

Supporting your child's mental health as they begin their journey in High School



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The session today...



Times of change/ secondary school transition can be unsettling – what to look out for.



How we can support our children with their emotional wellbeing and help them to manage difficult feelings



Know what to look for and where to get help to support child with anxiety & Low mood.



Resources

What do we know

Transition to High School

- Times of change can be unsettling for most people
- Moving to high school includes worries about practical changes, academic changes and friendship changes. It is normal to feel anxious at this time but can sometimes continue.
- Combined with puberty and hormonal changes happening in the body moving to high school can be overwhelming





What is a mental health problem?

We all have good days and bad days, but when negative thoughts and feelings start to affect our daily life and stop us doing the things we enjoy, or our ability to feel ok, this means we probably need some support with our mental health.

For example, nearly everyone gets anxious before an exam or being in a new situation. But if we feel anxious all the time, constantly worrying that the worst could happen, and this stops us sleeping well or meeting up with friends, we might benefit from some help.



Definition of mental health

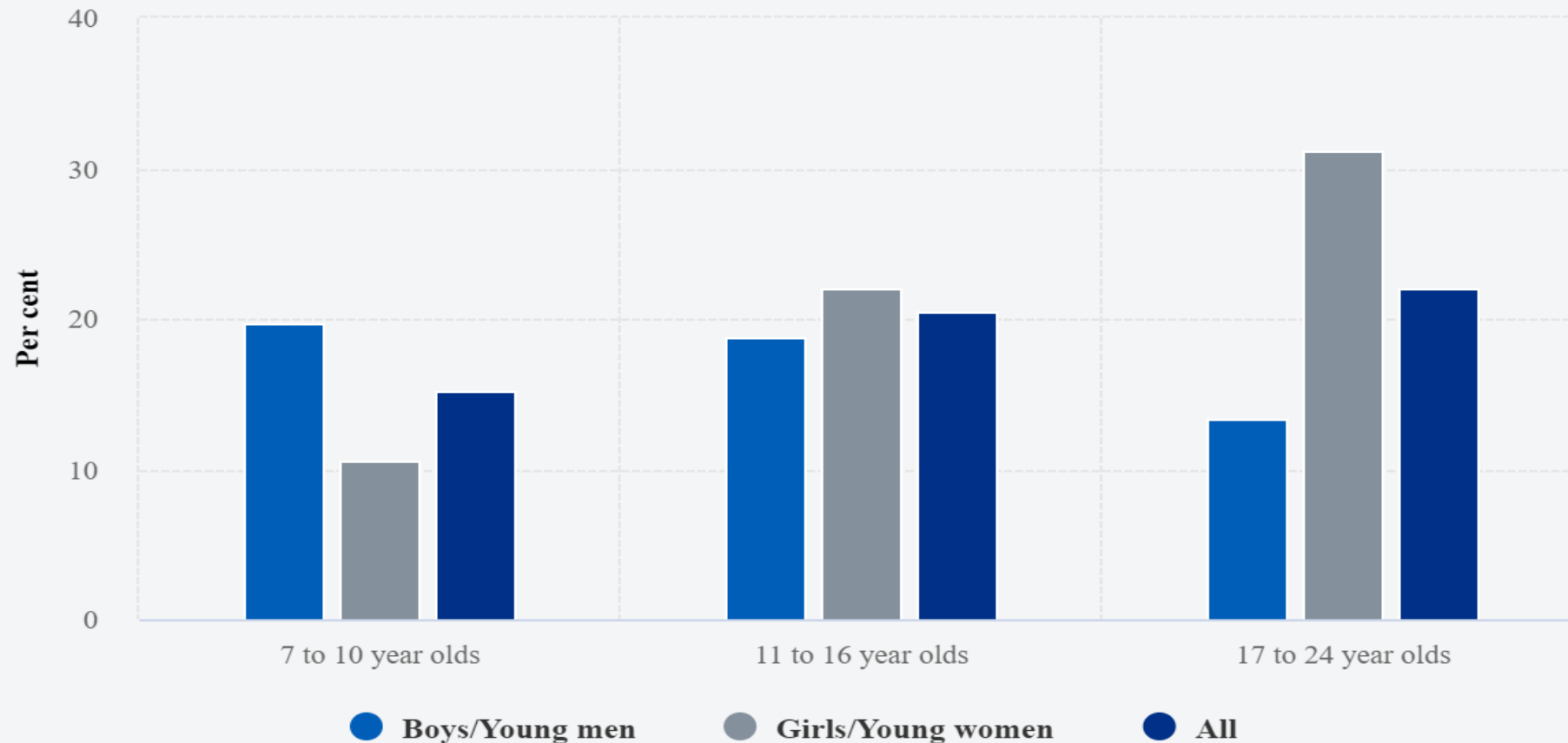
“A state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.”

