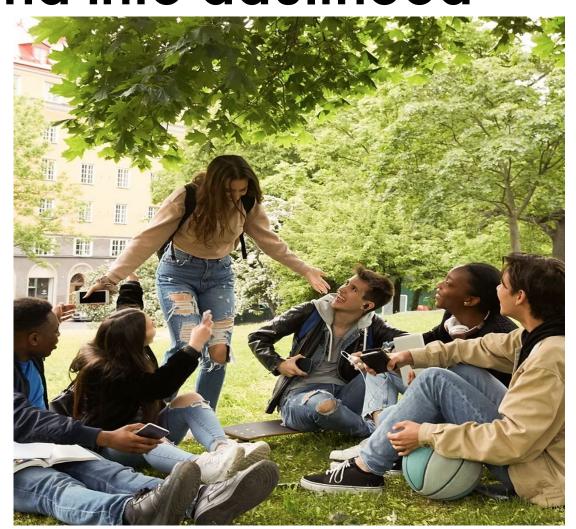
Supporting your child's mental health during exams and into adulthood

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Exam stress / mental wellbeing and supporting your child



What is Stress/ anxiety?

How does stress affect our physical and mental wellbeing



How to support your child.

Practical tips to help your child manage stress and anxiety



Signposting to resources

'A state of mental or emotional strain caused by adverse circumstances.'

We're normally talking about:

- An event or situation where there's lots to do, we feel **under pressure**, and/or we don't have much **control**
- > How we feel under pressure, our mental and physical responses



'A feeling of worry, nervousness, or unease, typically about an imminent event or something with an uncertain outcome'

When people are experiencing anxiety, they: <u>overestimate</u> the danger and <u>underestimate</u> their ability to cope.



Stress in young adults

- Feeling like you're not ready or prepared for exams
- Worrying about how you'll feel and perform during the exam, especially when you don't know what will be in it.
- Pressure from others, like parents, carers or teachers.
- Pressure from yourself to get certain grades.
- Comparing yourself to others, believing should get same results as friends.
- Worrying about the future, getting into university or getting a job.
- Coping with life changes, like moving from secondary school to college/ university
- Having difficulties at home or in your relationships with family, friends or partners.
- Coping with physical or mental health problems.

What does stress look like

Cognitive

- Fear of failure
- •Fear of disappointing yourself or others
- •Comparing yourself to others
- Talking badly to yourself
- •Feeling like you can't cope
- •Feeling things are pointless
- Doubting yourself
- •Believing everything is wrong or bad

Physical

- Shaking
- Feeling sick
- Headaches and dizziness
- Stomach pain
- •Changes in eating habits
- Crying
- Struggling to concentrate
- Forgetful
- Restless
- •Feeling tense in your body
- Changes in breathing, breathing very quickly
- Sweating a lot
- Feeling tired

Behavioura

- Avoiding things like revision and exam planning
- •Struggling to manage day-to-day life
- Lack of motivation
- Not doing things you usually enjoy
- •Working too much without taking breaks

Emotional

- •Anxious, worried, overwhelmed
- Upset, teary
- Exhausted
- •Defeated, bored, uninterested, fed up
- Frustrated, angry
- •Embarrassed, silly, stupid
- Easily annoyed
- Disappointed
- Confused

What does stress look like





Understanding how your child is feeling

- It's normal for your child to be worried during this time
- Encourage them to talk about their concerns, and reassure them that their feelings are valid and that you are there to support them.



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

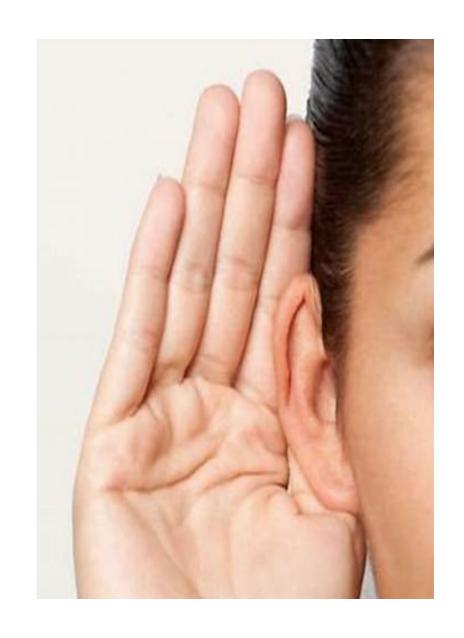
Ideas for activities:

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



Active listening

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



How to talk to your child about mental health



Help with practicalities

- Help your child to plan a realistic revision timetable breaking the days and subjects down into manageable chunks,
- Discuss different revision techniques and help your child to identify which suit them best
- Offer support by **listening to a recap or** testing them on what they have learned, if they find this is helpful.
- Ensure your child has a distraction-free place to study
- Help with relaxation during break times; encourage physical activity, provide a snack, do something

Encourage healthy habits

- 1. Adopting upright posture.
- 2. Practice positive thinking
- 3. Take a walk in nature
- 4. Hug someone
- 5. Hug your dog
- 6. Exercise
- 7. Get enough sleep
- 8. Eat well

Encourage healthy routines

- **Healthy Routine:** Encourage your child to stick to healthy routines and to make some time for activities they enjoy such as exercise, doing something creative, getting fresh air, seeing friends playing in person or online as these help reduce stress.
- Regular breaks: make sure that your child does step away from their books. You could suggest a cup of tea and a snack, a quick walk or a TV programme they enjoy.
- Relaxation techniques: such as focussing on breathing slowly or shoulder rolling, can reduce stress or help your child sleep if they are finding it difficult to unwind.

Promote a sense of perspective

- Try not to put too **much pressure** on them to get specific grades. Young people can feel overwhelmed by pressure to get high grades in exams.
- Encourage your child to focus on **realistic goals** of their own, rather than to compare themselves critically to their peers or to worry about expectations other people have of them..
- Reassure your child that exam results do not define them; that they are far from the
 only measure of success; and that you are proud of them whatever happens on results
 day.



Be positive

Let your child know that you believe in them and feel positive about their future. Planning a special treat and talking about things they are looking forward to after exams can help them feel positive, motivated and less worried.



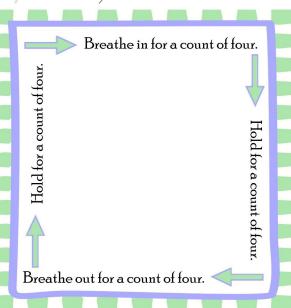
Look out for signs that your child is struggling

- These can include sleep or appetite problems; difficulties with concentration; or physical symptoms such as nausea, sweating or palpitations.
- If your child's anxiety is spiralling, encourage them to talk to you, or perhaps to a teacher, about how they are feeling. If you are worried that your child may be experiencing depression or longer-lasting anxiety, discuss this with the GP.



Breathing exercises

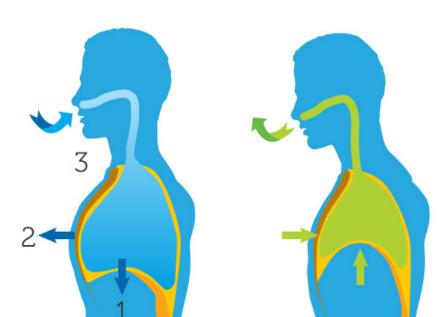
- 1. Box breathing
- 2. Diaphragmatic breathing
- 3. Lazy 8 breathing
- 4. Alternate nostril breathing



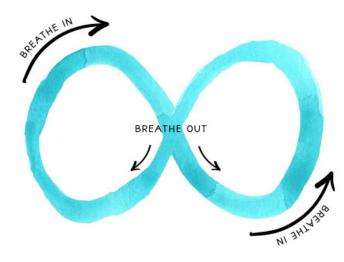


1-2-3 Diaphragm

- · 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







Grounding exercises

Stay Grounded Using Your 5 Senses

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



Things You Can See





Things You Can Feel



Things You Can Hear 🔊



🎇 Things You Can Smell 🖊



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



selfsoothe

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



Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Working through your muscles, tense each muscle group for 5-10 seconds, then release

- Start with breathing exercising imagining releasing tension
- Your face, including your eyes, mouth, and forehead
- Shoulders
- Your right arm, making a fist, then your left
- Stomach (but don't hold your breath)
- Buttocks
- Your left leg, then your right
- Your left foot and toes, then your right

