

YOUNG MINDS

The voice for young people's mental health and wellbeing

IN SCHOOL, STAY COOL



ABOUT THIS BOOKLET

FIVE DAYS A WEEK, SCHOOL TAKES UP A BIG PART OF YOUR LIFE.

MOSTLY IT'S A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN ABOUT NEW THINGS, HAVE DIFFERENT EXPERIENCES AND FUN WITH FRIENDS. BUT SOMETIMES THINGS DON'T GO SMOOTHLY.

THIS IS NORMAL – EVERYONE HAS BAD DAYS EVEN IF THEY DON'T SHOW IT.

This booklet describes some common problems and ideas on what to do about them. If you're worried about something that isn't included, or would like more information on the issues that are explored, you might find the help section at the end useful.



COPING WITH THE WORK?

You may feel you have a lot of juggling to do because of all the subjects you are taking at school. Some people find homework a big challenge.

This might be because:

- You have to get used to working on your own and sometimes it's boring
- You might not have a quiet place to work
- Your parents or carers can have different ideas from you about how you organise your time
- You may feel your homework is taking so long you don't have time to do anything else

If you're finding the work difficult, talk to one of your teachers. Most teachers would rather hear about any problems you're having. Your parents or carers may also be able to help and if necessary talk to teachers for you.

“
**Think
positive**
”
✓✓✓

Michael aged 13

TAKING TESTS AND EXAMS

Sometimes we all feel under a lot of pressure. You might find you work too much, or not enough. It's important to get the balance right.

Knowing how much revision to do can be hard. It can also be difficult knowing how to revise.

Don't believe everything other people say they're doing. Some people say 'I haven't revised' when they've been working a lot. They may be doing a lot less or more than they say.

“

I listen to music when I get stressed.

”

Talaya aged 15

HERE ARE SOME TIPS:

- Check with your teacher about what you need to revise and how to do it
- Work out a realistic revision time-table, which includes time to do things you enjoy. This can help you stay calm
- Discuss worries with other people
- Take exercise – being active can help you sleep well and your brain work better
- Eat healthily – preferably three meals a day
- You could also contact one of the places at the end of this booklet under the help section



REMEMBER

EXAMS TELL YOU WHAT YOU CAN IMPROVE ON, WHATEVER YOUR RESULTS. IF YOU DO BADLY, IT DOESN'T MAKE YOU A BAD PERSON.



FRIENDS

Everyone worries about making friends even though they may look confident. Some people have lots of friends – others are happy with one or two. If you feel you don't have any it can be very lonely. It is also very common for friends to fall out.

Remember:

- It's easy to think that no-one likes you – if you don't talk to people they might think you don't like them
- Sometimes you might feel different to other people
- People can be on their own for all sorts of reasons – sometimes through choice, sometimes not. It doesn't mean they aren't nice or fun to be with, or can't be a good friend
- Stick up for your friends



When you feel lonely it can seem like everyone has friends apart from you. It can make you feel bad about yourself, even though you might know deep down you are nice. Why not try some these...

- Invite someone you think might be nice to sit next to you
- Smile, be friendly and show an interest in others
- Talk to someone you don't usually talk to
- Join a school club – it's easier to make friends if you're doing something – you don't have to talk all the time, and they might like the same things you do
- Join a youth club or something you like outside school. This can help you make other friends which can be useful if you fall out with people at school

Take things
slowly
friendships
take time
to build



MAYBE YOU CAN THINK OF OTHER WAYS OF MAKING FRIENDS?

Doing what your friends want, and doing what you want

Most people want to fit in with the crowd – have similar clothes, CDs, computer games, or go to the same places. Sometimes you might not have enough money, or want to do something different to other people. Getting the balance right can be difficult. Deciding whether to join in with something you don't feel comfortable with can be very hard.

Some things you might feel pressured to do include:

- Not doing anything if someone is being picked on
- Messing about in lessons
- Missing lessons
- Spreading rumours
- Having a boyfriend or girlfriend if you don't want to
- Smoking
- Acting tough
- Other things?

