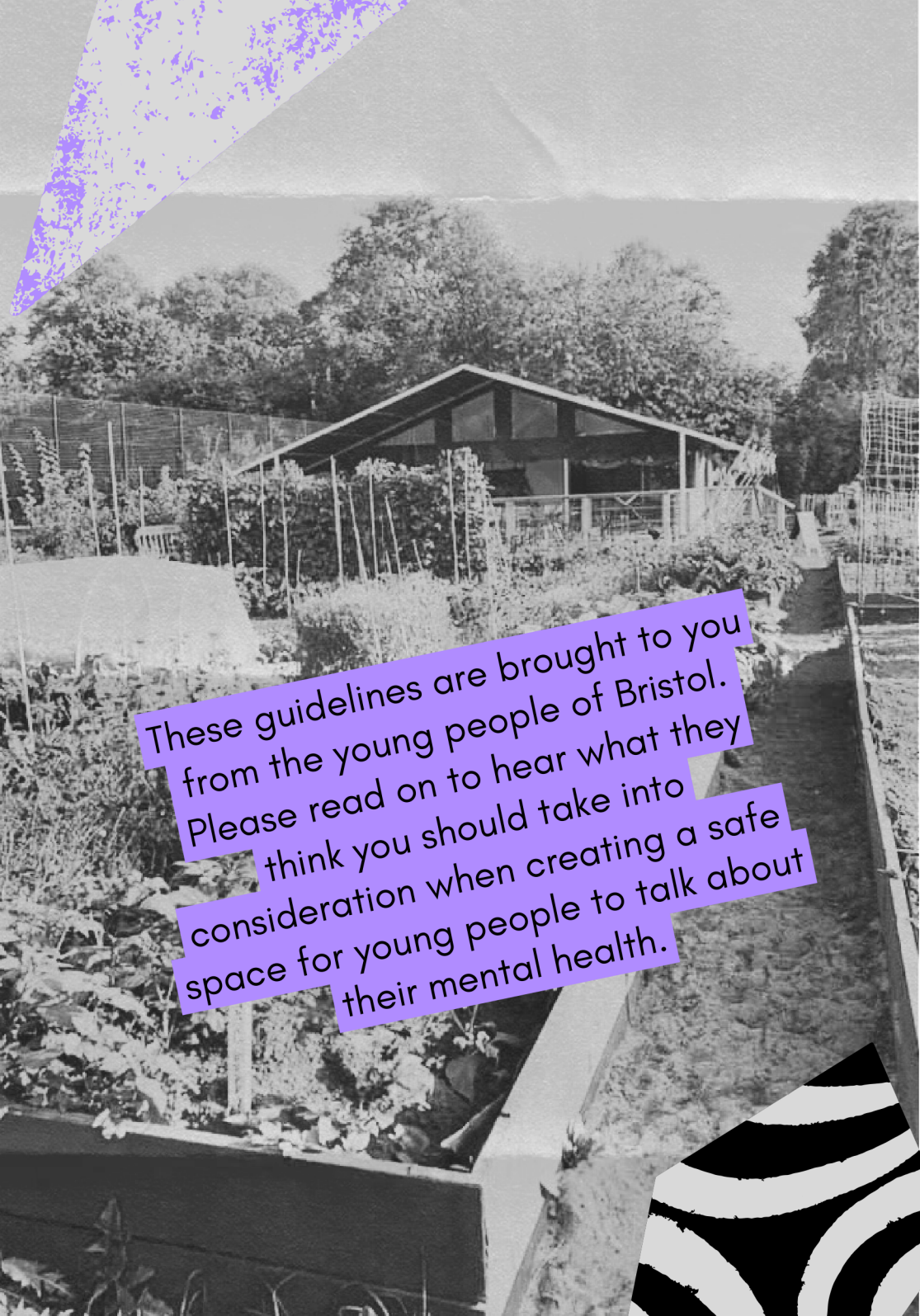


YOUNG PEOPLE'S SAFE SPACES GUIDELINES





These guidelines are brought to you
from the young people of Bristol.
Please read on to hear what they
think you should take into
consideration when creating a safe
space for young people to talk about
their mental health.

