

# guide to



parenting with a mental  
health problem

## **The Mind guide to parenting with a mental health problem**

This booklet explains difficulties you may face as a parent with a mental health problem. It describes the support available and contains suggestions on how to help yourself and your children. It also contains advice for friends and family.

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## How might my mental health problem affect me?

Many people worry that it will be difficult to cope with parenting if they have a mental health problem. It is natural to be concerned about the impact this will have on you and your children. However, with the right support and resources, it is perfectly possible to be a good parent while managing a mental health problem, and to care for and support your children in a positive way.

All parents face challenges, but if you are coping with a mental health problem, you may face additional concerns or difficulties. For example:

### **Coping with the everyday challenges of parenting**

A mental health problem can make the day-to-day challenges of parenting feel harder. For example, anxiety may make you more easily worried, or depression may mean that you have low energy.

### **The impact of your mental health on your children**

You may worry about how your mental health affects your child; for example, whether they may experience stress or mental health problems themselves.

### **Dealing with other people's negative ideas about mental health problems**

You or your child may have difficulties because of other people's judgement about mental health. For example, people may judge your parenting abilities because you have a mental health problem, or your child may be bullied or teased.

👁️👁️ *It feels like you are on the outside of your family looking in. You so desperately want to feel part of it but can't find a way to.* 🧠🧠

## Asking your children for extra help around the home

If your child has to take on responsibilities around the home to help you, such as preparing food or getting younger siblings ready for school, this may have an impact on their school work or the amount of free time they have to play or see their friends.

## Feeling safe to ask for help

You may find it hard to seek help because you are worried that people may see you as a less capable parent, and you may put pressure on yourself to cope for longer than you are able.

## Managing in a crisis

There may be times when you become unwell and can't carry out your usual parenting responsibilities, or have to go into hospital. This can cause practical issues, and stress and worry for you and your family.

### 'Perfect parent'

It can be easy to blame any difficulties you have as a parent on your mental health problems, or try to over-compensate by becoming a 'perfect parent'.

However, it's important to remember that all parents have difficult times and there is no such thing as being perfect.



Try not to put too much pressure on yourself or give yourself too much of a hard time. Remember that you have general skills as a parent – regardless of any mental health issues – that will remain useful.

👉👉 *Most illnesses don't have society making you feel guilty about raising a child while sick. Mental health conditions, though, make the guilt huge – it's as if others think you have a choice in it.* 👉👉

## What can I do to help myself?

Parenting with a mental health problem can be difficult and there is no one solution that will sort out everything.

However, there are lots of things that can make a positive difference. This section suggests several things you can try that might help:

 *Perfect people or perfect parents don't exist – just focus on one day at a time and do the best you can.* 

### **Taking steps to look after your mental health**

- Finding exercise that you enjoy will also reduce your stress levels. Online fitness classes can be done at home.
- Eat a healthy diet for a healthy immune system and a clear mind.
- Connect with nature for a rejuvenating boost.
- Develop self-help tools, such as mindfulness or relaxation.
- Make regular time for yourself with no external demands ('me' time) – even 10 minutes a day can help.
- Explore different treatment options so that you know what works for you.

### **Talking about mental health**

- Contact an anti stigma campaign such as Time to Change for advice on sharing information about your experience.
- Think carefully about how much you want to say and to who.
- Never feel you have to explain more than you feel comfortable with.
- Remember – you can always add more information later, but it's hard to take something back once it's been shared.

### **Having a support network in place**

- Let people know early if you are finding it hard to cope and need support.
- Ask for practical help such as childcare, transport and cooking meals.
- Ask the school or nursery to keep an eye out for any behaviour changes in your children.
- Find out if your employer offers flexible hours to help you manage the demands of working while parenting.
- Try to identify one or two people who you can ask for emotional support.

