

# MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS









# WHAT ARE MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS:

In many ways, mental health is just like physical health: everybody has it and we need to make sure we take good care of it always!

Good mental health means being generally able to think, feel and react in the positive ways that you need and want to live your best life. But if you go through a period of poor mental health you might find the ways you're frequently thinking, feeling or reacting become difficult, or even impossible, to cope with. This can feel just as bad as a physical illness, or even worse. Mental health problems affect around one in four people in any given year. They range from common problems, such as depression and anxiety, to rarer problems such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder.





# YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR EMOTIONS:

All children, of every age, experience powerful emotions. The world can be a frightening and uncertain place for young children, as can it be for adolescents, who are facing a time of very quick physical and emotional change.

A lot of parents can also remember uncertain times in their own childhood when they were very frightened, anxious, miserable or worried. Such feelings are part of growing up, and confronting the many changes and challenges being presented to us throughout childhood.

Children are sensitive to what happens in and around them, and young children in particular can feel as though it is their fault when things go wrong at home (such as parents becoming ill).

This makes them feel worried and guilty.

Not all children's emotions are logical. Young children usually have fears about the dark, insects, ghosts, kidnappers and getting lost or abandoned. These kind of fears are usually common and generally normal in all young children. Usually children grow out of their fears but sometimes they persist as the child grows up there are plenty of adults who are anxious about spiders or dogs. Only when such fears stop your child doing ordinary general activities is there any real cause for concern!





# ANXIETY IN YOUNG PEOPLE:

Anxiety is a condition that can affect anyone – it doesn't distinguish between age, background or social group. Even some of the most confident people you know may have suffered with anxiety. Recent research suggests that as many as 1 in 4 young people will experience an anxiety condition at some point in their lives, this means that up to 8 people in your class may be living with anxiety, whether that be OCD (obsessive compulsive disorder), social anxiety and shyness, exam stress, worry or panic attacks.

Many anxiety disorders begin in childhood and adolescence and there can sometimes be a long waiting time until they actually receive the help they require. You can save yourself a lot of stress by getting help sooner rather than later. You don't have to suffer in silence as there are helpful solutions available out there, so seek help if you need help and remember, sometimes, 'it's ok, to not be ok!'





# WHY IS IT THAT SOME YOUNG PEOPLE BECOME SO ANXIOUS?

There is usually a range of different reasons why some children and young people can become anxious. In a lot of cases, when children are extremely anxious there is a very real cause to this; perhaps they are having difficulties at school, (for example) being bullied. Anxiety can also have no apparent cause, but be very real in its own right.

Below are a number of reasons why children and young people might become anxious:

- a temperamental disposition. Anxiety can run in families. There is a genetic predisposition to some children being anxious.
- physical illness or disability
- family problems
- school worries
- problems with friends and activities out of school. The number of young people calling Childline to get counselling for anxiety-related issues has almost doubled in two years, according to the children's support service.

Data released by the charity - run by the **National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC)** shows that its staff delivered around 21,300 advice sessions to young people suffering from anxiety in 2017-18, up from 11,700 in 2015-16. Nine out of ten calls came from young girls. "Callers gave a variety of reasons for their anxiety, including bullying and cyberbullying, eating problems, relationship issues and school pressures such as homework and exams." Some callers reported abuse, neglect and bereavement. NSPCC chief executive Peter Wanless said: "Anxiety can be a crippling illness and it is deeply worrying that the number of counselling sessions we are delivering for this issue is rising so quickly."

"Increasingly, Childline is filling the gap left by our public mental health services, providing young people with a place they can go for round-the-clock help and advice."





## **SOME OF THE REASONS AT SCHOOL:**

**Bullying, verbal name-calling, rejection, teasing and even physical bullying can be widespread in some schools across the UK. It can sometimes be difficult for adults to understand the distress and misery bullying causes, especially if the bullying is “only” teasing and name-calling. But being persistently teased can make children extremely sad. It can lead to low self esteem and in some cases, the child feeling that they deserve to be bullied. It can also lead to problems in later life. Some adults who were bullied as children find that they often get depressed, lack self-confidence and feel hurt and resentful towards their-self and others.**

***There are positive steps that schools can take to prevent and stop bullying. Effective ways include the school making it clear that all pupils have a right NOT to be bullied and that it won't be tolerated, whilst also encouraging pupils that is NOT wrong to “tell” and that when bullying occurs measures will be taken to stop it.***

***Parents too can play an important role in supporting children who have been bullied; by listening to what the child is saying about their experiences and believing them, and by working with them to re-build their sense of self esteem and ensure they become resilient.***





## SOME OF THE REASONS OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL:

There are a host of things which children, especially teenagers can get anxious about. Worries about girl- and boy- friends are near the top of the list. Anxieties about getting into trouble with authorities such as the police sometimes feature. If parents have managed to keep talking to their children then it is more likely that they will ask for their help with anything which is worrying them.

