South East Glasgow
Community Health & Care Partnership

Glasgow CITY COUNCIL

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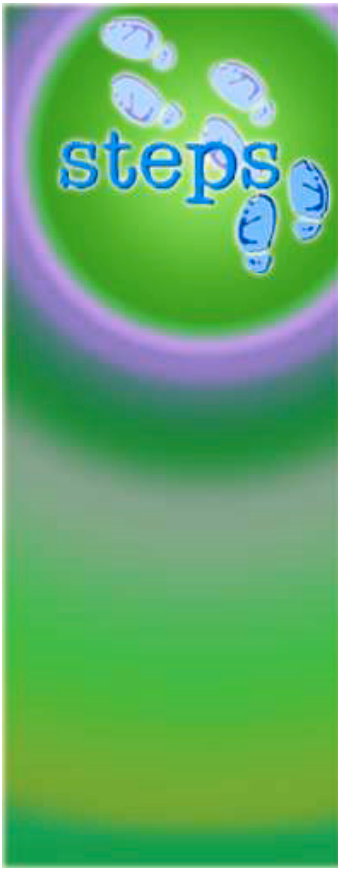
Wellbeing



A guide for young people

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This booklet is about mental health. It will give you some basic information and advice about how to look after your mental health including tips on how to cope better with stress.

- What is Mental Health?
- Feeling Good? - How can you stay that way?
- Felling Stressed? - What is stress?
- How can you help yourself beat stress?
- What if you need more help? - What's available?
- Friends & Family - How can you help others?
- Some useful websites and contacts

Part 1
What is Mental Health?

WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?

We all have mental health; it is part of our overall health. It is how we think, feel, and act when we are faced with the ups and downs of everyday life.

Everyone has to face challenges, make choices and deal with problems.

Our mental health depends on how we feel about ourselves, other people and our future.

- 1 in 5 young people at any one time will be suffering from some form of psychological problem.

Good mental health doesn't mean that you have to be happy and sorted all the time. It's normal to get upset or worried sometimes, that's just life.

Good mental health means being able to enjoy good times but it also means coping the best you can with the bad times.

You can look after your own mental health by learning helpful ways to handle whatever life throws at you.

FEELING GOOD?

If you're feeling good about yourself and the way your life is going here are some tips to help you stay in good mental health:

If you do have a problem, deal with it on the spot. Don't let things build up so that they are even harder to face.....

Make sure you take time to chill out and relax. Think about what makes you happy and make time to enjoy yourself.....

Get a good night's sleep. Sleeping well and waking up refreshed makes a big difference to how you feel during the day....

Good mental health is part of your overall health so look after your body by eating well and getting some exercise.....

If you drink or smoke, do it in moderation. It's easy to use drinking and smoking to relax but this could become a problem if you do feel stressed…..

Learn to recognise when something is out of your control. There will always be things in life that you can't change and worrying about them will only stress you out……

Focus on your strengths and learn from your mistakes….

Share things with people you trust. Whether it's good or bad news it's good to know that someone is there to listen……

Have a sense of humour try to see the funny side of things…..

FEELING STRESSED?

The most common mental health problem is stress. It's usually a mixture of feeling flat and sad (depression) and feeling worried and tense (anxiety). Stress is not a mental illness. Everyone feels low and under pressure from time to time. Problem stress means you have too much of a normal feeling. You can tackle stress by learning to control it.

Signs of Stress

Worry	Panic attacks
Tiredness	Feeling on edge
Anger	Poor concentration
Poor sleep	Unable to switch off
Feeling worthless	Waiting for the worst
Feeling hopeless	Tearful
Feeling irritable	Drinking/smoking too much

Part 2
Feeling Stressed?

CRAIG'S STORY:

"I feel shattered. I don't even know what's wrong with me. I just feel really worked up. I mostly worry about finding a job after school. I don't know what I want to do with my life, all my friends have got big plans. My head's buzzing all day and I can't get to sleep. I can't be bothered with anybody. My mum does my head in asking if I'm ok. I know she's only trying to help but she doesn't know what it's like. People are getting sick of my moaning. I fly off the handle if they wind me up. I don't feel like myself."

Part 3
How can you help yourself?

Keep a structure to the day. Plan the day ahead so that you do things for enjoyment as well as some of the boring or difficult things you've been putting off. Make sure you have one new goal a day.

Watch what you drink. Don't use drinking to help you relax. Alcohol can make you feel down and it can make panic worse. Men should stick to 21 units a week and women 14 units a week.

Get active. Exercise will lift your mood and can burn off nervous tension. Make sure you do something you enjoy - if you don't like the idea of going to the gym you won't go. Try 30 minutes of moderate exercise as many days as you can. Aim for variety so you don't get bored. Ask a friend to join a club or a class with you and you'll be more likely to keep going.

Don't accept other people's targets. Work towards what you want step by step. Don't let other people pressure you.

Talk to someone you trust. Sometimes you can't be bothered with anyone when you're feeling bad. It's important that you don't cut yourself off from people that could help. It's good to get a second opinion.