KEY POINTS

Young People's Safe Spaces

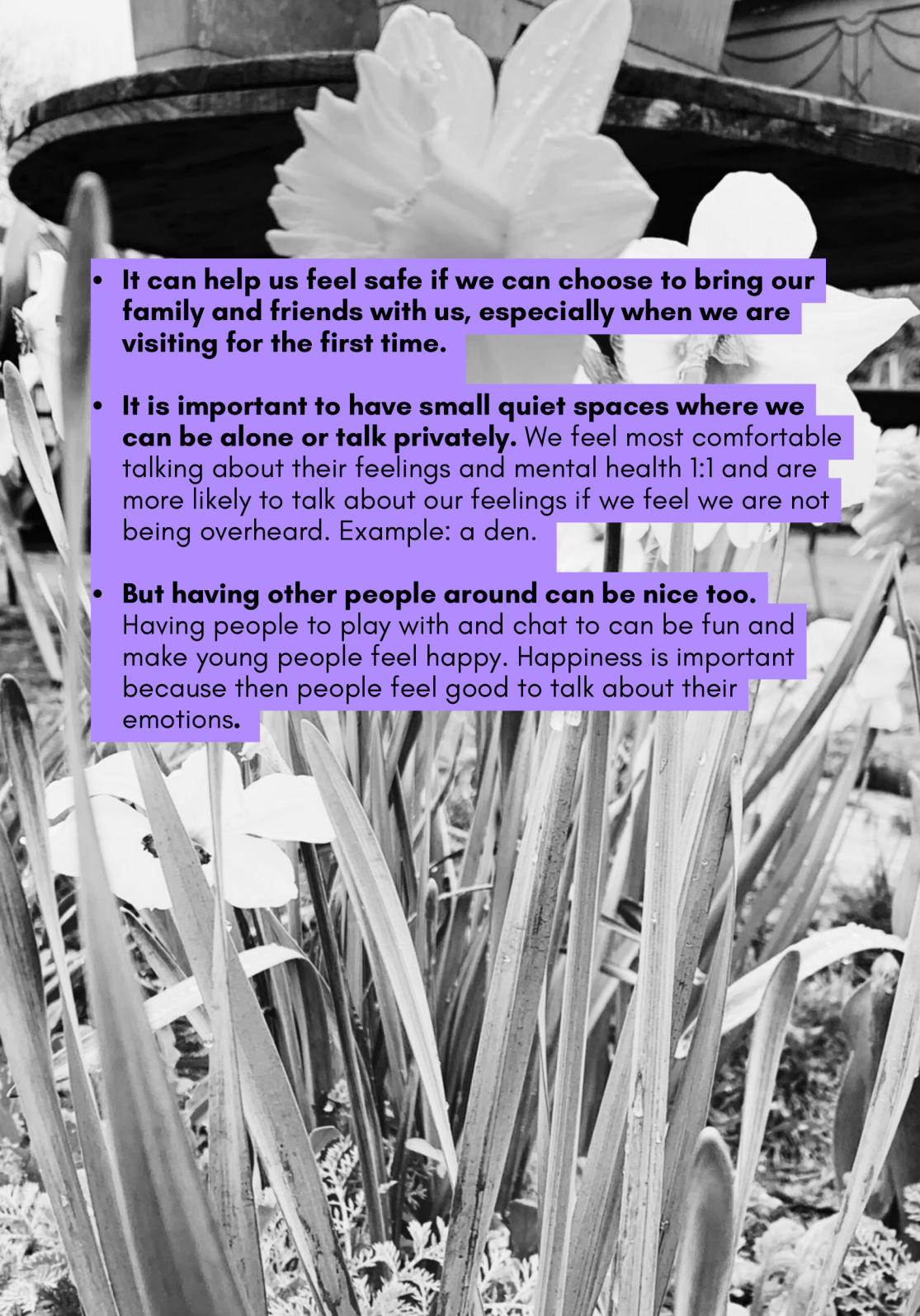


AVAILABLE AS AN ANIMATION AT
WWW.REDCATCHCOMMUNITYGARDEN.COM

MAKE YOUR SPACE FEEL WELCOMING AND FAMILIAR:

- **Be friendly and welcoming when we come into your space.** It will mean that we don't feel judged but appreciated.
- **It is important that everyone in your space is kind and full of love** (staff and visitors).
- **It is important to build a trusting relationship with us.** It is important to get to know us, so we feel comfortable to talk about our feelings.
- **To feel safe, it is important that we feel familiar with the space.** Not knowing what to expect, what we are supposed to do or where things are is intimidating and can make us feel anxious. It can help to show us around and let us visit your space first, so we know what to expect.



