

Children's Mental Health

helping to raise awareness



In 2020, one in six children (16%) aged five to 16 had a probable mental health disorder up from one in nine (11%) in 2017.

We don't know for sure what factors caused the increase, but living through the Covid-19 pandemic has undoubtedly had an impact. Social, psychological and biological factors determine mental health. As adults, it's important we understand common symptoms, how to spot them and what resources are available.

Common symptoms and spotting the signs

It is normal for a young person to feel angry, sad, worried or stressed sometimes. These feelings can be expressed in all sorts of ways, such as:

- Sudden changes in behaviour.
- Negative thoughts and low self-esteem.
- Arguing and fighting.
- Sleep problems.
- Avoiding school and activities, withdrawing or being 'clingy'.
- Complaining about aches and pains.
- Over-activity.
- Wetting the bed, when previously dry at night.

Signs that start to warrant concern and trigger further action include:

- Difficulties that last a long time.
- Persistent 'out of character' behaviour.
- If your child is hurting themselves.
- If your child is having suicidal thoughts.
- If another child's safety is at risk.
- Difficulties that are interfering with a child's development.
- If the situation is overwhelming for parents or carers.

Support and useful resources

General parental concern

- Young Minds.

Family separation

- Gingerbread provides information to help single parents support themselves and their families.

Bereavement

- Winston's Wish provides practical support and guidance to bereaved children and their families.
- Hope Again is Cruse Bereavement Support's website for young people experiencing grief.

Neurodiversity

- National Autistic Society offers support to autistic people and their families.
- Ambitious about Autism supports children and young people with autism.
- ADHD and You has information and resources to help young people living with ADHD.

LGBTQ+

- Stonewall provides information and support for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender young people.
- MindOut is a mental health service run by and for LGBTQ+ people with mental health issues.

Self-harm

- Calm Harm is a free app providing strategies to help people manage the urge to self-harm.
- Suicidal thoughts.
- Papyrus offers advice and support for young people struggling with suicidal thoughts.
- Samaritans is a 24/7 support service for anyone in need.

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