Challenge Negative Thinking. If you feel bad about yourself or your future, write down the thoughts that you're having. Argue against them. Don't just accept negative thoughts as true. What's the evidence? Come to a more balanced conclusion. What might you say to someone else if they were feeling like you?

Slow down. You can't do everything at once. Divide problems up and prioritise. If you feel it's too much, think about times in the past when you've coped well, what did you do?

Face your fears. Avoiding challenges or difficult situations can chip away at your confidence and make stress worse.

Cut down on Caffeine. A small amount can make you brighter but too much makes you jumpy and bad-tempered. Limit fizzy drinks, tea and coffee.

Look and sound relaxed. If you feel uptight, relax your shoulders and take deep, slow breaths in and out. If you feel panicky, use distraction to control your thoughts. Try counting back from 100 in 3's. Get a good night's sleep and look after yourself.

Fight Worry. If you worry a lot, think about how useful it is. Make a list of the good points about worrying and the bad points. Does worrying make you feel better or worse? If you are worried about something you can change make a step by step plan to do this. If you worry about things that are out of your control, think about helpful that is.

Part 4
What if I need more help?

Mental health problems can start at an early age. If you don't get help, problems can go on for many years.

This can make you feel bad about yourself and your future. It can also make it hard to get on with other people.

If you are finding it hard to cope by yourself, you might need more support.

- 50% of mental health problems in adults begin before the age of 14

It can be hard to tell someone when you are struggling. You might feel like no one can help. You might be worried that other people will think you're 'mental'.

Support is usually just for you. You don't have to tell anyone else if you don't want to. Sometimes, just knowing why you feel bad helps. You might feel less alone.

PEER SUPPORT.

Most schools have a peer support system where you can talk in confidence to another pupil about what's worrying you. They will listen, offer support and help you to think through your worries. They won't judge you and they might have gone through the same thing.

Part 4
What if I need more help?

SCHOOL NURSE.

The school nurse will listen to you and can give you advice and support. The things you talk about will be just between you. School nurses can also send you on to other people that can help.

YOUTH WORKERS/COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS.

There are lots of different volunteers working in the community to help young people cope better. You can get advice on sexual health, problems with drugs or alcohol as well as counselling and support.

COUNSELLING.

You can contact a counsellor yourself. Your school nurse or youth worker might also arrange for you to see one if you agree. A counsellor will listen carefully to your problems. They won't tell you what to do but they will help you to understand your own difficulties more clearly so that you can start to feel better. You can find out how to contact a local counsellor at the end of this booklet.

GENERAL PRACTITIONER (GP).

If you are finding it difficult to cope you might want to talk to your family doctor first. The GP might help by giving you anti-depressant tablets or they might tell you about other people that can help. Your doctor might also suggest some ways you can help yourself. You can now get 'healthy reading' books in all Glasgow libraries for all kinds of problems from depression to eating disorders.

Part 5
Friends and family - How can you help?

You might know someone that has a mental health problem. There are ways to help them to cope better with what they are going through.

If they don't want help and don't want to talk, try to understand. Offer your help and let them decide.

- 7 in 10 people in Scotland report that someone close to them has been diagnosed with a mental health problem.
- When asked, 80% of 16-24 year olds believed that having a mental health problem could lead to discrimination.
- 55% would not want anyone to know if they had a mental health problem (www.bbc.co.uk/health)

Having friends is important for good mental health. A big worry for some people is being treated differently by others. They might worry about losing their friends or being a burden.

If you notice that someone close to you is upset or tense, you might be worried because you just don't know what to say. There are simple ways that you can help them to cope better:

WAYS TO HELP

ACCEPTANCE AND UNDERSTANDING - You can help by staying in touch with the person and treating them with respect. Try to understand what they are going through - think about how you would feel.

PRACTICAL HELP AND SUPPORT - You can also help by going along to appointments with them for support. Think about things that might be harder to cope with now – can you help with school or housework?

TALKING AND LISTENING - For people who are feeling upset or worried it is important to know that someone is listening. Talking about the problem can help you to understand what they are going through and will also help them to feel less alone. You don't have to have all the answers. Just listening and being sympathetic can be really helpful.

JUST GIVING YOUR TIME AND TREATING THEM NORMALLY - It is important that you try to keep the same relationship as before - invite them to do something fun and spend time with them. They are still the same person.

SHOW APPRECIATION - try to show the person that you think they are a good friend. Give them praise when they do something well even if it is something small. Make sure they know why you care about them.

GIVING ADVICE, INFORMATION - Sometimes it is good to hear what someone else thinks. Any advice you can give will be helpful and shows you care. If you need to find out about mental health problems you can go to our website. (www.glasgowsteps.com).

Part 5
Friends and family - How can you help?