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- **It can help us feel safe if we can choose to bring our family and friends with us, especially when we are visiting for the first time.**
 - **It is important to have small quiet spaces where we can be alone or talk privately.** We feel most comfortable talking about their feelings and mental health 1:1 and are more likely to talk about our feelings if we feel we are not being overheard. Example: a den.
 - **But having other people around can be nice too.** Having people to play with and chat to can be fun and make young people feel happy. Happiness is important because then people feel good to talk about their emotions.

MAKE SURE YOUR SPACE IS PHYSICALLY SAFE AND SECURE:

- **It is important that we know that not just anyone can just walk in.** Examples: gates, doors, fences, walls.
- **It is important to have grownups there you know you can go to if anything goes wrong/to ask for help.**
- **Make sure the space is clean, so we don't get ill.** Not only is it nice to have a clean space but it will help ensure we don't get ill. Helping us be physically safe, helps us feel generally safe.



REMEMBER THAT NOT EVERY YOUNG PERSON IS THE SAME:

- **When designing a safe space, it is important to talk to the people that will use the space to see what they would like to be in it.** Try not to assume that you know best, other people may think of things that you would never of thought of that suit their needs better.
- **It is important to have options of things that young people can do and different areas they can go to within your space.** Different people like different things and feel comfortable and happy in different settings.





CREATE A CALM AND COSY ENVIRONMENT:

- **It is important to create areas that are relaxing and calm.** Examples: quiet spaces, calm music, bubble machines, fidget toys, bean bags, low lighting (fairy lights, lava lamps, coloured lights), hearing the sounds of nature (waves and bird song), silence maybe using ear defenders, having plants around and keeping things tidy.
- **Feeling cosy is important in helping us feel safe.** Feeling cosy makes us feel loved and gives us a warm fussy feeling. When things are fluffy and soft it makes you feel calm, relaxed and you want to chill out there and stay there. Examples: comfy places to sit, luxurious/fluffy cushions, warm, soft blankets, beanbags, low lighting, the space shouldn't be too big or should be divided into small spaces (i.e. a den).
- **It is important to have places for people to sit.** If people are like feeling stressed or anxious they may want to sit down and take some deep breaths before they get up and do something else.
- **It is important to think about where the space is located and how the outside might affect the space you are making.** Examples: using plants/nice smells to disguise the bad smells (i.e. petrol), calm noises to drown out road noise/busy areas, being separate from other buildings/spaces so you don't go from being into a calm space straight into a busy and overwhelming one.

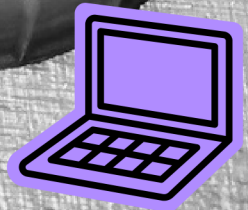
NATURE AND ANIMALS ARE IMPORTANT TO US:

- **Nature and plants can help young people feel calm, relaxed and safe.** It helps us feel connected, it is pretty, it smells nice, the sounds are calming, nature is away from lots of people/busyness. Examples: plants, flower, fresh air, water/waves, bird sounds, all the colours.
- **It is important to have animals in a safe space.** Animals are good for emotional support. They don't judge us and are affectionate. They are loving, comforting and cute. We would especially like to be allowed to bring our own pets with us.