World Health Organisation



Mental health in children & Young people

Figure 1.1: Percentage of children and young people with a probable mental disorder, by age and sex, 2022

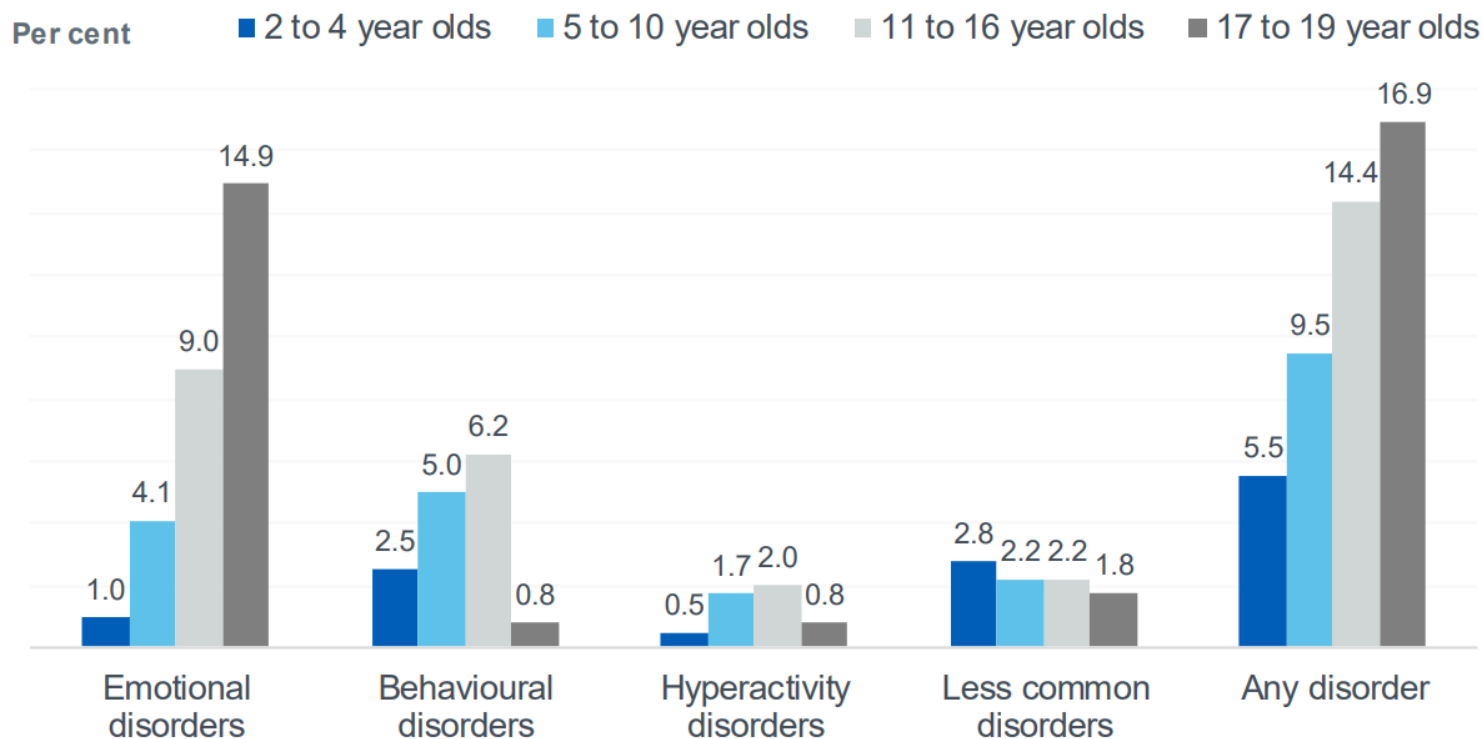


Young people aged 17 to 19 were three times more likely to have a disorder (16.9%) than preschool children aged 2 to 4 (5.5%).

