

**World Mental Health Day is celebrated worldwide on 10<sup>th</sup> October each year. In Birmingham a month of activities are arranged to raise awareness of the mental health issues that can affect us all.**



On Saturday 08<sup>th</sup> October 2005 Birmingham's biggest ever-mental health awareness event took place right next to Europe's busiest shopping centre, the Bullring.



Birmingham's Lord and Lady Mayor, joined by Sue Turner, the Chief Executive of Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health Trust, introduced onto stage by the 'Mad Hatter', opened the celebrations at 10.00am stating that, "mental health problems can affect any of our communities in this city at any time, this event will hopefully show everyone that you are not alone - there are many organisations that can help you".



Hosted by the Mental Health Promotion Dept of Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Trust working with the Positive Mental Health Group and a host of partner agencies over 40 different Birmingham based organisations filled Edgbaston Street to mark the 13<sup>th</sup> annual World Mental Health Day celebrations.



It was estimated that throughout the day well over 10,000 people visited the numerous information stalls and enjoyed the live entertainment on stage.



Other members of the Mad Hatters Tea Party including the Cheshire Cat and the King and Queen of Hearts mingled with the crowds of shoppers all promoting the message of positive mental health and well-being.



A busy bee was seen buzzing around giving out copies of the Buzz Guide, which is a resource produced by the Positive Mental Health Group, providing numbers of mental health services in Birmingham and Solihull.



Amongst many diverse acts, the acclaimed Dhol Blasters and Queensbridge Samba Drummers took to the stage and drew in the crowds with their colourful outfits and upbeat drumming.



MADCAP Theatre Company enthralled the crowds with their thought provoking drama piece, looking at the issues of getting back into work and a team of belly dancers from Sutton Coldfield braved the chilly weather to perform. Many more musical acts performed throughout the day as well as an inspiring poetry reading by a local service user.



There were a host of children's activities including face painting, t-shirt printing and cap designing. Complementary Therapies were also on offer during the afternoon and St John's Ambulance were on hand offering tips on First Aid and a chance to practice on one of their dummies!

Our monkey handing out bananas also passed on a health-eating message and even managed to convince Sue Turner to feed her a banana!



Importantly, thousands of leaflets and information booklets were taken, with details given to those needing further help or support. Staff were on hand throughout the day offering advice and information to members of the general public who were keen to find out more about mental health issues, indeed many people asked when the next event would held!!

There are a whole host of events taking place throughout October and the rest of the year, all of which are listed in our monthly Calendar of Events. To receive your own copy please contact the Mental Health Promotion Department on 0121 678 4150 or log onto [www.bsmht.nhs.uk](http://www.bsmht.nhs.uk) or [www.buzzguide.co.uk](http://www.buzzguide.co.uk) for the Calendar and links to much more information.