### **Being organised**

- Stick to regular times for routine tasks like mealtimes and bedtimes.
- Create simple and time-saving systems for daily, weekly and monthly activities such as cooking and shopping.
- Plan ahead for the busy morning times each evening by making lunches and packing bags.
- Have a clear and quiet homework space for your children.
- Make advance plans to reduce your responsibilities during unwell periods, and check out options for extra support during these times.
- Write down family routines so anyone supporting you can keep things consistent.

### Seeking help when you need it

- Ask someone you trust to either find out about or go with you to a support service for the first time.
- Make a list of all the questions that you'd like to ask the support service.
- Reaching out for help can sometimes bring up very difficult fears about having children taken away. Remember that organisations will have supported lots of other parents before you, and their family support staff will be experienced in how best to help you manage your situation.

👩👧 *Let other people babysit, have your kid overnight, make their tea. Your kid won't mind and they'll love the extra attention. You aren't a bad parent for needing help.* 👩👧

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## How can I help my children?

Many parents who have a mental health problem worry about how this might affect their children. This section suggests a few things that you can try to help reduce any impact that your mental health problem may have on your children.

👩👧 *It was extremely hard for me to admit to my boys that I wasn't OK. But I saw it as vital for their own future mental health to know that this was alright and they could ask for help whenever they needed it.* 👩👧

### Honest communication

Talking to your child honestly about your mental health can reduce any fear or confusion they may be feeling, and help them understand your



actions and behaviour. The following list suggests things to consider that will help make the conversations a little easier:

- speak with a trusted friend first and decide what you want to say to your child, or talk it through with a support service like the Carers Trust
- stick with clear and age-appropriate information
- explain as simply as possible how your mental health affects how you feel and how you behave
- make regular time to talk to older children about how they are feeling
- be available to listen if they are having problems or if they just want to talk
- answer questions as honestly as possible, or find someone else who can answer them instead
- reassure them that they are not responsible for how you feel – instead, be a team with your children and help each other at different times
- agree what information about your mental health you feel happy for them to share, and with whom
- if your child doesn't feel comfortable discussing their feelings with you, identify a trusted teacher, friend or family member that they can talk to if they feel worried. Childline can also offer them confidential information and advice (see 'Useful contacts' on p.25).

### **Keep track of their mental wellbeing**

It is a good idea to keep track of your child's wellbeing, to make sure that they are OK and that their own mental health is not being adversely affected.

If you keep an eye on how they are, you will be able to notice if they are having difficulties and deal with any issues quickly.

- devise a simple way to check in with your child about their stress levels, eg: 'On a scale of 1–10 how relaxed are you feeling? What is one thing that will bring that score closer to 10?'

- keep an eye out for changes in their behaviour, such as becoming quiet and withdrawn
- notice if your child doesn't want to participate in activities that they usually enjoy
- pay attention when children become angry or aggressive; try to acknowledge their feelings and set boundaries without becoming angry back
- attend parents' evenings at school, nursery or any after-school clubs as much as possible, to find out how your child is coping; or make arrangements for a trusted relative or friend to go on your behalf
- ask people you trust to also keep an eye on your child's wellbeing; close friends and family members can let you know if your child appears different, and they may notice things you don't
- if you feel concerned about your child's mental health, you can ask your GP to assess them, or make contact with a local support organisation for young people such as Young Minds (see 'Useful contacts' on p.25).

👉👉 *Parenting with a mental health issue is about using the skills and practices all parents can use. The arrangements I make for my children's care should I need to go into psychiatric hospital are no different to those I would make for a stay in general hospital.* 👉👉

### **Make sure their caring responsibilities are manageable**

If your child has responsibilities around the home, this might mean they are classified as a young carer. These could include looking after the household, shopping or money, or helping you with your basic needs such as washing, dressing or taking medication.

Try to keep track of how much they are doing and make sure this isn't having a negative impact on them:

- be aware of the relationship between responsibility and stress, and makes changes that reduce the pressure on your child if their stress levels rise



- ensure that they balance any caring responsibilities with activities of their choice
- build in rest time each week where your children can 'do nothing'; this will help them avoid becoming overly tired or resentful of having too many 'grown up' things to do
- if it feels difficult for you to help balance your child's caring responsibilities, ask for some advice from a support organisation such as the Carers Trust (see 'Useful contacts' on p.25).

