



## Safeguarding Newsletter - Spring 1 2024

### Young People and their Mental Health

When children and young people experience good mental health and wellbeing, they say: they feel good, they are able to regulate their emotions, they feel that overall their life is going well and that they are able to cope well with life.



### The Stats

- 1 in 5 young people aged 5-16 suffer from a mental health disorder.
- Over half of mental ill health starts by the age 15 and 75% develops by the age 18.
- There is a 10 year delay between young people displaying the first symptoms and getting help.
- Suicide is the most common cause of death for those aged 15-34.
- 9% of 16-24 year olds attempt suicide.

#### In an average classroom of pupils:

- 10 will have witnessed their parents separate
- 8 will have experienced severe physical violence, sexual assault or neglect
- 1 will have experienced the death of a parent
- 7 will have been bullied
- **3 will be suffering with poor mental health**

MFHA England

### The Mental Health Spectrum

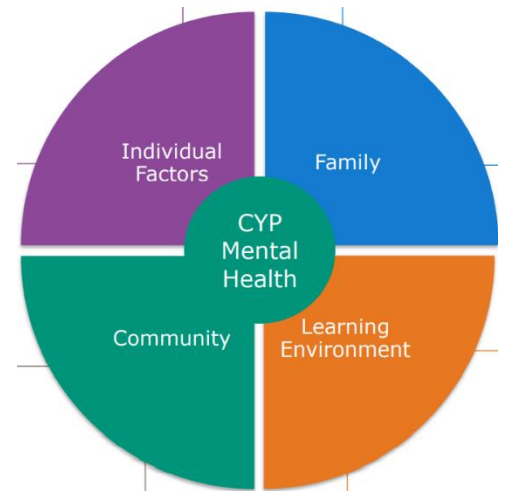
Like physical health, mental health is something we all have.

- It can range across a spectrum from healthy to unwell.
- It can fluctuate on a daily basis and change over time.



# What factors impact on mental health and wellbeing?

Multiple factors affect mental health. The more risk factors children and young people are exposed to, the greater the potential impact on their mental health. Factors that can contribute to poor mental health during childhood include exposure to adversity, expectations to conform with peers, exploration of identity and the pressures placed on children and young people in both school and extra-curricular settings.



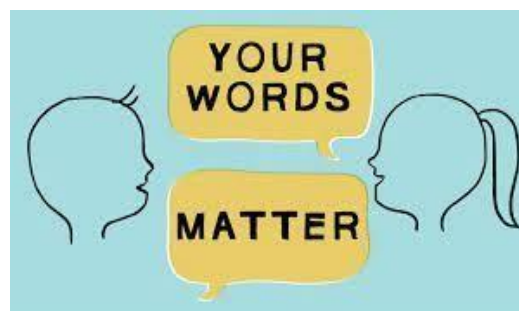
## Using Positive Language Around Children

It's easy to forget the impact our words can have on children and young people. Everything we do as adults is subconsciously absorbed by the children around us. This isn't restricted to words, it's our body language as well. It's becoming more recognised that children's self-esteem and resilience is affected by what is called negative language. Phrases such as 'stop doing that' cause confusion in children as it doesn't explain what they're doing wrong, why they shouldn't do it or what they should do instead.

This also means that the behaviour or action is repeated because the child doesn't understand what is expected from them. By changing our negative language to positive language, we can promote good behaviour by showing the child what we do expect of them.

POSITIVE WORDS THAT CAN CHANGE HOW YOU SEE YOUR CHILD	
✗	✓
STRONG WILLED	SPIRITED
STUBBORN	PERSISTENT
WILD	ENERGETIC
EMOTIONAL	CARING
DRAMATIC	EXPRESSIVE
UNPREDICTABLE	SPONTANEOUS
QUIET	A THINKER
FORCEFUL	DETERMINED
CLINGY	LOVING
BOSSY	A LEADER
LOUD	EXPRESSIVE
DREAMY	IMAGINATIVE
HYPER-SENSITIVE	RESPONSIVE
SHY	REFLECTIVE
FUSSY	SELECTIVE
SERIOUS	CONTEMPLATIVE
RESTLESS	ACTIVE

Your words have power, use them wisely - Unknown



*When using positive language remember to emphasize what you do expect from the child and explain why.*

Be quiet



Can you use your inside voice, we don't need to shout?