Different disorders were prominent at different stages of childhood. For example, rates of emotional disorder were highest in 17 to 19 year olds. While rates of behavioural and hyperactivity disorders were highest in children aged 5 to 16.

Caution is needed, however, when comparing rates between age groups due to differences in data collection. For example, teacher reports were available only for 5 to 16 year olds.

Rates of different types of disorder in 5 to 19 year olds by age



Mental health in children & Young people

Among 6 to 16 year olds with a probable mental disorder,

- 68.3% sought help from education services,
- 45.7% from friends and family,
- 37.9% from health services
- 35.2% had used online or telephone support;
- 15.6% said they had not sought help from any of these sources.

How to recognise mental health problems



- **Prolonged low mood**
- **Hopelessness, guilt**
- **Loss of energy, lack of responsiveness**
- **Difficulty concentrating**
- **Loss of confidence**
- **Agitated, angry**
- **Thinking of suicide**



- **Excessive worry, restlessness**
- **Panic, confusion,**
- **Dread, avoidance, compulsive behaviour**
- **Sweating, nausea, chest pains**

What helps



How to help your child start talking

Find an activity as lots of YP find it easier to talk when while doing something . It Gives them something to do with their hands

Feels less like a 'big chat' and is more natural

Ideas for activities:

- Walk
- Drive
- Bake
- Share music
- Draw / colour together
- Out for coffee

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Conversation starters

General

How are you feeling?

What do you want to talk about?

What was the best and worst bit of your day?

If you could start today again, what would you do differently?

What did you do today that you are most proud of?

Serious

What was the biggest problem you had today?

Do you want to talk about what's going on?

How can I support you through [issue]?

Is there anything that you need from me?
Space, time to talk,
time to do something fun...



Conversation starters

Encouragers

I love you,
nothing can
ever change
that

You can talk to
me, I'm here for
you

If you need
to talk to
someone else,
that's okay too

If you talk to me
about what is
worrying you, I
can do my best to
help

Even if I don't
understand,
know that I
want to

We're going
to get through
this together



Active Listening

- Pay attention
- Validate their feelings
- Acknowledge their experience
- Ask open- ended questions
- Make space for silence
- Paraphrase and summarise





Building Resilience

- Resilience is the **ability to do well despite challenges** in life. It helps us adapt successfully and bounce back from adversity, failure, conflict and disappointment.
- When faced with challenges and difficulties, resilient children still experience anger, grief and pain. But they can **function and recover**.
- We play an important role in promoting resilience in children. Our instinct is to support and protect, but no-one can escape stress, risks, adversities, and other challenges; they are part of being alive. In fact, a tolerable amount of all those things can help children develop resilience.

How to build resilience

Help children develop coping strategies

Coping strategies help us to deal with overwhelming feelings. Encourage children to find one, or more, that they can turn to. For example, they could try relaxation, exercise, journaling, music, or distraction techniques.

Support children to face specific challenges

Worries about everyday experiences are a good chance to help prepare children to face future challenges. For instance, you could support them in managing the anxiety about presenting their work in assembly.

Let children flex their muscles

Overprotecting them won't help. Remember that a tolerable amount of stress is actually beneficial.



