

Mental Health Awareness 2024

Child and Adolescent Briefing



Mental Health Awareness Week is from 13 – 19th May. The Mental Health Foundation's theme for this year is movement. Movement is important for our mental health. But so many of us struggle to move enough. We know there are many different reasons for this, so this Mental Health Awareness Week there is a focus to help people find moments for movement in their daily routines.

In this briefing:

- Hillingdon's Focus
- Let's get talking about mental health
- Conversation tips and exam stress
- Responding to mental health concerns.
- Local support in Hillingdon
- 24 Hour Hopeline
- Resources.
- Further reading for professionals.



Hillingdon's Focus

In Hillingdon, this year, we're focussing on child and adolescent mental health. Why? Because it's time to shatter the stigma surrounding mental well-being. Let's engage in open conversations with children, normalising the topic and empowering everyone to seek support when needed. Remember, mental health is a conversation for all of us!

Free online lunch and learn - Book now!

- **Monday 13th May:** LINK - Children and young people's mental health and the relationship between movement and emotional well-being. [Book here](#)
- **Tuesday 14th May:** Papyrus - Spark Suicide Prevention Awareness, Resources, and Knowledge Presentation. [Book here](#).
- **Wednesday 15th May:** CAMHS and Eating Disorders Service Lunch and Learn. [Book here](#)

Wear it Green Day, Thursday 16th May. Wear green to show people you are available and welcome conversations around mental health.



Lets Get Talking



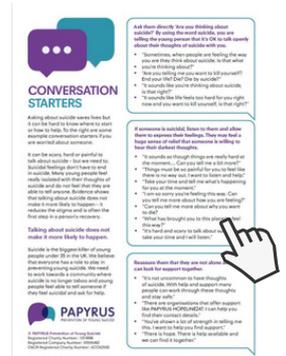
Discussing mental health can be daunting, especially when it comes to topics like suicidal feelings. However, it's crucial that we break the silence and engage in open conversations. Suicidal feelings don't have to end in suicide. Many young people feel really isolated with their thoughts of suicide and do not feel that they are able to tell anyone.

Evidence shows that talking about suicide does not make it more likely to happen – it reduces the stigma and is often the first step in a person's recovery. Everyone has a role to play in preventing young suicide. We need to work towards a community where talking about suicide and mental health is no longer taboo and young people feel able to ask for help.

Conversation Tips

We all need to get talking to our children about mental health to make this topic less of a taboo and remove the stigma around it. Below are some tips on how start having open conversations with children:

- Be there with a listening ear.
- Stay curious.
- Create time to talk.
- Ask directly about mental health.
- Reassure them that they are not alone.
- Know where to get help and point them in the right direction of support.



CONVERSATION STARTERS

Ask them directly. You are talking about suicidal feelings. You are not asking them if they are suicidal. You are asking them if they have thoughts of suicide with you.

It's important to be direct when talking to the young person about suicidal thoughts. You are not asking them if they are suicidal. You are asking them if they have thoughts of suicide with you.

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Education: Exam Stress – No Silence Please

For most people, exams are stressful. They may be worrying about workload, anxious about performing or fearful about the future, it's not unusual to feel this way.

When under pressure our bodies respond by producing adrenaline – the fight, flight or freeze hormone. While this reaction is perfectly natural and often necessary, too much adrenaline can cause unwanted symptoms such as sickness, dizziness and headaches. Stress can lead to trouble sleeping, a loss of appetite and can affect our mood causing us to feel irritable, unhappy and even hopeless.

For some students, the pressure surrounding exams can feel overwhelming and can sometimes lead to thoughts of suicide. We urge parents, teachers and others to reach in and give students space to share how they are feeling and to get people talking about their mental health.



EXAMS ABOUT TO START

NO SILENCE PLEASE

Free resources on supporting children around exam time.

Responding to Mental Health Concerns and Suicidal Feelings

Prompt professional responses to mental health concerns are important to promote wellbeing and, sometimes, to prevent harm to children. Practitioners across the local network need to know how to access specialist mental health services.

Things which indicate a child or adult needs an urgent mental health assessment:

- Expressing suicidal thoughts and feelings
- Worries about self-harm
- New or increased symptoms such as hearing voices and/or believing things which are not real
- Expressing paranoid beliefs
- Talking in a very confused way, which is unusual for the person
- A marked change in behaviour including, but not limited to, social withdrawal, aggression, irritability or onset of self-neglect.

These things can indicate serious mental health concerns for adults, children and older adults. Anyone can experience a mental health crisis and people need timely interventions from clinical services.



