

For Boys and Young Men



Booklet for Boys and Young Men on
Asking for Mental Health Support.

stem4
supporting teenage mental health
Charity no 1144506
stem4.org.uk

Introduction

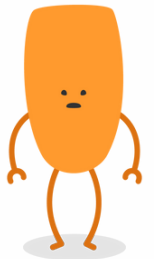
Each November the charity Movember Europe raises awareness about important issues facing men's health. One of the main features of this campaign is focussing on the challenges boys and men face in regards to their mental health.

stem4, as a charity that exists to promote positive mental health in teenagers, are very concerned by the continued ongoing rates of mental ill health amongst boys and young men. We want boys and young men to know that there is help available and to empower those who care for them in how best to support them.

Key statistics

(stem4 2022 Movember survey):

- Over a third (37%) of boys and young men aged between 14 and 21 said they were currently experiencing mental health difficulties.
- The survey found that almost half (46%) of respondents would not ask for help for a problem that was making them upset, anxious or depressed, "even if things got really bad."
- 46% of boys report that societal and media-driven expectations to "perform in a masculine way" have a negative impact on their mental health.



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Opening Up

Mental health lies on a spectrum ranging from good to unwell. This often makes it difficult to know when the right time might be to open-up about something that may be impacting them.

After all, everyone can feel anxious or low in mood.

Some general rules:

- A person doesn't have to be unwell to check things out. Sometimes 'a problem shared', does become a 'problem halved.'
- Set aside some time – being in a rush doesn't really work.
- Be prepared to repeat some of the points. You've mulled over matters for a while so you know what it is, but for the person listening it might be the first time they've thought about what you are saying, so they need time and explanation.
- Some people respond better than others. If you don't get the response you would like the first time, try again.

Dr Krause's Top Tips

1

Pick somewhere you feel relaxed – for example, arrange a walk or an activity.

2

Practise in advance what you want to say. Note down some points if you feel it would help.

3

Set the scene. Tell the person you want to talk to what you would like – for example, 'please listen and then we can talk' so you don't get disrupted, or you could say you don't want them to feel under pressure to come up with a solution, just want them to listen.

4

Try the '3 times rule'. Say something important a minimum three times before you discard it.

5

Starting by stating that it's important to you, or that you are nervous can be helpful.

6

Start with small pieces of information otherwise all might not get addressed and you can also assess their reaction.

7

Treat what you say as a series of discussions. This means you don't lose out on important detail and it's not too overwhelming.

8

Take time to process what's said. Take steps to change.

Conversation Starters:

'I've not been myself lately.'

'I've not been on top of the world recently. In fact I've been quite down.'

'Do you think you could help me find some help to be less stressed/anxious/depressed?'

'I've been low in mood recently.'

'I've not been holding up that well under all the pressure I've been under.'

'I've been sleeping really badly recently because I've been overthinking. I think I need some professional support.'

'I'm not dealing well with (...) and would benefit from talking to someone. Do you think you might be able to help me find some names or tell me what I need to do?'

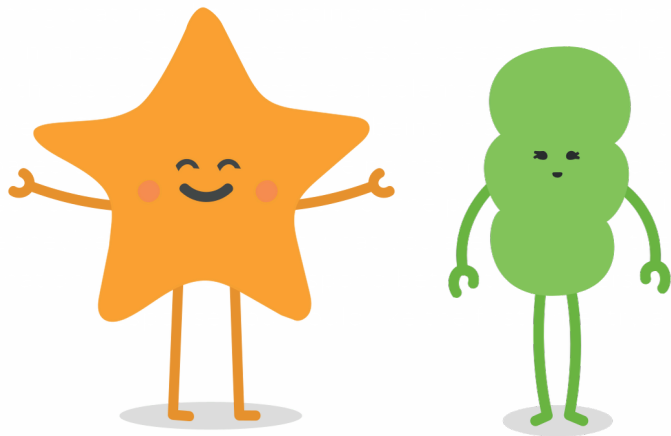
Friends Watch

How to Support the Mental Health of Your Friends



FRIENDS
WATCH

Friendships are amongst the most valuable relationships we have. We often talk to friends about things we won't easily tell our family. Whilst friends can annoy or hurt us, they are also vital in keeping us going. It's not surprising that friends are pretty important in helping with our mental health. They can be a listening ear, help us feel grounded and encourage change.