5 Ways to wellbeing

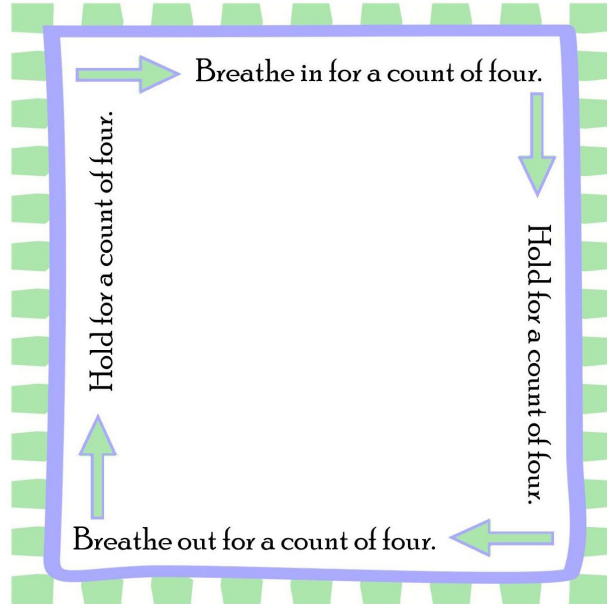


Things to try

- ☐ Mindfulness, meditation, breathing
- ☐ Sport, yoga, walking the dog, going outside
- ☐ Creative arts- drawing, singing, trying something new/challenging
- ☐ Spending time with loved ones, identifying safe people to talk to
- ☐ Volunteering, giving your time/attention, engaging in the community
- ☐

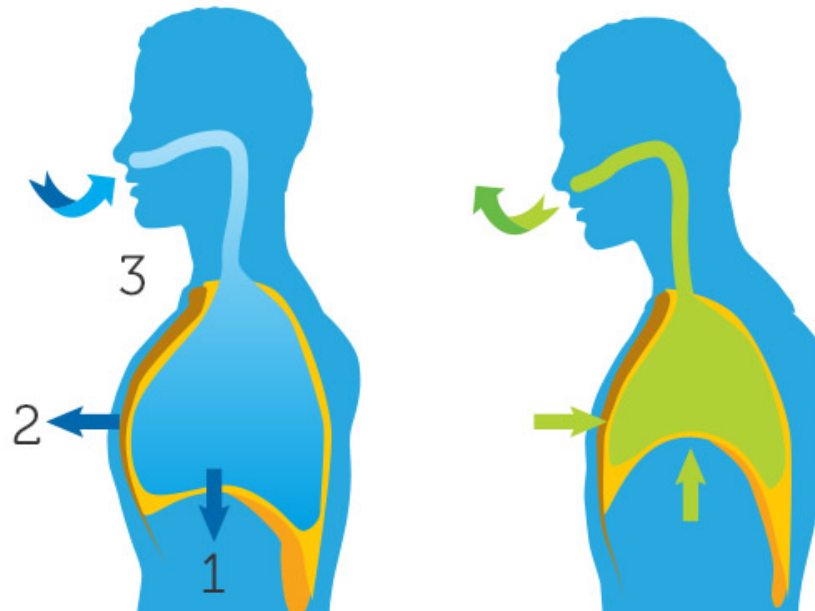
Breathing exercises

1. Box breathing
2. Diaphragmatic breathing
3. Lazy 8 breathing
4. Alternate nostril breathing

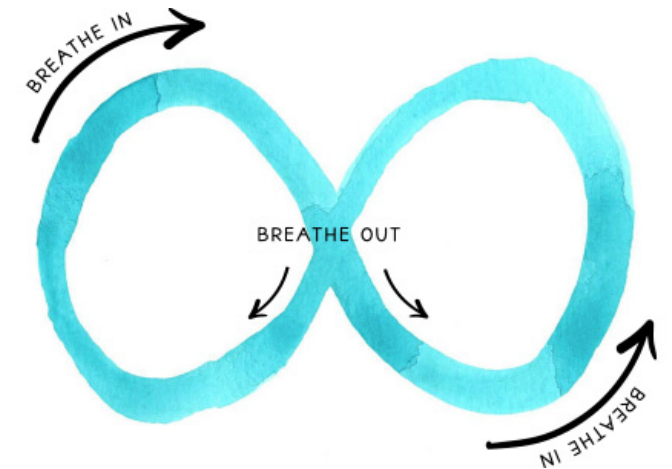


1-2-3 Diaphragm

- 1= Diaphragm- 2= lateral collateral-3= apical
- If two and three go first, they stop the diaphragm and it cannot function so the body remains in a sympathetic state



[More breathing exercises](#)




Grounding exercises

Stay Grounded Using Your 5 Senses

Relax Your Body, Take a Few Deep Breaths and Focus on the Following...