### Think about what they need in their own lives

Helping your child to have the different things they need in order to be happy and healthy is a satisfying part of being a parent. You might want to ask a friend or relative to help you think about how best to support them to flourish in their own lives.

- talk to them about their experience of school, find out what they are enjoying and which aspects they are finding harder
- create a quiet and clear place at home where they can study and prioritise time each week for them to do schoolwork
- support their friendships to develop and strengthen; if you don't feel able to have their friends around, see if you can help them to set up times where they can meet outside the home
- help them take part in activities they enjoy
- respect their privacy by letting them have their own space
- encourage physical exercise, to let off steam and reduce anxiety or worry.

If you are concerned that your child's caring responsibilities are having a negative impact on them, lots of organisations may be able to offer advice and support. See 'Useful contacts' on p.25 for more information.

 *Most importantly love yourself. You are your child's role model. They know if you don't look after yourself and they will do the same.* 

## What support is there?

If you are parenting with a mental health problem, there may be times when you need additional support to help you cope. Different types of services are available for you and your family:

- Advocacy
- Mental health services
- Social Care
- Charities and voluntary organisations.



### Advocacy

If you are finding it hard to get the help you need, an advocate might be able to support you. An advocate is an independent person whose role is to listen to your needs and support your choices.

The Mind Infoline can help you find out whether there's an advocacy service in your area, and NHS Choices has information on specific types of advocacy. See Mind's online guide to advocacy for more details.

Advocacy can help with:

- listening to your views and concerns
- helping you to find out information
- exploring different options for support
- helping you contact relevant people
- attending meetings and appointments with you
- supporting you to express your views and wishes
- helping make sure your voice is heard.

 *It's the hardest thing to do but admitting you're struggling and asking for help and support is very important.* 

## Mental health services

If you would like to access a mental health service, talk to your GP or a mental health worker. They can tell you what support is available and refer you to a local service.

Mental health services can help with:

- health visitor – offers support, advice and information on parenting young children while managing your mental health
- community mental health team (CMHT) – offers intensive support to help you manage your mental health problem more effectively and cope better as a parent
- parent and baby unit – a place where you can look after your baby, under the care of a specialist mental health team, while being treated for a mental health problem.

Also see 'Care Programme Approach' below.

## Social Care – adult services

If you need extra support your local authority may be able to advise you and provide some help through social care. To access this, you need to ask for a care and support needs assessment.

The assessment should be carried out in such a way that ensures your involvement and that takes enough time to capture all of your needs. For more information on assessments in England see NHS Choices. In Wales, contact your local Social Services team.

Examples of the types of support that adult social care might be able to help you with are listed below.

## Social Care – children's services

In addition to support from adult social care services, you and your child may also be entitled to support from children's social care services. Local authorities have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of any

children 'in need' and their families under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. This automatically includes disabled children and any child whose health or development is likely to be negatively affected if the local authority doesn't provide support. The fact that you have a mental health problem won't automatically mean that your child is in need.

The local authority has to carry out an assessment of your child's needs to decide this. Children who perform caring roles are likely to meet the criteria for being a child in need, in recognition that the role can often impact on their health and development.

Adult and children's services should work together in assessing your family's needs.

Social Care can help with:

- managing money, such as budgeting or paying the bills
- housework tasks of cleaning, cooking and shopping
- accessing local services such as peer support groups, employment services, or day centres
- organising transport or applying for travel passes to attend appointments or services
- training in parenting skills
- managing relationships with friends, family or neighbours
- aids and adaptations to your home or help with mobility issues
- personal care, such as washing or dressing
- benefits and housing, such as help with applications, attending appointments or getting advice or information
- accessing or staying in training, education or employment
- support from a specialist social worker or support worker
- support for your child, such as supervised youth clubs or day trips, and respite.

Also see 'Care Programme Approach' below.