Central and
North West London
NHS Foundation Trust



For urgent matters there is 24/7 mental health crisis support for children and adults



0800 023 4650

CNWL's Single Point of Access (SPA) is a 24 hour telephone service which offers support, advice and signposting for children, young people, adults and older adults who may be experiencing a mental health crisis. Individuals, family, carers and professionals can contact SPA for urgent mental health advice. SPA clinicians can support with risk assessments, referring to secondary services, referring an adult or a child for urgent intensive community support or can explore whether hospital admission might be needed.

Tip: If someone already has a mental health clinician in place try to speak to them first if possible.

TIP: If you believe that a child or adult needs to be in hospital for mental health care because the risks are very high, they may require an assessment under the Mental Health Act. See the information on the next page about what this means and how to refer for a Mental Health Act assessment.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)

CAMHS provide community mental health services to children, young people up the age of 18, registered with a GP in the borough, with complex mental health difficulties, and their families in a range of different ways depending on their needs.

- Young people, families, and carers can call Hillingdon CAMHS for advice on how to get help and support: [01895 256521](tel:01895256521)
- Families, carers and young people can speak to a GP's who can do a referral on your behalf, download a form [here](#).
- Healthcare professionals, school staff, GPs and social workers can also make a [referral here](#).

Local Universal Support

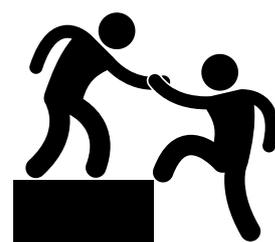
There are a range of targeted programmes which include counselling, mentoring individually or in groups to improve self esteem, communication and wellbeing. You should also consider completing a Stronger Families Assessment if a child would benefit from one of the services below:



- **Being Me | Ages 8 to 17** Programme for children who have witnessed domestic abuse to explore self-esteem, healthy relationships, and personal safety.
- **BOUNCE | Ages 8 to 11** Group programme to build resilience, communication, and self-esteem.
- **iChoose | Ages 12 to 19** Weekly groups for boys and young men. Each week, explore issues that affect young people through games, cooking, craft, sport, activities and discussion.
- **KISS | Ages 11 to 19** One-to-one mentoring and support around sex, relationship, CSE and sexual health education.
- **LGBTQIA+ Drop-in | Ages 13 to 19** Monthly groups for 13 to 16-year-olds and 16 to 19-year-olds who are questioning or identify as LGBTQIA+.
- **LINK | Ages 13 to 24** One-to-one counselling. Delivered online and at various community locations.
- **M- PACT (Moving Parents and Children Together) | Ages 8 to 17** Programme to educate family members on the impact of addiction on children and family life, and help families with communication and coping strategies, so they can make positive changes.
- **SORTED | Ages 11 to 19** One-to-one mentoring and counselling around drugs and alcohol education.
- **SWiTch | Ages 8 to 11** Transition support programme delivered in school to support the transition from primary to secondary school.
- **Unique Swagga | Ages 12 to 19** Weekly groups for girls and young women. Each week, explore issues that affect young people through games, cooking, craft, sport, activities, and discussion.
- **Yoga For Wellness | Ages 15 to 21** Group to support young people who struggle with stress, anxiety and/or depression.



[Click here to make a referral](#)



HOPELINE247 is a 24 hours service that works with you to understand why thoughts of suicide might be present. They also want to provide you with a safe space to talk through anything happening in your life that could be impacting on your or anyone else's ability to stay safe.

HOPELINE247
0800 068 41 41



- For children and young people under the age of 35 who are experiencing thoughts of suicide
- For anyone concerned that a young person could be thinking about suicide

Resources

YOUNGMINDS



Child and young person suicide prevention charity.



Conversation starters - Mental Health Foundation



Kooth is a free online support platform for children and young adults aged 11-25.



Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust

0800 023 4650

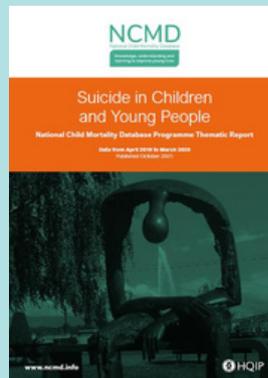


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Further Reading



This report contains findings on children's access to mental health services in England during the 2022- 23 financial year, based on new analysis of NHS England data.



This National Child Mortality Database (NCMD) thematic report aims to identify the common characteristics of children and young people who die by suicide, investigate factors associated with these deaths and identify common themes



Safeguarding Partnership Mental Health Related Briefings



World Mental Health Day 2023



World Suicide Prevention Day 2023



Safeguarding Children and Adults with Mental Health 2023