5 Things You Can See 

4 Things You Can Feel 

3 Things You Can Hear 

2 Things You Can Smell 

1 Thing You Can Taste 

SIX WAYS TO PRACTICE GROUNDING

with anxiety + intense emotions



body

lay on the ground,
press your toes into
the floor, squeeze
playdough



5 senses

wear your favorite
sweatshirt, use
essential oils,
make a cup of tea



self-soothe

take a shower or
bath, find a
grounding object,
light a candle



observe

describe an object
in detail: color,
texture, shadow,
light, shapes



breathe

practice 4-7-8
breathing: inhale
to 4, hold for 7,
exhale to 8



distract

find all the square
or green objects in
the room, count by
7s, say the date

Stress bucket

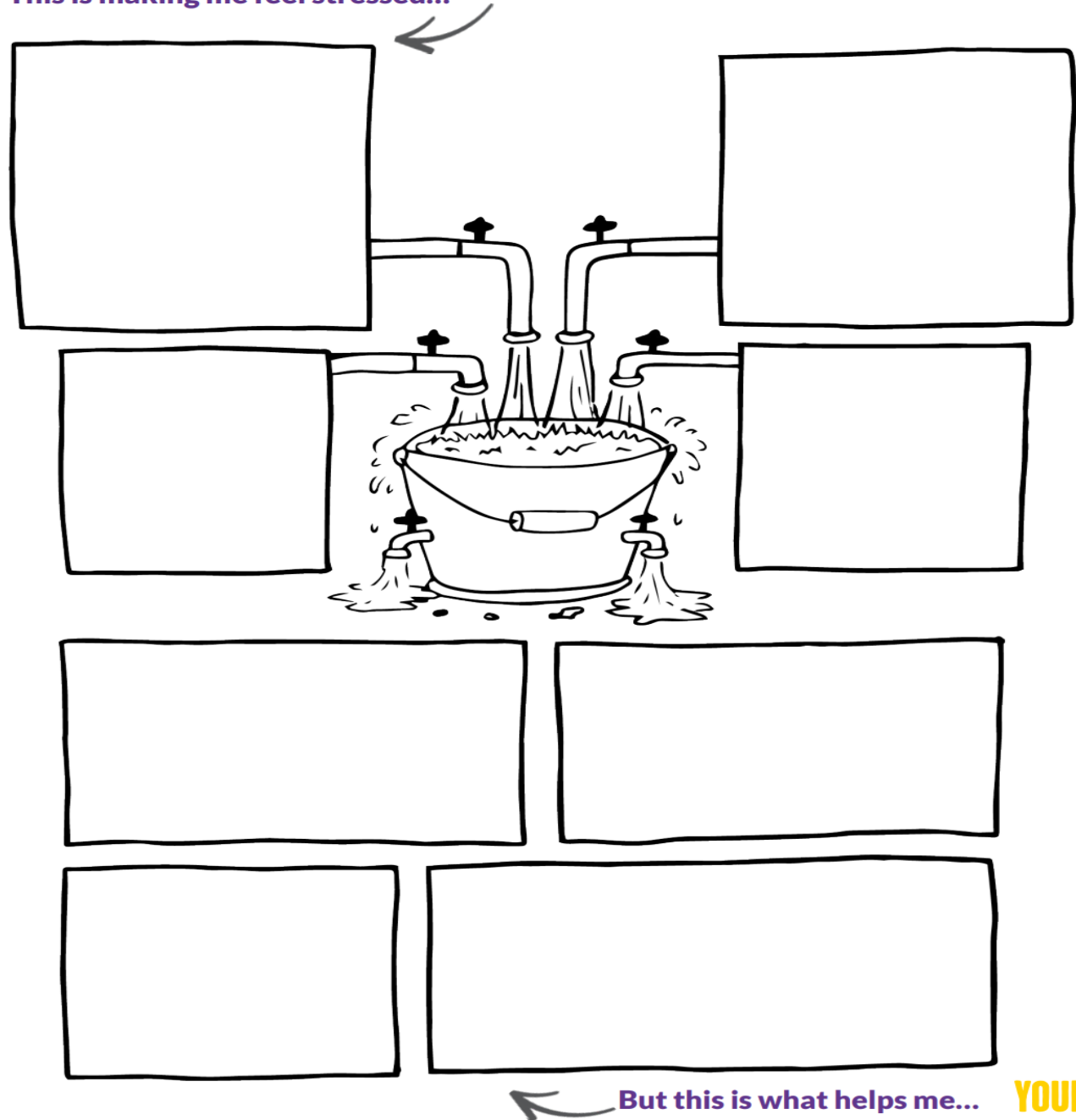
It is normal to feel stress at times. Some stress can be good, but too much can cause you to feel anxious or depressed, which might affect your sleeping, eating habits and general wellbeing.