## **Charities and voluntary organisations – support for adults**

In certain areas voluntary mental health organisations and family charities may offer services that might be able to help you. You can refer yourself by telephoning, emailing to make an appointment or attending a drop in session.

Find out what support is available in Useful contacts on p.25, by getting in touch with the Mind Infoline or by contacting your local Mind.

## **Charities and voluntary organisations – support for children**

Children with parents who experience mental health difficulties can also benefit from extra support sometimes. There are a wide range of services that offer different kinds of services for varying ages.

To find out what support is available in your area, search online or talk to a relevant professional, such as a GP.

Children and voluntary organisations can help with:

- parenting courses – see Family Lives
- email, text or helpline support
- online forums and discussions
- online counselling
- drop in services for information and advice – see Citizens Advice
- wide range of support for parents – see Family Action or Family Rights Group
- specialist support for single parents – see Gingerbread
- outreach services where workers can visit you in your home – see Home-Start
- drop in groups
- peer mentoring and support groups
- time out for carers – see Barnardos (in 'Useful contacts' on p.25).

Also see 'Care Programme Approach' below.

### Care Programme Approach

If you are being treated through the Care Programme Approach (CPA) your role as a parent and the needs of your children should be taken into account when considering your health and social care needs.

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## What will help me prevent or manage a crisis?

**Please note:** if you feel that you're in immediate danger of seriously harming yourself or someone else, call 999 and ask for help or go to your nearest Accident & Emergency department (A&E).

If you're not sure about which of these is right for you, or you want to talk about other options that might be available, you can call the Mind Infoline on 0300 123 3393 (weekdays 9am–6pm), email: [info@mind.org.uk](mailto:info@mind.org.uk), call The Samaritans' 24-hour free helpline: 116 123 or email: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

Even if you do your best to manage your mental health, there may be times when you become very unwell and are unable to care for your children. It can be a difficult time to make clear decisions, so it might be helpful to think through what would need to happen in advance.

### Become aware of any patterns in your mental health

Tracking your mental health and identifying what increases your distress can help you plan to put extra support in place during pressured times. Some people may be able to identify clear patterns in their mental health whereas for others it may feel a lot less predictable.

Ask yourself:

- Does your mental distress increase in any specific circumstances?
- Are there are certain times of the day, month or year that typically



increase your distress?

- What are the main things that are hard to manage during times of increased distress?
- What helps you when you are finding things difficult?
- Who can you turn to for extra support?

### **Reduce your responsibilities during times of illness**

If you have periods when you are unwell or find it more difficult to cope, you may find it helpful to think in advance about what practical steps you could take to reduce some of your responsibilities during these times.

- Organise extra childcare for your children, such as an after-school club, nursery or childminder.
- Get older children to use public transport or a taxi to get to school or after-school activities.
- Employ a cleaner on a temporary basis.
- Ask your employer if you can work fewer hours or work from home some of the time.
- Ask friends to cook occasional meals for you and your family.
- Find other adults who can help your children with their studies.
- Ask for more general help from friends, family and any other sources of support you have.

### **Think about your support in a crisis**

Talking to the people closest to you about how you would prefer to manage a crisis can be a good way to plan for the future. This could even prevent a crisis from happening. If it would be helpful to have a record, you could take notes of what you agree.

- Identify how they can spot the signs of a crisis.
- Explore how you would like them to help you.
- Identify who should be contacted.
- Talk through what treatment you would like.

There are also more formal ways that you can plan for times when it may be hard to make decisions. For more information, see Mind's online

resource 'Advance Statements and Decisions'.

### **What if I become too unwell to care for my children?**

Planning in advance for times when you become too unwell to care for your children can reduce stress and worry about what will happen, and minimise any disruption to your children's lives.



Plan the following with someone you trust while you are well:

- decide who will do what for your children
- have a clear plan about how that will happen (for example, if your children will go and stay with them or if they will come to your house)
- discuss weekly routines and useful contacts
- if you are a single parent, it is particularly important to decide who will take over your role as the legal responsible parent if you are unwell.