Friends can be very persuasive in supporting change.

This doesn't mean taking on responsibility for change but enabling your friend to make the right contact with teachers, school nurses, school counsellors, their families or other support to start to make positive change.

You can also download Combined Minds, a free app to help friends provide mental health support.

Talk

When a friend is going through a difficult time it makes sense to encourage them to talk. This might be to you or to someone who can help. Listen to your friend and support them in speaking to a responsible adult. Do keep in mind that whilst 'a problem shared is a problem halved' when it comes to mental health, sharing a problem is not going to treat the problem, so make it your role to signpost (or direct) them to get help.

Tell

You might want to help your friend by finding out about what sort of resources are available and tell them about them. These resources might include names of people at school or in the community who can help, helpful websites or peer supporters in the school. Telling also includes looking after yourself. If your friend refuses to talk to someone and you remain concerned, you can tell someone in confidence about your concerns. This will ultimately help your friend.

Offer

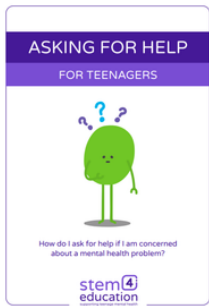
Offer to support your friend in asking for help. This might be from their family, school or their GP. Sometimes when a friend is unwell you might find yourself automatically becoming a carer. Remember that you are their friend not their carer, so plan some fun 'friend activities' you can do together.

Look after yourself

Friendships work both ways and whilst good times together benefit both, difficult times can affect both too. If you feel that your friend's mental ill health is having a negative impact on your own mental health, then take steps to look after yourself. This may mean you take time to reflect on the changes in the friendship and how it has changed. It may mean having a break from supporting your friend and seeking some trusted adults for yourself.



Additional resources



Asking for Help Booklet

Ever wondered how to ask for help if concerned about a mental health problem? This guide provides a simple guide on how to take the first steps to talk to friends, trusted adults, and your GP.

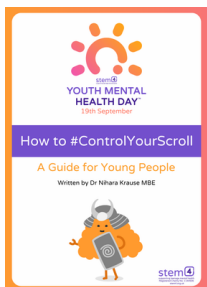
Found at stem4.org.uk/askingforhelp



Power building tips for boys and young men

A guide containing ideas of things you can do to add to your self-esteem power kit to help build positive self-esteem.

Found at stem4.org.uk/november



How to #ControlYourScroll: A Guide for Young People

This guide offers young people tips and tricks on how to look after your mental health in a digital age.

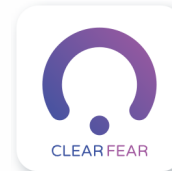
Found at stem4.org.uk/youthmentalhealthday

stem4 Apps



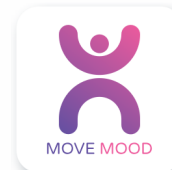
Calm Harm A free app to help teenagers resist or manage the urge to self-harm.

<https://calmharm.stem4.org.uk/> | @calmharmapp



Clear Fear A free app to help children and young people manage the symptoms of anxiety.

<https://clearfear.stem4.org.uk/> | @clearfearapp



Move Mood A free app to help teenagers manage low mood and depression.

<https://movemood.stem4.org.uk/> | @appmovemood



Combined Minds A free app to help families and friends provide mental health support.

<https://combinedminds.stem4.org.uk/> | @combmindsapp



Worth Warrior A free app to help young people manage negative body image, poor self-worth, and related early-stage eating difficulties or disorders.

<https://worthwarrior.stem4.org.uk/> | @worthwarriorapp

Please note these apps are free in the UK.



Please note that none of the stem4 apps substitute for seeing a mental health professional/GP, see a suitably qualified professional for assessment and advice on treatment.

HELPLINES

stem4 does not provide a counselling service and so regrettably we are unable to answer questions of a personal nature. Please contact your GP or call 111 or 999 should you have an urgent concern.

Beat

Beating eating disorders.