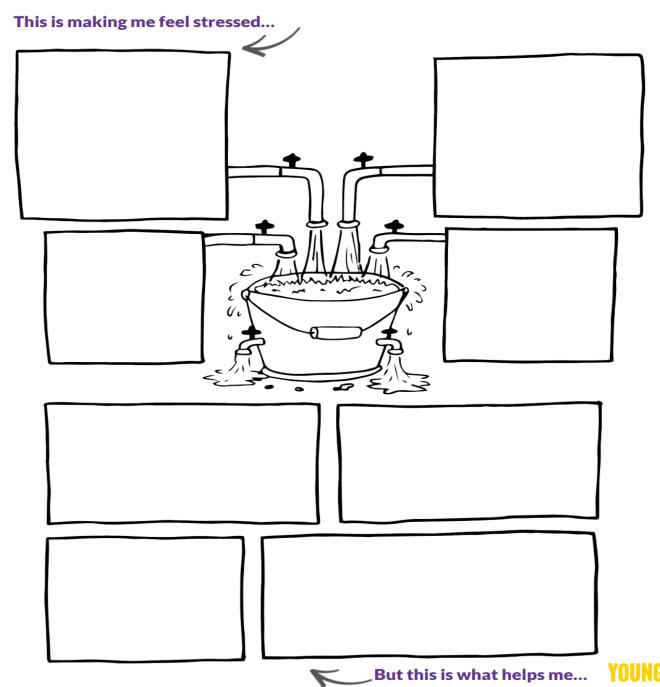
Stress bucket

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.
- You might find it helpful to discuss your stress bucket and the things that help you.





The PERMA+ model for wellbeing

Positive Psychology

- As concerned with strength as with weakness
- As interested in building on the best things in life as in repairing the worst.
- As interested In making life fulfilling for all people.

Positive emotion

Build more positive emotion into your daily life through gratitude, hobbies, music, spending time with your loved ones

Accomplishments

Set SMART goals, reflect on successes, celebrate your achievements

Engagement

Use your strengths and try to do more activities where you 'lose yourself'

Meaning

Find and get involved in a cause that matters to you, use your passions to help others

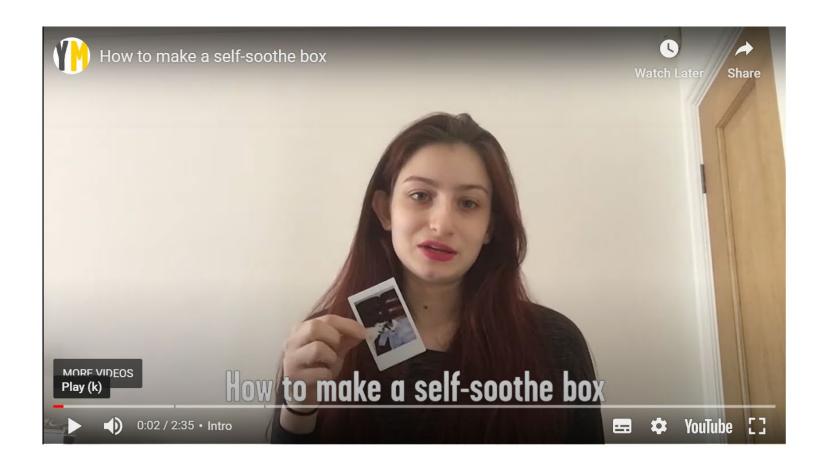
Relationships

Invest in existing and new relationships, in and out of work. Offer your help and ask for support too



Make a self-soothe box

Our Activists explain what a self-soothe box is, how it can help you when you're feeling anxious or panicky, and what they have in theirs.



Ideas to try

Mindfulness, meditation, breathing

Sport, yoga, walking the dog, going outside

Creative arts- drawing, singing, trying something new/challenging

Spending time with loves ones, identifying safe people to talk to

Volunteering, giving your time/attention, engaging in the community

Resources



Kooth

Kooth.com is a place for children and young people aged 11-25 years in North West London to seek non-judgemental professional mental health and emotional wellbeing support.

The service is free and anonymous, with no waiting list or thresholds to qualify for support. Kooth works alongside existing services, providing a safe space for accessing therapeutic activities and content, a peer support community, and live text chat and messaging with Kooth's team of practitioners.

Once registered, Kooth.com can be accessed via any internet-connected device and our counsellors and practitioners are online every day until 10pm.

Watch the online video or visit the website to find out more and to sign up for free.

https://www.kooth.com/



Kooth

Need urgent support? Get help from a crisis service →



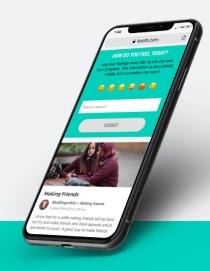
<u>Log in</u>

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

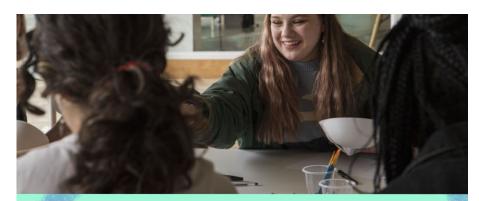
Chat to our helpful team about anything that's on your mind. Message us or have a live chat.