Stop yelling



Take a deep breath and tell me what happened.

Stop crying



I can see this is hard for you, it's ok to be upset.

Do I need to separate you two?



Could you do with a break?

Don't hit



Please be gentle, use your kind hands so we don't hurt.

Don't be naughty



Please make good choices.

## What anxiety can look & feel like...

When anxious, we can go into the fight, flight, or freeze state (the stress response). Our thoughts & feelings are connected and as above, our bodies respond with physical sensations to predicted danger. Our breathing gets faster, our heart beat increases, we get sweaty palms, tummy ache/ headache etc.

By purposefully breathing more slowly and deeply we are letting the body know that we are safe. That there is no danger and we can relax our bodies. *We need to remind our children that these responses are totally normal, as quite often these responses can be very frightening to the young person.*



# A quick response for anxiety/ panic attacks

If a child or young person is very anxious and in a state of panic (rapid shallow breathing/tears), you can use a grounding technique called 5,4,3,2,1.

Explain that anxiety is normal and everyone experiences it at some time in their lives (before an exam/meeting etc); their brain is protecting them and we just need to help it calm down by assuring it that they're safe. We can do this with simple breathing techniques eg: "deep breath in through the nose (smell the flower), and fully out of the mouth (blow out the candle)"

Encourage them to breathe and possibly model it; try something like "Breathe with me, I will do it with you". Don't tell the young person to "calm down", this isn't helpful.

If you think your child needs further support Please speak to the School's DSL who will be able to offer further advice. You can also access help from the following charities and organisations.

Dear Lord,

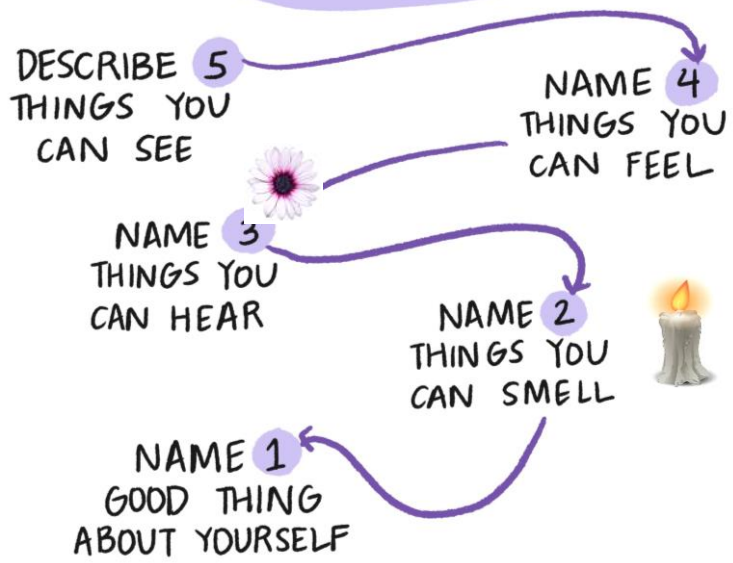
We think of those who are sad right now.  
We think of those who are despairing. We think of those who see no hope. In this time of quiet we remember. We think of God who knows pain. We think of God who loves.

We think of God who comforts. In this time of quiet we remember.

Amen



## HOW TO GET GROUNDED



**Signposting & Self Help**

**YOUNGMINDS**

**koeth** | **SAMARITANS**

**ChildLine** 0800 1111 | **mind**

**Place 2Be** | **CRISIS TEXT LINE |** Text HELLO to 741741 Free, 24/7, Confidential

**THE MIX** | **Mental Health UK**

**shout** 85258 here for you 24/7 | **time to change** let's end mental health discrimination

**Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families**

**Mental Health Foundation** | **HEADS TOGETHER**

**WORTH-IT**