



Focus: October Mental Health Month

WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY IS ON TUESDAY, 10th OCTOBER

During October we are encouraging students to think about how they can prioritise good mental health

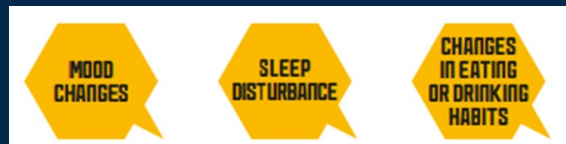


What is Mental Ill Health?

Most people know someone who has experienced a mental health problem. They happen to all types of people, from all walks of life. Any one of us could encounter a mental health problem in our lives.

When people first struggle with their mental health, they can sometimes feel that it's a sign of weakness. But it isn't. It is certainly, however, an upsetting, confusing and frightening time.

The signs and indicators of mental health problems can be highly individual and this makes it hard to tell if someone is struggling with their mental health, because they may still seem OK. It's not the job of non-professionals to diagnose mental health problems; however, it is helpful to be aware of certain recognisable signs of mental health problems such as:



If you are concerned that your child is displaying some of these signs, then try and have a conversation with them. Offering to go for a walk, getting a drink or some food, or doing whatever activity feels most comfortable, can encourage people to talk.

ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD TO TALK TO SOMEONE ABOUT THEIR MENTAL HEALTH

1. Advise them to choose someone they trust to talk to

This might be a friend, teacher or family member. Or they might be more comfortable talking to someone they don't know, for example, through a support helpline. It can help to do a pros and cons list about talking to someone.

2. Think about the best place to talk

It's important they choose a place where they feel comfortable enough to open-up. They might want to choose somewhere private where they're less likely to be disturbed. They also might want to talk while they do an activity, like going for a walk.

3. Prepare themselves for a reaction

Hopefully, your child will have a good experience when they open-up to someone. But there's a chance that they may not react in the way your child hoped. This may be for different reasons, like they may be worried or not fully understand at first. If that's the case, your child should try to give them time to process what your child has told them. It might help for your child to give them information to read to help them understand. And don't forget your child should be kind to themselves and practise self-care.

TALK TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT THEIR MENTAL HEALTH

1. Find a good space to talk without distractions

If you're worried about your child, try to find a place where you know you can have a conversation without being distracted. Make sure to give them your full attention. It might help to switch off your phones.

2. Listen and ask questions

Listening can be one of the most valuable ways to be there for someone. Show them that you're actively listening by facing them, making eye contact, and not interrupting. Questions can help you clarify what they mean and also show that you're actively listening. But make sure the questions are relevant to what they're saying, and not changing the subject.

3. Ask how you can help

Ask how you can help or make suggestions, rather than telling them what to do next. They might want support with making a GP appointment or just for you to keep things normal and chat about what's going on in your life.

Who can your child can you talk to if they are struggling with their mental health?

- In school they can speak with their Form Tutor or any trusted adult or they could email: stayingSAFE@heber.org.uk
- They can speak to their GP if they require specialist support or medical help
- If your child or a member of your household is experiencing a mental health crisis, ask for help:
Samaritans: 116 123 ChildLine: 0800 1111
- If you live in Cheshire West or Cheshire East there is a dedicated phone line
Cheshire and Wirral Partnership Crisis line: 0300 303 39
- If you live in Shropshire the dedicated phone line is: 0300 124 0365
- If you live in Wrexham call 111 and select option 2 to speak to a member of the mental health team

STARTING TEAM
www.startingwell.org.uk

NHS
Cheshire and Wirral Partnership
NHS Foundation Trust

ChatHealth
www.startingwell.org.uk/chat-health

11 - 19 years old?
One text can make a difference...
07312 263260

We can discuss anything e.g.

Exam Stress Self Harm Physical Health Emotional Health LGBTQ+ Changing Schools
Family Worries Low Mood Growing Up Worries Diet and Exercise Healthy Relationships
College Life Anxiety Body Image / Body Confidence Social Media Bullying Vaccinations

We do not usually inform your parents, teachers or anyone else if you contact the school nurse. We might inform someone if we were concerned about your safety, but we would usually speak to you first. Your messages are stored and can be seen by other healthcare staff who follow the same confidentiality rules. We aim to reply to you within one working day and you should get an immediate bounce-back to confirm we received your text. Texts will not be seen outside of normal working hours. If you need help before you hear back from us, contact a member of school staff or your doctor. Our text number does not receive voice calls or MMS picture messages. We support messaging from UK mobile numbers only (which does not include messages sent from landlines, international mobile numbers and some 'number masking' mobile apps). Prevent the school nurse from sending messages to you by texting STOP to our number. Please respect your school's mobile phone policy. Messages are charged at your usual rate.