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: circlereferrals@hfehmind.org.uk

Tel: 02034750060 email: dutyyouthservices@hfehmind.org.uk hfehmind.org.uk Charity no. 801259 Scan here for our website !





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

A helpline that offers telephone support, basic counselling and problem-solving to young people and their families to help prevent difficult periods from becoming a mental health crisis.

Who can access: Young people, families and professionals in Ealing, Hounslow and Hammersmith and Fulham

More information can be found here

https://www.westlondon.nhs.uk/our-services/child-and-adolescent/camhs/how-we-help/camhs-helpline



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 advise on how a referral to

CAMHS can be made.



SPEAK CAMHS Helpline

0800 328 4444







Speak CAMHS

Our Alm: To offer telephone support, basic counselling and problem-solving to young people and their families to help prevent difficult periods from becoming a mental health crisis.

Who We Are: A multidisciplinary team of CAMHS professionals, who are familiar with local services and have a range of specialist knowledge, to help support and advise young people and their families.



What We Do:

- Provide immediate talking support to children, young people and their families who are distressed, by listening, offering a friendly, supportive voice and thinking through helpful options.
- To support children and young people to utilise their safety plan they have made with their community or other specialist care teams, in order to minimise any potential risk issues.
- Provide CAMHS expertise and advice to parents and carers in relation to their child or young person, reminding them of any plans put in place by CAMHS.
- Provide feedback to mental health or other professionals involved, regarding children and young people who have received support from the helpline.
- You can speak with someone who works in West London and has knowledge of local services in the area who will do their best to assist you.



About

Clinical support and services

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Professionals

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Training and

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Parents and carers

Young

Urgent Help

Looking for help right now?

If you or someone you know needs help right now, you should, if possible, try to talk to a parent, carer or trusted adult.

If talking to an adult is not possible, the following organisations are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week:

childline

Call: 0800 1111 email | online chat

Childline is there to help anyone under 19 in the UK with any issue they're going through. Whether it's something big or small, their trained counsellors are there to support you.

Childline is free, confidential and available any time, day or night.

SAMARITANS

Call: 116 123 email | visit | write

Samaritans a safe place for you to talk any time you like, in your own way, about whatever's getting to you. They won't tell you what to do – they listen and try to understand what you're going

Samaritans is free, confidential and available any time, day or night, for people of any age across the UK and Republic of Ireland.

Emergency Services

Call: 999

If you are concerned that your life or the life of someone else is in danger, you can call 999 for an ambulance, police, fire brigade or any other emergency service any time of the day or night.

The 999 emergency number covers the whole of the UK and anyone can call 999 for free, but it should only be used in cases where there is a risk or threat to someone's safety (this includes if someone is at risk of suicide). The emergency services may be able to track the location of the phone used to make the call.

AFC Crisis Messenger





Read more about the AFC Crisis Messenger service.

Download the AFC Crisis Messenger poster for your school, college or workplace.

Resources for young people

https://www.annafreud.org/on-my-mind/urgent-help/

https://www.annafreud.org/on-my-mind/

https://www.youngminds.org.uk/youngperson/

https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/#maincontent

How we can help

We know parenting isn't always easy. Although it's often amazing and rewarding to watch your children grow up, and to help them learn to be independent, it can also be really hard work. It can feel especially hard if your child's mood and behaviour seem different and you're not sure why, or what you can do to help. But you are not alone.

We have lots of practical advice and tips on supporting your child - from how to encourage your child to open up about their feelings to dealing with mental health services. No matter what you and your child are going through, things can get better.

We also have our Parents Helpline who can provide advice and support if you're worried about a child or young person.



Parents Helpline and Webchat >



Parents Helpline

Call our Parents Helpline for detailed advice, emotional support and signposting about a child or young person up to the age of 25.

You can call us for free on 0808 802 5544 from 9:30am - 4pm, Monday - Friday.

- Our Parents Helpline is available in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.
- You'll get through to a trained adviser who will listen and talk through your concerns in complete confidence.
- Your adviser will help you to understand your child's behaviour and give you practical advice on what to do next.
- If you need further help, they'll arrange for one of our independent, experienced professionals to call you for a 50-minute telephone consultation within seven days.
- Please note, calls may be recorded for monitoring or training purposes.
- Hard of hearing or speech-impaired? Please use Typetalk or Textdirect to contact us, or use our Parents Webchat.
- If English is not your first language, we can arrange for an interpreter as a member of LanguageLine.