When you feel worried, the stress bucket is a visual way for you to communicate this, and this can help the adults in your life best support your needs.

Instructions:

1. Above the bucket are taps and the things that cause you stress. Using the boxes, draw or write the things that are making you worry. It might be too much homework, friendship issues, back-to-school anxiety.
2. The below taps are the things that help you release stress. Using these boxes, write or draw the things that help you manage this feeling. It could be talking to friends, exercise or spending time with pets.
3. You might find it helpful to discuss your stress bucket and the things that help you.

This is making me feel stressed...



But this is what helps me...

Choose health



**Know what affects your child,
what makes them grumpy, hyper, disconnected...**

- Do they need snacks throughout the day?
- Do they need lots of sleep?
- Do they need to get out and about and do exercise?
- Do they need time alone?

Trust that you know your child and give them the basics that they need to cope with difficult days

Work together

Share ideas about how to:



- create action plans
- have a problem-solving approach
- enjoy achievements
- be forward-looking
- show them that we can all get things wrong

Move on up

Encourage independence:

- help them to move positively from child identity towards teen identity
- increase their responsibilities
- be positive whenever they act maturely



Be aware of your child's changing needs. Sometimes it might feel like one step forwards, two steps back.

Be calm

Try to stay calm whilst your child is feeling distressed.

Your child may show:

- highs and lows
- blame
- melodrama
- self-centredness
- anger



Communicate

The small things you do make all the difference:

**Keep talking, texting, listening, hearing,
hugging, sympathising, smiling, reassuring,
checking, sharing, suggesting, encouraging,
respecting**

Get learning

Be involved, find out more and talk about:

- social media
- internet benefits and dangers
- new music
- language and slang
- current affairs
- what it's like to be young in the current world



Be wise

As they discover new things, try to:



- be interested
- be non-judgemental
- guide
- give boundaries
- see it from all sides
- listen to their point of view
- choose your words carefully
- act on warning bells

Be the anchor

In times of change you are:

- constant
- family
- familiar
- routine
- in-jokers
- irritating
- comforting
- home



Have fun

Provide lots of light relief:

- be silly
- be embarrassing
- play games
- laugh together
- do stuff together
- make jokes
- make things
- be outside



Look after yourself

Support yourself, to best support your child:

- lean on friends
- offload on other family
- find 'me time'
- see the GP
- relax, exercise, sleep well, eat well
- remember tomorrow is a new day



Ten Ways for parents to help children cope with change

Resources

Kooth

Need urgent support? Get help from a crisis service →



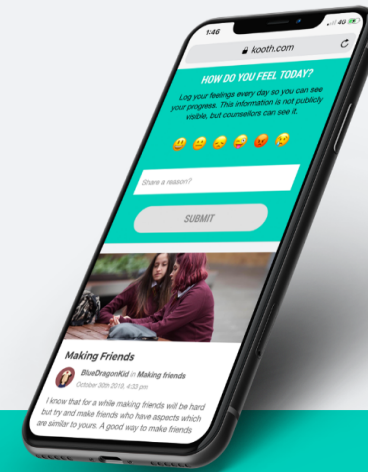
[Log in](#)

Your online mental wellbeing community

Free, safe and anonymous support

► [Watch our Kooth video](#)

[Join Kooth](#)



Just some of the things you'll find on Kooth



Articles

Helpful articles, personal experiences and tips from young people and our Kooth team.