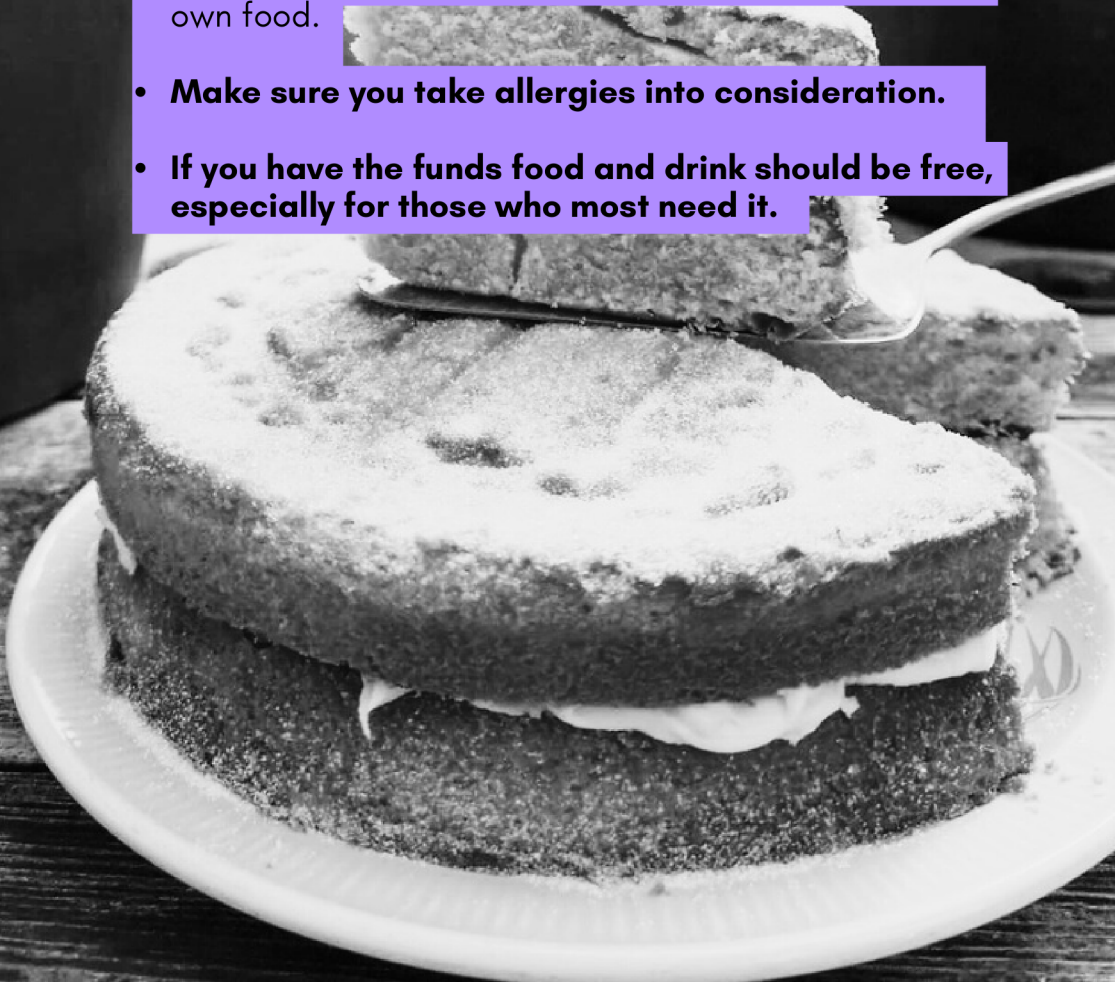
ACTIVITIES:

- **It is important to have activities for young people.**
 - Activities are great as not all the focus is on you.
 - They can also be a great distraction if you aren't feeling good.
 - Arts can be a way to help us explore feelings.
 - Sports and active things can be helpful to help us manage our feelings, especially as an outlet for anger.
 - They are fun and help you to have a good time. Playing and gaming with others is fun.
 - Activities can be relaxing.
 - Examples: Gaming, games, arts and crafts, books (both to read and audiobooks), music, looking after animals, things to watch (TV films, tablets, phones), listening to music on headphones, fidget toys/toys, Orbeez, sleeping, sports/exercise stuff (trampoline, punch bag, swing, dance, skateboarding, football, acro, gymnastics, running).
- **It is important to have lots of different activities and choice.** Not everyone likes the same thing and can find different things calming, it is nice to have a choice about what you do depending on your mood.



FOOD AND DRINK:

- **There should be food and drink available.** Having food around makes it feel like home, it's welcoming and comforting. It is helpful if you are hungry or thirsty and gives you energy. It can also be a distraction and something to talk about if you are nervous.
- **There should be a choice of food and different types of food.** People like different things. If you have different types of food, you will also have different types of people. You could also think about letting people to bring their own food.
- **Make sure you take allergies into consideration.**
- **If you have the funds food and drink should be free, especially for those who most need it.**





Guideline Authors: Jack, Millie, Frankie, Mina and other young people from Bristol

Research Team: Naomi Warne (University of Bristol Researcher), Jenny Clarke (Redcatch Community Garden Art Therapist + Wellbeing Lead) and Lucy Condon (ARC West Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement Facilitator)

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Contact us

For more information, please contact:

- Naomi (naomi.warne@bristol.ac.uk) about the research
- Heather (heather@redcatchcg.com) and Jayne (jayne@redcatchcg.com) about Redcatch Community Garden or using the guidelines