Please note we're unable to:

- provide assessments, counselling/therapy or direct support to young people
- process referrals to CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service), statutory or local services
- provide families with ongoing support, since we are a one-off service
- offer support to professionals, friends or wider family members who are not the child's main carer
- offer advice around medications prescribed to young people

We aim to support parent/carers with their child's mental health in the best way we can.





Parents' A-Z mental health guide

Our A-Z guide gives you advice on how to help your child with their feelings and behaviour, as well as mental health conditions and life events.



Getting help for your child

Read our information and advice on how to find the right support for your child's mental health and wellbeing.



The parents' guide to looking after yourself

Parenting isn't always easy. Although it's often amazing, it can be really hard work. Here are our tips for looking after your child while also looking after yourself.



How to talk to your child about mental health

Read our advice on how you can talk to your child about mental health and encourage them to talk about their feelings.



Read our parents' blog

Parents share their real life stories and experiences with tips and advice for supporting your child with their mental health.



Setting up a parent support group

Read our guide on how you can set up a parent support group in your local community.





Clinical support and

10 Tracks

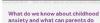
Child in Mind

We've produced a series of expert podcasts to help parents understand and manage child and family mental health problems.

The series, Child in Mind, is presented by BBC Radio 4 presenter Claudia Hammond. In each 20-minute episode, she discusses an important issue in child and family mental health with an expert and a young person or parent.

If you have disabled non-essential cookies on this website, you may not be able to listen to the podcasts below but you can still access the podcasts via our ITunes channel and on Soundcloud

Sort tracks by AZ/ZA Earliest First/Latest First



Feeling anxious and worried is a normal experience for children, but how do we know when it's becoming a serious problem and what can we do about it? Claudia Hammond discusses these issues and more with expert Professo Cathy Creswell from the University of Reading, and Beckie, whose whole family was affected by her son's



What is ADHD and what help is available for children with ADHD?

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a common mental health issue in children. But what is ADHD and what help is available for children who are diagnosed with the condition?

Claudia Hammond discusses these topics with Dr Jeanette Phillips, a Consultant Child Psychiatrist, and diagnosed with ADHD when he started having problems at school.



What is therapy and does it work?

What is therapy and does it work for mental health problems? These questions are discussed in this month's Child in Mind podcast. Presenter Claudia Hammond is joined by Maisy, 18, who has various types of therapy for both obsessive compulsive disorder and post traumatic stress disorder, and Professor Peter Fonagy, Chief Executive of Anna Freud National Centre for Children and



Why do some people self-harm?

Self-harming behaviour is becoming more common according to recent statistics, and particularly among young people between 16 and 25 years But what is self-harming behaviour, why do people do it and what help is available for those affected?

Claudia Hammond discusses these topics with Dr Trudie Rossouw, a Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, and Grace, a 23 year old woman who self-harmed between the ages of 16.

This podcast includes material that some people may find disturbing.



What is trauma and how does it affect the brain?

What is trauma, what does it look like, and how does it affect the brain? These questions are discussed in this month's Child in Mind podcast. Presenter Claudia Hammond is joined by David Trickey, Consultant Clinical Child Psychologist in the Trauma and Maltreatment Service at the Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families.



What are eating disorders

What are eating disorders and how to cope? These questions are discussed in this month's Child in Mind podcast.

Presenter Claudia Hammond is joined by Jess, 23, who has experience eating disorders and Dr Dasha Nicholls, Joint Head of the Feeding and Eating Disorders Service at the Institute of Child Health, University College London.



Is medication for mental health problems safe?

Is medication for mental health problems safe? How do young people make decisions about their treatment? These questions are discussed in this month's Child in Mind podcast.

Presenter Claudia Hammond is joined by Maisy, a 19-year old Young Champion at the Anna Freud National Centre and Dr Peter Hindley, Chair of the Faculty of Child and Adolescent Psychiatrists.



Bonding with your baby

Our latest Child in Mind podcast explores what it means to securely bond with your baby, how this bonding can affect your child's development as well as useful advice for parents to support this bond.

Presenter Claudia Hammond is joined by Dr Linda Mayes, the Arnold Gesell Professor of Child Psychiatry, Pediatrics, and Psychology in the Yale Child Study Center and expectant mum, Rhian



The impact of sexual material online

Any parent with a computer in the house will have thought about whether their child will see sexual material online. How widespread is this problem and what is it's impact on children?

Claudia Hammond is joined Dr Dickon Bevington, the Medical Director of the Anna Freud Centre, and Vera, a mum of two who's concerned about what her children see online.



https://www.annafreud.org/parents-and-carers/







Return to On My Mind landing page.





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Emily Callard Health Improvement Team