Discussion Boards

Start or join a conversation with our friendly Kooth community. Lots of topics to choose from!




Chat with the team

Chat to our helpful team about anything that's on your mind. Message us or have a live chat.



Daily Journal

Write in your own daily journal to track your feelings or emotions and reflect on how you're doing.



Circle

Circle is a hub space and crisis cafe that will offer support for young people aged 5-18 in Ealing and Hounslow who are near, or at crisis point with their mental health. A mental health crisis is when you feel at breaking point, and need urgent help.


Appointments by referrals
Monday to Friday - 6:30PM to 10:00PM
Saturday and Sunday - 3:30PM to 7:00PM

Drop in hours:
Monday to Friday - 3:30PM to 6:00PM
Saturday and Sunday - 12:30PM to 3:00PM

Tel: 02034750060
Email: circle referrals@hfehmind.org.uk

Tel: 02034750060
email: duty youths services@hfehmind.org.uk
hfehmind.org.uk
Charity no. 801259

Scan here for our website !



NHS
In Partnership with North West London CAMHS Provider Collaborative

mind Hammersmith, Fulham, Ealing and Hounslow

Most of the young people attending A&E for mental health support are dealing with anxiety, depression, self-harming behaviour and suicidality risks. The earlier a young person gets support for their mental health, the more effective that support will be.

That's why Circle exists: to provide mental health support early, and prevent things getting worse.

Who is Circle for: Children and Young People aged 5-18 who are in active mental distress

What and Where: Young people can come in for advice, support, or just to talk, with drop-in or appointment-based services.

Circle, 46 South Ealing Road, Ealing

When: Open 365 days a year

Speak CAMHS

Why Should I Call the Helpline?

Young people and Carers were asked about what they wanted from this Helpline, so we listened to what they said!

The helpline name "Speak CAMHS" was created by a young person who is open to CAMHS.

We were asked to offer more personalised support, rather than giving the obvious suggestions all the time.

We want to do our best to ensure we can offer support and advice to those who contact the Speak CAMHS Helpline.

**We are currently operating the
Speak CAMHS Helpline:**

Weekdays (8am – 11pm)

Weekends and Bank Holidays (12pm – 8pm)

Outside of these times, crisis calls can be passed to a CAMHS Out of Hours worker, who may accept your call if they are available to talk, otherwise can arrange a call back.

**This is not a route of referral into CAMHS.
However, we can give advice on how a referral to
CAMHS can be made.**



West London
NHS Trust

SPEAK CAMHS
Helpline

0800 328 4444

Option 2



Promoting hope & wellbeing together



Supporting children's transition to secondary school (Anna Freud Centre)

Why is transition difficult for some children and young people?

Transition can be challenging for a number of reasons. For example, some children may worry about making new friends. Others may have concerns around organisation and understanding new systems – being in a larger environment, knowing that they have different lessons in different classrooms, or having more homework to do. Children in primary school are generally used to having one teacher most of the time. Changing to having multiple teachers, who will have high expectations and additional classroom rules may feel daunting, especially if they have formed close bonds with their primary school teachers.



What can parents and carers do to support children and young people through transition?

As a parent or carer, you will probably have walked your child to their primary school and come to know other parents. You might have had the chance to chat to your child's teacher at pick up to discuss any concerns you or they have. Secondary school is different for parents and carers as well as children. School staff recognise this, and many include thorough inductions for families, introducing them to pastoral care and the systems and support the school provides. Taking advantage of this can be helpful in getting to know your way around secondary school.



4

What does successful transition look like?

How can you tell whether your child is settling in well at secondary school? Research shows that the signs of a successful transition are as follows:

- developing new friendships and maintaining good self-esteem and confidence;
- showing an increasing interest in school and school work;
- getting used to their new routines and school organisation with ease;
- experiencing continuity in learning.

Helping your child through transition

We have summarised four ways to support your child through their transition. They are:

- encouraging them to explore their feelings;
- helping them connect to their school;
- building friendships and relationships;
- empowering them by building their confidence and independence.

5