- 0808 801 0677 (Helpline)
- 0808 801 0711 (Youthline)
- 0801 801 0811 (Studentline)

Bullying UK

Information about bullying; verbal, physical and cyber bullying.

- 0808 800 2222

Childline

A free point of contact for children and young people who need advice either online or via telephone on a wide range of issues.

- 0800 1111

Frank

Confidential information for anyone concerned about their own or someone else's drug misuse.

- 0300 123 6600

Kooth

Kooth CAMHS support provides free, safe and anonymous online support for young people.

- 0300 123 6600

Mind

Provide advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem.

- <https://www.kooth.com/>

NSPCC

Keeping children and young people safe from a wide range of abusive situations.

- 0808 800 5000
- 0800 1111 (ChildLine)

Papyrus

prevention of young suicide Provide confidential support and advice to young people and anyone worried about a young person.

- 0800 068 41 41

Relate

Relationship support for young people aged 16-25 including support with their own relationship or a family relationship. Free on-line chat with a trained counsellor.

- www.relate.org.uk

Samaritans

Talk to the Samaritans any time you like, in your own way, and off the record- about whatever is getting to you.

- 116 123

Stonewall

Information and advice for LGBT communities and their allies.

- 08000 50 20 20

Shout

Shout is a 24/7 text service, free on all major mobile networks in the UK, for anyone in crisis. It's a place to go if you're struggling to cope and you need immediate help. The number to text is 85258.

- <https://giveusashout.org/>

Togetherall

Togetherall is an online community for people who are stressed, anxious or feeling low. The service has an active forum with round-the-clock support from trained professionals. You can talk anonymously to other members and take part in group or 1-to-1 therapy with therapists.

- <https://togetherall.com/en-gb/>

The Mix

Online guide for 16-25 years olds. Support and information on everything from sex and exam stress to debt and drugs.

- 0808 808 4994

Young Minds

Supporting children and young people with emotional health and wellbeing concerns, offering a wide range of resources across a whole spectrum of issues.

- 0808 802 5544 (Parents)

Switchboard

(LGBT+ helpline; calls cost the same as those to 01 and 02 numbers; available 10am-10pm every day)

- 0300 330 0630

Muslim Youth Helpline

(faith and culturally sensitive support service for Muslim communities; free to call; available 4pm-10pm every day)

- 0808 808 2008

Campaign Against Living Miserably (for anyone who needs to talk about life's problems; free to call; available 5pm-midnight every day)

- 0800 58 58 58

Websites

stem4 — www.stem4.org.uk

Mind — www.mind.org.uk

Switchboard LGBT+ Helpline — www.switchboard.lgbt

The Black, African and Asian Therapy Network — www.baatn.org.uk

Muslim Youth Helpline — www.myh.org.uk

Anxiety UK — www.anxietyuk.org.uk

Bipolar UK — www.bipolaruk.org

Harmless — www.harmless.org.uk

Young Minds — www.youngminds.org.uk



Who are we?

We are stem4, the UK's leading digital mental health charity for children and young people. We offer a suite of 5 evidence-based mental health apps that support various mental health conditions as well as digitally-delivered mental health literacy programmes in schools.

We also bridge the digital divide by offering in-person facilitation of mental health education in schools and mental health training of parents and carers, educators, and health professionals, as well as providing multiple clinically informed, printable resources.

Our free offerings help thousands of young people manage anxiety, self-harm, depression and eating disorders across the UK every single day, whilst also learning to build resilience and become safe online.

Our Mission

Immediate Evidence-Based Support

- To ensure that every young person gets the immediate, evidence-based mental health support that they deserve – coming from a disadvantaged background or where access to early resources are sparse should not be a barrier.

Early Intervention

- To provide earlier intervention at a bigger scale than is possible via the public health system, ensuring that low-level mental health issues do not escalate into long-term mental health crises.

Enabling a Support Network

- To provide everyone who supports a child or a young person, including families and carers, educators and health professionals, with a range of evidence-based resources to maximise their child or young person's wellbeing.

Solid Foundation

- To enable children and young people to have a solid mental health foundation, ensuring they can thrive and lead fulfilling lives.



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