



Let's

Talk

# ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

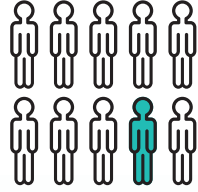
## A GUIDE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE



"Simply put, mental health is how we think, feel and act"



"We ALL have mental health; we can ALL do things to look after our mental health"



"1 in 10 young people have a mental health problem, requiring further help"

Developed by Dr Natalie Jewitt and Dr Caroline Rayment



# 7 Things you can do to look after your mental health

1

**TALK:** When we go through a difficult time it can be easy to become isolated and cut off from our friends and family. It is good for your mental health to keep connected to the people that are important to you.

2

**FUEL YOUR BODY:** Eat well and drink lots of water. Too much caffeine, energy drinks and/or sugar can make you feel anxious, angry, and may also affect your sleep. Alcohol and drug use can affect how people feel and change their behaviour. The effects of drink and drugs may be unpredictable, and dangerous - Keep safe!

3

**SLEEP:** Aim for at least 8 hours. Keep phones, and other screens out of your bedroom, and/or switch them off an hour before you plan to go to sleep. The light your screen gives off can have a huge impact on your sleep hours after you switch it off!

4

**GET ACTIVE:** Being active is not just good for your physical health, it can also be good for your mental health. There are lots of different forms of exercise you can try, from just going for a walk, to joining an exercise class or group.

5

**RELAX:** Take time out to relax, connect with the moment you are in. Many people find relaxation/breathing exercises or mindfulness apps useful, others find reading a book or listening to music helpful - find what works for you!

6

**BE KIND TO YOURSELF:** Being an adolescent can be tough! Try and develop some out of school/college interests to widen your group of friends and give you ways to let off steam. Choose something you enjoy, that makes you feel good.

7

**SOCIAL MEDIA:** Remember that you only see what people want you to on social media, which means you often only see the "perfect image". Social media posts can have a powerful impact on how you think, feel and behave. Could you limit the time you are on social media and/or cut out the things/people that make you feel sad/unhappy. Remember YOU are in control of what you see/post.

# Mental health first aid tools

## CONNECTION



When we start to feel big emotions like sadness, loneliness, and worry we can often stop doing things we used to enjoy and become isolated. If you notice this happening, plan to have at least one connection each day, whether that be texting a friend, meeting someone for a hot chocolate or going to a group/class. You may not always feel like it as it can take your mind a while to catch up - fake it until you make it!

## NOTICE & CHALLENGE UNHELPFUL THOUGHTS



Thoughts are NOT facts! Our minds can be cruel and lead us towards unhelpful thinking patterns such as "No one likes me" "I am not good enough" etc. Making space for more positive thinking can be helpful - it does however take some practice, just like when you learn a new skill.

## MINDFULNESS AND BREATHING EXERCISES



Take 5-10 minutes each day to slow down and focus on relaxing. You can do this by trying out an exercise on a mindful app, practicing yoga, or some simple breathing exercises. Some people find imagery useful: create a happy place in your mind and escape there for a moment whenever you need to.

## BE AWARE OF WHATS NORMAL



Between the ages of 12-24 your brain undergoes some BIG changes, which leads to feelings being experienced more intensely (this is normal!). The area of your brain responsible for self-control, problem solving, good decision making doesn't catch up until your mid-twenties, which can make adolescence feel like a roller coaster ride for some.

## Recommended smartphone apps



SMILING MIND



HEADSPACE



CALM



CALM HARM



ANXIETY COMPANION

\*We are all different - find what works for you

## Further help

Speak to  
someone at home  
or school

See your GP

CAMHS / School /  
Independent Service  
/Charity

\*If you need immediate help to keep safe call 999 or go straight to your nearest A&E.

## Useful websites

### Mental health information/services

[www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)

[www.jenbys.co.uk](http://www.jenbys.co.uk)

[www.themix.org.uk](http://www.themix.org.uk)

[www.youthaccess.org.uk](http://www.youthaccess.org.uk)

[www.compass-uk.org](http://www.compass-uk.org) (n-yorks)

### Suicidal thoughts and suicide prevention

[www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org)

### Information about drugs

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

## Helplines

NHS first response - 01274 221181 / NHS 111

Samaritans - 116123 / Childline - 0800 1111

Youngminds text service - Text YM to 85258

[www.themix.org.uk](http://www.themix.org.uk) - 0808 8084444

HopelineUK suicide prevention - 0800 0684141