“
I'm going to do more things that make me happy.
”

Ryan aged 12

How to decide what to do when you feel under pressure:

- Talk over how you feel with someone else – a friend, a relative, an adult friend, a school counsellor or youth counsellor
- Be prepared to say what you think. It might come out wrong, but doing what you want will make you feel more confident
- If you don't want to do what everyone else is doing have some reasons prepared

“
My goal is to not be self conscious.
”

Pembe aged 14



BULLYING

Bullying is an unhappy experience – certainly for the person being bullied but sometimes for the bully too.

People can be bullied in different ways – through teasing, threats, physical attacks, spreading rumours...

Being bullied can make you feel horrible inside – as if there is something wrong with you.

- Try not to be on your own – stay with other people
- Write a diary of the bullying and show it to a trusted adult
- Tell your friends or an adult
- Keep asking for help until things are sorted out
- If nothing works, you may be able to change school

It is
VERY
important
that you talk
to someone
you can
trust.
If no-one
knows,
no-one can
help
you.

WHO WOULD YOU FEEL MOST COMFORTABLE TALKING TO?

- Teacher
- Parent or Carer
- Counsellor
- Relative
- Brother or sister
- Friend
- Youth worker
- Helpline

The help section can tell you where to get help and support.

If you know someone who is being bullied, they may badly need your help.

Try discussing the suggestions made here to work out what to do.

Sometimes bullies don't know how much they are upsetting others; some people bully because they have their own problems.

If you feel this could be you, find someone who you can discuss your problems with and help you find support. See help section at end of booklet.

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We aren't alone if we become depressed or upset – talk to someone.

”

Yousef aged 12



WHAT IF I DON'T WANT TO GO TO SCHOOL?

Everyone has days when they don't want to go to school. Sometimes people know the reasons. Sometimes they don't.

Possible reasons might be:

- Pressure to do things you don't want to do
- Feeling ill
- People being unpleasant
- Problems with friends
- Work is too hard
- Problems with teachers
- Problems at home
- Not doing homework
- Being bored
- Other things?

What you can do:
If you feel like this a lot, it's important to find someone to talk to.

It can help to be prepared:

What would you say?

(try writing it down first)

When would you say it?

(talk to someone when they're not busy)

Take someone with you if you feel nervous

Contact one of the organisations at the end of this booklet

WHAT IF I DON'T GET ON WITH A TEACHER?

Sometimes you can get into difficulties with a teacher and you might need help to sort it out.

WHO CAN YOU TALK TO?

A teacher you get on with – maybe your form teacher or Year Head

Your parents or carers

A school counsellor

One of the helplines at the back of this leaflet

WHO CAN HELP?

It may help to contact some of these places:

BULLYING UK

Provides practical information and advice to young people and parents via the website.

Website: www.bullying.co.uk

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YOUTH ACCESS

Provides information and advice on counselling services throughout the UK for young people aged 12–25 years. Can give details of appropriate local agencies for young people. Go to the ‘find your local service’ section of the website.

Website: www.youthaccess.org.uk

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GET CONNECTED

Connects young people to organisations that can help them, whatever the problem, including mental health concerns and if you are thinking of leaving home or running away.

Freephone: **0808 808 4994**
(7 days a week, 1.00pm–11.00pm)

Website: www.getconnected.org.uk

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CHILDLINE

The UK’s free 24 hour helpline for children and young people, providing a confidential telephone counselling service for any problem. It comforts, advises and protects. You can also find information on their website about the issues faced by children and young people including bullying, exams, family relationships and friendships.

Helpline: 0800 1111

Living away from home:..... 0800 88 44 44

Website and online chat:..... www.childline.org.uk

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NSPCC

Experts in child abuse however they also provide counselling and advice to children on a range of issues.

Helpline for children & young people: .. 0800 1111

Helpline for adults: 0808 800 5000

Textphone: 88858

Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Website: www.nspcc.org.uk

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