

USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS:

If you are worried about symptoms you or someone you know is experiencing your GP can give advice and signpost you to services including CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services).

Some CAMHS teams accept self-referrals but this depends on where your GP surgery is located.

NHS direct

24/7 phone line to help advise you. They can signpost to services, make GP appointments or call an ambulance if they feel it is needed.

Dial: 111

Samaritans

If you are in distress or need support, you can ring the Samaritans for free at ANYTIME of the day or night.

116 123 (24/7 service)

The Mix

If you are under 25 you can contact The Mix free of charge to talk to someone. You can also use their text or webchat if you prefer by visiting their website.

0808 808 4994 (daily 1pm to 11pm)

www.themix.org.uk

Staffordshire Mental Health

0808 800 2234—Free and confidential advice.

Childline

Anyone under the age of 19 can confidentially call, email or chat on-line about any problem big or small.

0800 1111 (24/7 service)

www.childline.org.uk

(to talk one to one with a counsellor register for an account with Childline on the website)

Papyrus (Prevention of young suicide)

Confidential advice and support for young people (under 35) who feel suicidal.

Hopeline: 0800 068 4141

Text: 07786 209 697

Available: Mon-Fri 10am to 10pm

Sat, sun and BHs 2pm to 10pm

Fosterline

Confidential and impartial advice, information and support for foster carers on a range of issues.

0800 040 7675 (M-Fri 9am to 5pm)

There is an answer phone for out of hours calls.

**Numbers correct at time of publishing.
Some numbers may incur a charge.**

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VERSION 1 PUB:2019 REVIEW: MARCH 2020

MENTAL WELLBEING OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN



Please note the information provided in this leaflet is for guidance only and not designed to diagnose a specific condition. Contact your GP if you are concerned about any of your symptoms.

Mental Wellbeing

Mental wellbeing and physical wellbeing are equally important for everyone.

Children in the care system are four times more likely to have issues relating to their mental wellbeing than children living with their birth families.

If these mental wellbeing needs are not met then they are likely to experience placement breakdown and under achieve in education.

Mental well being can be broken down into three parts: emotional wellbeing, psychological wellbeing and social wellbeing.

Children in the care system have often been subject to some sort of abuse or neglect.

Children can be placed into care with or without the agreement of their parents/ carers by a social worker's assessment.

However the decision is made it is likely that the child will feel that it is in some way their fault. Feelings of bewilderment, anxiety, grief, fear and guilt will be mixed with feelings of relief when they are moved from an unsatisfactory or abusive home life.

Children will take their past experiences and the survival strategies they developed with them when they move into the foster system. These strategies have the potential to disrupt any new relationships.

Promoting and supporting Children's mental health and wellbeing

Having individuals around children and young people can help them to build self-esteem. It can also provide them with positive messages about their abilities and achievements and encourage positive aspirations and hope for the future. This all helps to promote positive mental health and wellbeing.

Support of this kind can be provided by the carers and health/social professionals.

Children in the care system or foster homes need routine and stability in order to help them thrive.

The rights of the child

A looked after child has several rights that must be considered on a case by case basis.

For example, they should have contact where it is deemed appropriate with any members of their family or who they see as important. If however it is deemed not to be in the best interests of the child then it would be reasonable for contact to be prevented or withdrawn.

Children have a right to see the file that social care have kept about them — however this should be done with caution as it may contain upsetting information and there may be information in it that the child may not have been aware of.

There will be forms/letters to complete in order to view the file and in some cases there may be a cost involved.