

NO LiMiTS

**Helping Young People
Help Themselves**

HOW TO TALK ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

Tips to help you start a conversation



What is mental health?

We all have mental health. It involves our emotional, psychological, and social wellbeing, and it affects how we think, feel, and act.

Our mental health is just as important as our physical health. It can affect our everyday lives, including our ability do the things we need and want to, like work, study, getting on with people and looking after ourselves and others.

Another way to think about mental health is like thinking about the weather. As the seasons change, the weather does too. There are bright, sunny days which make us feel happy and want to do things like go outdoors.



But on other days, the weather can change to dark and rain, where you don't feel like leaving the house. You may feel tired and lack motivation or energy to do the simple things, such as getting out of bed or getting on with your day.

Whatever you are feeling, know that it is completely normal, and you can seek support or speak to family and friends about how you are feeling.

What causes mental health difficulties?

Lots of things can affect our mental health. Things like situations we're in, things we're doing and things outside of our control, including other people, our physical health and our finances. Even the weather and world events can change how we're feeling.

Everybody gets affected by what happens to them, past and present. Things that happened even many years ago can affect our mental health today, for better or worse.



Talking can be hard

It can be really difficult to talk to anyone about your feelings. You might feel worried about upsetting people you care about and feel nervous about what people will think, or how it might affect your relationships. That's okay, these feelings are completely normal.

Some people feel more comfortable talking to friends or family, while others would prefer to speak with a professional. There's no right or wrong person to speak to and it's up to each individual person to decide who they feel comfortable speaking with.

Tips for talking to someone

Communicate in a way that feels right for you

This might be a face-to-face conversation, or you might find it easier to talk on the phone or write down how you feel in a letter.



Find a suitable time and place

There may not be a 'good' time, but it can help if you're somewhere where you feel comfortable and are unlikely to be disturbed by anyone while talking.

Choose someone you trust

Talk to or let someone know who will listen to what you have to say, not tell other people if you don't want them knowing and who will be there to support you.



Practice what you want to say

You could do this in your head or make some notes. Phrases such as "I've not been feeling like myself lately" or "I'm finding it hard to cope at the moment" might provide a starting point.

Be honest and open

It can sometimes feel uncomfortable sharing something so personal, but explaining how your feelings are affecting your life may help others to understand.



Think about what you need

You might just want someone to listen to you, or you might want them to offer emotional or practical support. There's no right or wrong, just whatever you feel would help you most.

Tips for checking in on someone else

Ask them how they're doing

If you think someone may be struggling with their mental health, you can start a conversation by just asking how they are. Even if they talk to you or others all the time, they might not have told anyone if no one has directly asked them 'how are you?'.



Keep checking in on them

Regular contact means they have a regular place to say how they're doing and how they're feeling. If someone feels they don't have anyone to talk to, they may bottle up their feelings which could make things worse.

Give them space and time

It's hard to talk about your feelings, especially if it's for the first time or if you are struggling, so give them space and time to talk and think. If you're talking in person, they might not open up straight away, or if it's a text conversation they might not reply straight away and that's okay.



Listen

Hear what they have to say and listen without judgement. It takes a lot for someone to open up about how they're feeling.

Tell them it's okay to feel that way

Reassuring them that their feelings are valid can be really helpful - lots of people may feel silly for feeling the way they do, but they shouldn't feel like that. Tell them it's okay to feel however they feel and it may help them to open up.



How can I get support?

There are lots of ways you can get support. You might find that some are more suitable for you, or more easily available. Different things work for different people at different times. Some things you can try are:

Talking to No Limits

Our trained workers can talk to you and support you with any issue you're facing. We have specialist projects and groups that may help, and we can explore other areas of support too. You can talk to us in person, on the phone or online. Our details are on the next page.



Going to your GP

Your doctor is there to help you with your mental health as well as your physical health. They could offer your support and treatments such as talking therapies or medication, refer you to a mental health specialist like a psychiatrist, or recommend local support options.



Student Services

Higher education institutions usually have a student wellbeing centre where enrolled students can go for support.

Talking to other organisations

If you want to talk to No Limits, our information is on the next page, but you can also contact these organisations for support.

All support is available 24/7, 365 days a year.

Papyrus

Phone service for people under 35 experiencing suicidal thoughts. Call the Hopeline on 0800 068 4141.

Samaritans

Phone line on 116 123. This is a listening service and they won't offer you advice or information.

Shout

Anonymous text service for people experiencing a mental health crisis. Text 'HANTS' to 85258.

Want to talk to No Limits?

We offer free, confidential information, advice and support for young people under 26 in Southampton, Hampshire, Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight.

Advice Centre

Open six days a week, come down and talk to a trained youth worker about any issue you have, without needing to make an appointment.

Address

13 High Street
Southampton, SO14 2DF

Opening times

Mon 10am-5pm | Tue 10am-5pm
Wed 1:30pm-8pm | Thu 10am-8pm
Fri 10am-5pm | Sat 10am-1:30pm



Advice Centre

nolimitshelp.org.uk/advice-and-wellbeing-hub/advice-centre

Mental Health Support

We offer a broad range of mental health and wellbeing support, covering our whole area.

Support includes:

- Counselling
- One-to-one or group work with a youth wellbeing practitioner
- Three out-of-hours Safe Havens across our area
- Mental health transition support for 16-25 year olds
- Social prescribing



Mental Health Support

nolimitshelp.org.uk/mental-health-and-wellbeing

Find out more

nolimitshelp.org.uk | 02380 224 224 | enquiries@nolimitshelp.org.uk