"When people writing about their own experience of mental health problems were asked what they most wanted from their friends, the most common unprompted answer (61%) was to stay as friends, keep in touch and spend time with them; 56% wanted acceptance, understanding and a nonjudgemental approach; and 27% wanted friends to listen and talk to them." (Mental Health Foundation)

(Mental health foundation news release - www.mentalhealth.org.uk)

Helping a friend or someone in your family to cope better with their problems can make you closer. It can also be very challenging. You might find it very stressful and tiring.

Make sure your own mental health doesn't suffer. Make time for yourself and use all the support that you can get. Talking to someone else can help.

There are people that can give you information, advice and support. A list of places that can help is on the next page.

LOCAL AND NATIONAL WEBSITES

• Local and National Websites

www.glasgowsteps.com
(0141) 433 4934
STEPS are an NHS service for people with common mental health problems (e.g. stress, anxiety, depression) in the Southeast of Glasgow. STEPS can help anyone over the age of 16. Detailed self-help booklets are available for download free from the website.

www.healthspot.org.uk
Information Only: (0141) 560 3035
A health service for young people aged 12-25 in the South East of Glasgow. Health Spot provides a wide range of services that include a drop in, counselling, training and education (available to young people, staff and parents), research and consultation, sexual health, mental health and addiction specialist staff (drugs, alcohol, smoking). Their website has an 'emergency exit' link that will redirect you to another site if someone walks in.

Youth Counselling Services Agency (YCSA)
Free Helpline: 0800 917 1723, Enquiries: (0141 420 6600)
Provides the following services for black and ethnic minority youth: counselling, family mediation, drugs and alcohol advice, literacy and numeric tutoring, training and development.

Frequently Asked Questions www.breathingspacescotland.co.uk
0800 83 85 87
A free and confidential phone-line service for anyone who is experiencing low mood or depression, or who is unusually worried and in need of someone to talk to. You can also get advice and information about common problems on the website.

www.justlikeme.org.uk
A Scottish campaign to fight stigma and discrimination on behalf of young people. They also provide sources of support and information about mental health problems.

www.aimhigherscotland.ac.uk
A partnership between the Scottish Executive and the Royal Bank of Scotland. Will help you to find out what your options are for work, training and higher education.

www.al-anonuk.org.uk/alateen
Helpline (10am-10pm everyday): 020 7403 0888
Enquiries: (0141) 339 8884
Help, information and support for young people aged 12-20 who are affected by a problem drinker. There are lots of support groups throughout the Southside as well as across the city.

www.sandyford.org
(0141) 211 8130
The Sandyford Initiative is part of NHS Glasgow. They provide free sexual and reproductive health services, as well as counselling, information and specialist services for women, men and young people. There is no need to be referred by your GP or another healthcare professional.

www.gsecarers.org.uk
0141 634 4996
Glasgow South East Carers Network provides information, advice and support for people caring for a friend or family member. They also provide services in training, income maximisation, carers 'having a say', short breaks and a young Carers support service.

• UK - Wide Websites

www.bbc.co.uk/radio1/onelife
Radio 1's website for young people. You can get information about relationships, sex, health, education, travel, work, money, housing, the law and your rights. You can also chat to other young people, play games and get freebies.

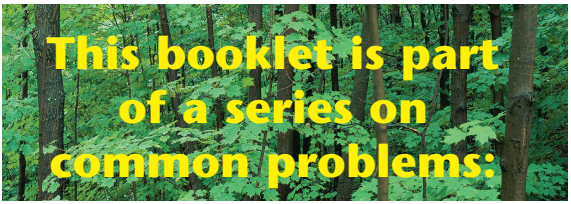
www.getconnected.org.uk
0808 808 4994
An organisation that provides free, confidential help for young people.

They can connect you with over 13,000 services in the UK that deal with all sorts of issues. You can contact them by phone (between 1pm and 11pm everyday) by email (help@getconnected.org.uk) or by web-chat (6pm to 9pm every Wednesday). You can also hide your visit to their website and it has an 'emergency exit' link that will redirect you to another site if someone walks in.

www.samaritans.org
08457 90 90 90
24hr confidential, emotional support for anyone feeling upset or distressed, including feeling suicidal. You don't have to be suicidal to call. They can help if you are feeling worried about something, feel upset or confused, or you just want to talk.

www.bbc.co.uk/health
The BBC's Health website where you can 'Ask the Doctor', post on the message board and get information, help and advice about any health problem that is worrying you. They have a section dedicated to mental health.

www.youngminds.org.uk
A mental health charity for young people. Provides information for young people and parents.



Controlling your stress (anxiety and depression)

Controlling your stress (for teenagers)

Panic Attacks

Health Anxiety

Phobias (general)

Agoraphobia

Coping with a death

Fatigue

Anger

Alcohol and sensible drinking

Anti-depressants

Insomnia

Relaxation

Self-esteem

Coping with trauma

So you've had a baby?

Getting more active

Building up motivation

Assertiveness

Social anxiety

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder

Psychosis

steps

0141 433 4934

All these booklets can be downloaded free of charge, from www.glasgowsteps.com