



for Scotland's mental health

AM I OK?

A SAMH guide for young people

MENTAL HEALTH FACTS



By the time they're 16, three children in every classroom will have experienced a mental health problem¹



Nine out of 10 people who experience mental health problems have experienced stigma and discrimination²



74% of young people do not know what mental health information, support, and services are available in their local area³

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- 1 Green, H., McGinnity, A., Meltzer, H., et al. (2005). Mental health of children and young people in Great Britain 2004
 - 2 SeeMe. <https://www.seemescotland.org/stigma-discrimination/>
 - 3 Scottish Youth Parliament (2006), 'Our Generation's Epidemic'

WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?

We all have mental health. And just like just like getting the flu or breaking a bone, sometimes we can feel low and lose interest in things.

Having poor mental health can make us think, feel and act differently. Mental health problems are common and can affect anybody, so it's important you know when something is wrong.



WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I'M WORRIED ABOUT MY MENTAL HEALTH?

The best thing you can do if you're worried about your mental health is talk to someone. You could tell your GP. Your GP can help explain what you're experiencing, offer you advice and help you receive care. Most mental health problems appear gradually, so it's best to seek help as soon as possible.

It might help to talk things through first with someone you don't know, call it a practice run. You could contact ChildLine online or call 0800 1111.

Alongside professional help, you could also think about how you can look after your own mental health. Here are some ideas:

Get support:

Living with a mental health problem can be hard, but it can be even harder living with it on your own. Let someone you trust know about what you're going through and what they can do to help you feel more supported.

Self-care:

Sometimes when our mind is in a bad place it can affect our body and behaviour; but actively taking care of our body can really improve our mood. Download SAMH's 'Five ways to better wellbeing' for some ideas.

HOW DO I TALK ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH?

Telling somebody about what you're going through for the first time can be difficult. If you're struggling to get the conversation started about your mental health, these tips might help you find the words.

Telling my GP⁴

- Write down what you want to discuss in advance.
- Explain what's been going on for you over the past few months, and if anything has changed. It might help to keep a mood diary of how you feel day to day – this can help you to keep track and remember so it's easier to explain to your doctor.
- Be honest and open. Use words that feel natural to you.
- Consider taking a family member or close friend with you. Try practising what you will say with them beforehand.

Telling a friend, family member or loved one⁵

- Consider what you would like to get out of the conversation and what you want from the person you choose to tell. Prepare yourself for how you might feel if their response isn't what you expected.
- Plan what you want to say: It can help to write down the things you want to say to get things straight in your head. You might want to try calling a helpline to practice what you want to say with someone you don't know first.
- If talking face to face is just too hard, try texting or emailing. It's better to say the words somehow than not to say them at all.

⁴ Mind – Find the Words

⁵ Adapted from The Mix – Mental Health and Your Family

USEFUL CONTACTS

SAMH (SCOTTISH ASSOCIATION FOR MENTAL HEALTH)

t: 0141 530 1000

e: enquire@samh.org.uk

w: samh.org.uk

Details of local SAMH services and information and sign-posting for people concerned about mental health. Office hours 9am – 5pm, Monday to Friday.

CHILDLINE

t: 0800 1111

(24 hours, 7 days a week)

w: childline.org.uk

A free, private and confidential service for anyone under 19 in the UK.

BREATHING SPACE

t: 0800 83 85 87

(Monday to Thursday, 6pm – 2am; Friday 6pm to Monday 6am)

w: breathingspace.scot

A free, confidential helpline for anyone in Scotland feeling low, anxious or depressed.

MOODJUICE

w: www.moodjuice.scot.nhs.uk

Offers information and advice to those experiencing troublesome thoughts, feelings and actions.

NHS24

t: 111

w: nhs24.com

24 hour health service for Scotland.

THE LOWDOWN INFORMATION LINE, BY YOUNG SCOT

t: 0808 802 4444

(Mon to Fri, 10am–6pm)

e: Infoline@young.scot

w: young.scot/get-the-lowdown/

Guidance and support on teenage health.

PLACE2BE

e: Scotland@place2be.org.uk

w: place2be.org.uk

Providing emotional and therapeutic services in primary and secondary schools, building children's resilience through talking, creative work and play.

THE MIX

t: 0808 808 4994

w: themix.org.uk

Free, confidential support for young people under 25 via online, social and mobile.

SAMARITANS

t: 116 123

(24 hours, 7 days a week)

e: jo@samaritans.org

Free, confidential service for anyone in the UK.

YOUNGMINDS

t: 0808 802 5544 (Monday to Friday, 9.30am – 4pm)

w: youngminds.org.uk

Information and resources for young people and parents on mental health.

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SAMH is the Scottish Association for Mental Health.
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