### **What if I need to be admitted to hospital?**

If there is a chance that you may be admitted to hospital during a crisis, you might also find it useful to plan the following:

- check and write down visiting hours of local hospitals
- find out whether there are facilities for family visits
- decide whether you want your children to visit you in hospital or not, and arrange with someone to bring your children to visit if you do
- explain to your children in advance that you might have to go to hospital and what will happen while you are there, to help them feel more prepared.

 *It's like a juggling act – people keep saying I must take time to deal with my mental health but when the children need things it can be almost impossible.* 

## Checklist and planning resources

Use this to remind yourself of things you have tried and what helps:

- I take positive steps to look after my mental health
- I can ask for help if I need it
- I'm organised about daily parenting tasks and have a good routine
- I have a good support network
- I know who to ask to help me with day-to-day responsibilities if I need to
- I have spoken to my friends and family about what to do if I have a crisis or need to go into hospital
- I have an Advance Statement (see Mind's online resource 'Advance Statements and Decisions')
- I know what professional support is available for me if I'm not coping
- I have spoken to my child about my mental health and they understand my condition
- I keep a close eye on my child's wellbeing and they have someone to talk to if they are worried
- I know what support is available for my child if they finding it difficult to cope
- I keep track of my child's caring responsibilities and make sure they aren't getting too much.

## Could my child be taken into care?

Many people worry that their child will be taken into care if they are parenting with a mental health problem. This can be upsetting, and can increase stress and worry for you and your family. This section explains more about when children could be taken into care and what would happen.

### What is safeguarding?

'Safeguarding' is a term that you might hear professionals using.

Safeguarding is the term given to the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. It aims to protect children from abuse, prevent harm to their health and development, ensure they have safe and effective care, and that they have the best outcomes in their lives.

Safeguarding applies to all children aged up to 18. Everyone who works with children – including teachers, medical staff and social services – has a responsibility to safeguard them.

### If you are concerned that your child might be taken into care

There are several important points to remember:

- **Children are only taken into care in extreme circumstances** – this will only happen if other forms of support haven't worked, or if social services feel you cannot keep your children safe.
- Being in contact with social services doesn't mean your child will be taken into care – social services can provide a wide range of support to help you look after your children yourself. For many parents, this is a positive experience.
- If your child is taken into care, it doesn't mean it is permanent – care is often temporary until you are well enough to look after them yourself again.

- Unless it's an emergency, your child cannot be taken into care straight away – you would receive many warnings and be given months of notice that the care process is beginning.

For more information on what would happen if a child was going to be taken into care, see Citizens Advice (in 'Useful contacts' on p.25).

### Getting support throughout the process

It is really important that you don't go through this process alone. There are lots of things to think about and different types of support that can help you through it.

- Make sure you are aware of your legal rights – information is available on the GOV.UK, Citizens Advice or Family Rights Group websites.
- Get a solicitor who specialises in children/childcare law to help you with the legal process – ask your social worker how to do this or check the GOV.UK website. You will be able to get free advice and representation from a solicitor, no matter what money you have coming in, what savings you have or whether you own your home.
- Make sure you get continued mental health support to manage your mental health – talk to your GP or community mental health team (CMHT) about what might help.
- Make sure that you understand any treatment plan your social worker has given you. Talk to your social worker, GP or a mental health worker if you don't understand or disagree with any part it.
- You may want to contact a support charity for families involved with social services, such as the Family Rights Group, for info and advice.
- You may also benefit from a talking treatment to help you deal with any difficult feelings you have.

💡💡 *Sometimes I worry about how my mental health issues affect my ability to parent my children – and then I look at them and see how tolerant and kind, caring and understanding they are towards others. It's then that I remember I've still done a good job!* 💡💡

## How can friends and family help?

This section is for friends and family who want to support someone who is parenting with a mental health problem. Support from friends and family is very helpful when looking after children. This is particularly true if someone is unwell.

