

Looking after your child's mental health

We all have mental health, just like we all have physical health. It's about how we think, feel and act. Sometimes we feel well, and sometimes we don't. When our mental health is good, we feel motivated and able to take on challenges and new experiences. But when our mental health is not so good, we can find it much harder to cope.

**RISK
AWARE**

Top tips for helping your child

Your child may be unable to explain why they feel the way they do. Asking why can add to a sense of guilt: the feeling that they don't deserve to feel this way. A gentler exploration of what may have contributed to it can be helpful.

Above all, reassuring them that they are loved and valued, and that you will be there for them, will be a great help.

As a family member or friend, trust your instincts. If your concern is growing, don't ignore your concerns. Speak to your GP, to CAMHS or contact one of the [organisations listed](#) in the [Get support](#).



ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH



If help is needed urgently, find out what to do [in a crisis](#).

- If your child is finding it difficult to talk, give them time.
- Let them know that you are there for them and always happy to listen and support them.
- It might be helpful to ask if they have any ideas about what might help.
- There may be someone else that they could talk to or a support service that could help.
- Take things slowly and gently: asking lots of questions may be unhelpful.

Useful apps

- [HeadSpace](#) is a guided meditation app that many young people and adults have found helpful. There is a free version that can be used freely and a subscription version that includes additional resources.
- [CalmHarm](#) is an award-winning app which suggests tasks to help young people resist or manage the urge to self-harm.

- [Doc Ready](#) is a digital tool that helps young people prepare to speak to a doctor about mental health – it helps them create a checklist of things they may want to talk about, and gives information and advice about speaking to a GP

- [MindShift](#) is an app designed to help teens and young adults cope with anxiety.

- [Stay Alive](#) is a suicide prevention app providing information and tools to help you stay safe in crisis. You can use it if you are having thoughts of suicide or if you are concerned about someone else who may be considering suicide. The app also includes a safety plan, customisable reasons for living, and a LifeBox where helpful photos and memories can be stored.