

TALKING TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

1 in 8 young people experience mental health problems (NHS digital, 2017). Research shows that those who experience bullying behaviour are more likely to have long term mental health concerns (Wolke et al, 2014) and this can lead to self-harm in a few cases (Lereya et al, 2013).

Talking to your child and identifying ways to further support them are the first steps to supporting their mental health. It is important to raise your concerns with your child and then work together to find the best ways to work with their school and the Child Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) if needed to provide further support.

TOP TIPS ON STARTING A CONVERSATION_

1. Start an open conversation by checking in and asking how they are feeling. Ask open-ended questions and remember, it's important to not have any preconceived expectations. It also helps when your body language is open and on the same level as your child i.e. when you are in the car or side by side at the kitchen table.
2. Listen with your full attention and practice active listening - make sure you are prioritising how they are feeling throughout the conversation.
3. Offer options for how you will discuss mental health or wellbeing, for instance, some young people may feel more comfortable expressing themselves through art/ drawing or via text message.
4. Be prepared with signposting materials and contact numbers. Look at different resources or local services in the area, for instance, youth clubs and support groups. We've included a few of these below.
5. Reassure them that you will be supporting them throughout the process and thank them for speaking with you. Remember, there are many organisations who can support your family through this.

FURTHER LINKS/SUPPORT_

The organisations below can provide advice and help you to access local support for your child.

Child Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)

<https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/mental-health-services/child-and-adolescent-mental-health-services-camhs/>

Young Minds' Parents Helpline:

0808 802 5544

www.youngminds.org.uk/

Mind www.mind.org.uk/information-support

NHS www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depress/talking-to-your-teenager

You can also arrange an appointment with your local GP for you and/or your child

Young people* can access The Diana Award Crisis Messenger by texting DA to 85258 for free, 24/7 support from a trained volunteer.

*UK only

References

1. NHS digital (2017) Mental health of children and young people in England. UK, England. Retrieved from <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/mental-health-of-children-and-young-people-in-england/2017/2017>
2. Wolke, D, Lereya ST, Fisher, HL, Lewis, G, Zammit, S. Bullying in elementary school and psychotic experiences at 10 years: a longitudinal, population- based cohort study. Psychol Med. Epub ahead of print 17 December 2013, pp. DOI:10.1017/S0033291713002912- DOI: 10.1017/S0033291713002912.014
3. Lereya, S, T, Winsper, C, Heron, K, Lewis, G, Gunnell D, Fisher, H.L, Wolke (2013). Being Bullied During Childhood and the Prospective Pathways to Self- Harm in Late Adolescence. Journal of American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, volume 52, issue 6, pages 608-618.e2. DOI <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaac.2013.03.012>



FROM THE DIANA AWARD

We're proud to be the only charity set up in memory of Diana, Princess of Wales and her belief that young people have the power to change the world. It's a big mission but there are two things within it that we focus our charity's efforts on – young people and change.

Throughout all of our programmes and initiatives 'change' for and by young people is central, including our anti-bullying work which encourages change in attitudes and behaviours.

We hope you found this resource useful and wish you all the best in your anti-bullying journey. If you would like to help us create more resources and train even more Anti-Bullying Ambassadors you can make a £5 donation by texting CHANGE 5 to 70470 or visit diana-award.org.uk/donate

Give us feedback on this resource:
<https://tinyurl.com/ab-feedback>



[/antibullyingpro](https://www.facebook.com/antibullyingpro)



[@antibullyingpro](https://www.instagram.com/antibullyingpro)



[@antibullyingpro](https://twitter.com/antibullyingpro)



[/antibullyingpro](https://www.youtube.com/antibullyingpro)

The Diana Award is a registered charity (1117288 / SC041916) and a company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales number 5739137. The Diana Award's Office, 1 Mark Square, London EC2A 4EG.

All images and text within this resource © The Diana Award and cannot be reproduced without permission.