### Practical help

Practical help is invaluable when someone is unwell. There can be any number of things that you could do to support someone that would make a huge difference to their stress and anxiety levels:

- Helping with day-to-day tasks like transport, childcare, housework or shopping.
- Organising parenting responsibilities over a period of time by working out daily and weekly routines and identifying the most important tasks.
- Taking the children to activities and making sure they still get to see their friends.
- Looking after pets.
- Acting as an emergency contact person who can have the children to stay at short notice, or help with basic tasks, if your friend or family member becomes unwell.
- Asking your friend or family member how you can best help – they will know what's most helpful for them.

If your friend or relative is more seriously ill, you may have to decide whether to do things for them (possibly including looking after the children for a bit) or to keep encouraging them to try to carry on for themselves. There are no easy answers to this situation.

It will help if you can find someone who you can discuss these and other issues with, and who may be able to share the responsibility with you.

### Emotional support

If your family member is finding it hard to look after their family, they may worry that they will be judged or criticised if they ask for help, so it's important to be supportive and reassure them that it's OK. Encourage them to be open about their mental health problem, so they feel comfortable coming to you if they need support.

- Let them know that you respect them for talking to you about how they are feeling.
- Be empathic and understanding in your response, rather than trying to fix them.
- Explore with them any ways that would help them to recognise when they are becoming unwell, and what their triggers are.
- If you sense that they are not coping, ask them how they are – they may not know how to ask for help.
- Understand that they may feel very sensitive to being judged. Be as supportive and kind as you can in the way you speak with them.

👉👉 *I didn't realise becoming a parent was going to be hard but having depression and looking after a baby made me feel blank. All I can say is thank God for family and positivity.* 👉👉

### Help them to find other sources of support

It is important that you don't offer more support than you can genuinely give. If you feel that your friend or family member needs additional support, you could support them to find the extra help that they need:

- Research what support is available for them, or do it together.
- Act as an advocate to help them get the support they need.
- Put together a list of contact numbers and opening times for local support services.
- Signpost them to useful websites and information services.
- If you have previously agreed that you can contact schools, other friends or family members on their behalf, do so to enlist more help.

### If you're concerned for a child's safety

Sometimes complex problems like mental distress can make it hard for parents to meet a child's needs. This situation can develop into a more serious one of abuse or neglect. If you notice any warning signs, it is important that you take them seriously – even though it can feel very hard to do so.

- If you have a strong enough relationship with the parent, see if you can find a way to voice your concerns without judging their parenting.
- Ask them if you can help them to find the support that is needed.
- If you are unsure about what to do in this situation, you might find it helpful to contact the NSPCC to find out your options and discuss your concerns in confidence.
- If you are genuinely worried about a child's safety, you may want to talk to your local authority's Children's Services department.
- It is likely that you will be worried about whether you are doing the right thing, and you may feel as if you are betraying your friend or family member. It is important that you also find support for yourself during this time.

### Looking after yourself

Supporting a friend or relative experiencing a mental health problem can be difficult, and lead to stress and mental health problems such as depression and anxiety. Looking after your own mental health is as important as supporting anyone else's.

- Be clear about your boundaries of what you can and can't do, and how much time you have available.
- Make sure you continue to spend time doing things that you enjoy and that help you to relax.
- Notice if you are being affected by supporting others. Put things in place to support you with any increased stress or anxiety – see our information about stress.
- Recognise that you are in the role of a carer and be aware of the impact this can have on you over time. See Mind's online information on coping as a carer.



## Useful contacts

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### Babble

web: [babble.carers.org](http://babble.carers.org)  
Online community support and advice for young carers, operated by the Carers Trust.

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### Barnardo's

web: [barnardos.org.uk](http://barnardos.org.uk)  
Support for children experiencing mental health problems and young carers.

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### Childline

tel: 0800 1111  
web: [childline.org.uk](http://childline.org.uk)  
Confidential helpline for children and young people in distress.

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### Citizens Advice

tel: 08444 111 444 (England)  
0844 477 2020 (Wales)  
web: [citizensadvice.org.uk](http://citizensadvice.org.uk)  
Confidential advice on a range of issues, including legal rights and parenting.