### SPECIFIC FEARS

*It is common sense that a child may learn to fear something because of a frightening experience. More perplexing are the irrational phobias which some children develop. Mostly these are severe forms of the common fears which affect many young children, but in the teens more complicated fears can develop. When these cannot be reasoned away and prevent someone from carrying out ordinary activities they are called phobias. Several characteristic patterns of phobias are recognised in children and teenagers.*





# DAILY THINKWELL TECHNIQUES:

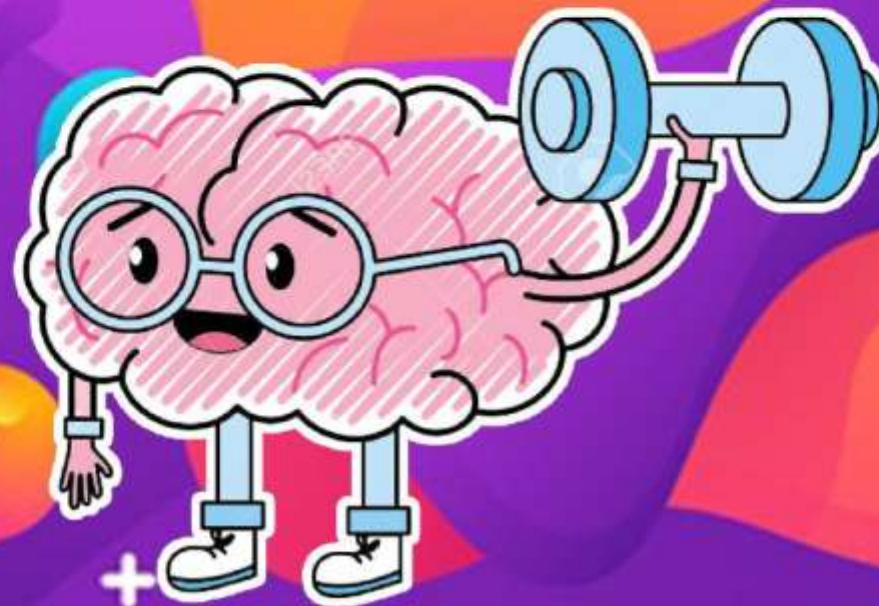
(Morning routine habits - EVERY MORNING)

**“WIN THE MORNING, WIN THE DAY!”**

**3 minutes of exercise to raise heart rate and release endorphins (e.g: star jumps/press-ups) and then drink plenty of water to re-hydrate straight afterwards!**

**2 minutes of deep breathing techniques to set a calm and focused state for the day ( close your eyes and begin to take deep controlled breaths in through your nose for 7 seconds and then slowly out through your nose for 11 seconds.)**

**Use your hand and fingers to Count 5 Things you are grateful/thankful for!**





# LIGHT AT ART:







**ART TO BE HAPPY:**

TODAY IS  
GOING TO BE  
AWESOME



# EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH WORD SEARCH



p e p r s s i o n m o  
a t t a c h m e n t l  
r o u n l l x i t t y  
a p p x r o t w o r l  
n m x i l o w m o o d  
o a t e y i o p e p a  
i b a t l l s i o p e  
a n i y o s n m e u l  
d e s i c u p p t s r  
d e p r e s s i o n s  
c o u n s e l l i n g

**DEPRESSION**  
**ANXIETY**  
**PARANOIA**  
**ATTACHMENT**  
**LOW MOOD**  
**COUNCELLING**  
**SUPPORT**

**Mental Health**





## WHAT CAN BE DONE:

It is clear that a number of causes of anxiety in childhood/youth years can be prevented or managed by sensible handling. This is also true for many of the specific fears - there are practical things that parents can do when these arise. For the illogical fears which are not severe enough to be called phobias, simple explanations and reassurance will help many children gradually get over them.

Anxiety or fear which is causing the child or teenager prolonged distress, or is interfering with everyday events such as going out with family or friends or having relationships or hobbies, will often need special treatment. This treatment will nearly always take place in a clinic without the child having to be admitted to hospital.

There are a number of professionals who can help children and young people who are extremely anxious.

### Helpful Sources for Parents

#### Carers National Association

20/25 Glasshouse Yard London EC1A 4JB  
Tel: 020 7490 8818

*Activities include information and advice service for carers.*

#### Childline

(Confidential helpline for children and young people)  
Tel: 0800 1111, 24 hours, free.

#### Eating Disorders Association

First Floor, Wensum House 103 Prince of Wales Road Norwich,  
Norfolk NR1 1DW Tel: 0870 7703278.  
Helpline: 0845 634 1414 Open Monday to Friday 8.30am-8.30pm

#### British Psychological Society

St. Andrew's House, 48 Princess Road East, Leicester LE1 7DR  
Tel: 0116 2549 568.

#### British Association for Counselling

1 Regent Place, Rugby, Warwickshire CV21 2PJ Tel: 01788 578328



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