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### Family Action

web: [family-action.org.uk](http://family-action.org.uk)  
Services for families, including mental health and young carers' support.

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### Family Lives

24-hour helpline: 0808 800 2222  
web: [familylives.org.uk](http://familylives.org.uk)  
Information and support for parents and families.

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### Family Rights Group

helpline: 0808 801 0366  
web: [frg.org.uk](http://frg.org.uk)  
Support for families whose children are involved with social services.

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### Gingerbread

helpline: 0808 802 0925  
web: [gingerbread.org.uk](http://gingerbread.org.uk)  
Advice and practical support for single parents.

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### GOV.UK

web: [gov.uk](http://gov.uk)  
Information about public services, including benefits.

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### Home-Start

freephone: 0800 068 63 68  
web: [home-start.org.uk](http://home-start.org.uk)  
Local support networks for families with young children.

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### Mental Health Matters

tel: 0191 516 3500  
web: [mentalhealthmatters.com](http://mentalhealthmatters.com)  
Mental health and general support services including helpline.

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### **mumsnet**

web: [mumsnet.com](http://mumsnet.com)  
Forums about parenting, including parenting and mental health.

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### **NHS Choices**

web: [nhs.uk](http://nhs.uk)  
Information about PALS and a search function to find an office in your area.

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### **NSPCC**

adult helpline: 0808 800 5000  
child helpline: 0800 1111  
web: [nspcc.org.uk](http://nspcc.org.uk)  
Support for children and anyone worried about a child. Includes Family Smiles groups for children who have a parent with a mental health problem

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### **Samaritans**

24-hour free helpline: 116 123  
email: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)  
web: [samaritans.org](http://samaritans.org)  
Freepost RSRB-KKBY-CYJK  
Chris, PO Box 90 90  
Stirling FK8 2SA  
Emotional support for anyone feeling down, experiencing distress or struggling to cope.

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### **Saneline**

helpline 0300 304 7000  
web: [sane.org.uk](http://sane.org.uk)  
Online mental health information for all ages, and support services for over 16s.

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### **Time to Change**

web: [time-to-change.org.uk](http://time-to-change.org.uk)  
Anti-stigma campaign led by Mind and Rethink Mental Illness.

## Further information

Mind offers a range of mental health information on:

- diagnoses
- treatments
- practical help for wellbeing
- mental health legislation
- where to get help

To read or print Mind's information booklets for free, visit [mind.org.uk](http://mind.org.uk) or contact Mind Infoline on 0300 123 3393 or at [info@mind.org.uk](mailto:info@mind.org.uk)

To buy copies of Mind's information booklets, visit [mind.org.uk/shop](http://mind.org.uk/shop) or phone 0844 448 4448 or email [publications@mind.org.uk](mailto:publications@mind.org.uk)

This information was written by Jenny Smith

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References available on request  
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## Support Mind

Providing information costs money. We really value donations, which enable us to get our information to more people who need it.

Just £5 could help another 15 people in need receive essential practical information.

If you would like to support our work with a donation, please contact us on:  
tel: 020 8215 2243  
email: [supportercare@mind.org.uk](mailto:supportercare@mind.org.uk)  
web: [mind.org.uk/donate](http://mind.org.uk/donate)

Mind  
(National Association for Mental Health)  
15-19 Broadway  
London E15 4BQ  
tel: 020 8519 2122  
fax: 020 8522 1725  
web: [mind.org.uk](http://mind.org.uk)

# Mind

We're Mind, the mental health charity for England and Wales. We believe no one should have to face a mental health problem alone. We're here for you. Today. Now. We're on your doorstep, on the end of a phone or online. Whether you're stressed, depressed or in crisis. We'll listen, give you advice, support and fight your corner. And we'll push for a better deal and respect for everyone experiencing a mental health problem.

**Mind Infoline: 0300 123 3393**  
**info@mind.org.uk**  
**mind.org.uk**

