



# The Two Way Street

Issue: March 2020

Firstly, this will be one of many newsletters aimed at mental health and general wellbeing for you, our parents, carers, guardians, nans, grandads and anyone else involved in our school community. The idea of these newsletters isn't to throw statistics at you all with regards to mental health and wellbeing. No, this is a newsletter designed to help, inform and enable every one of us to learn more about ourselves, others, and the ever increasing fact that we all need to look after our own mental health. I, along with many others, was truly saddened to hear of the recent death of Caroline Flack. Just like Caroline and many others before her, I fear she won't be the last to fall victim to pressures, influences and unkind treatment which left her feeling she had no where to turn. Whether you loved her or loathed her isn't the point here, the point being - our mental health is just as important as physical health and looking after it should be just as much a priority. Hopefully this newsletter and the ones after it, help, if just a little towards this.

## So, what is mental health?

Well one of the first things to say is that we all have it. You, me, the Queen even!

There is a huge stigma attached to mental health and mental health problems. The stigmas have created alarming language (nut case, he/she's mental, crazy etc) as well as negative, unrealistic and false portrayals shown on TV and media.

These stigmas can make people feel uncomfortable about mental health issues and so don't/won't talk about them much. But the FACT of the matter is, we all have times when we aren't 'mentally healthy.'

In reality, mental health problems are a common human experience.

Mental health is a state of mind, it's how we think and feel. Being in good mental health, described by the Mental Health Foundation, you are said to :

- Make the most of your potential
- Cope with life
- Play a full part in your family, workplace, community and among friends.

Mental health is everyone's business.

We all have times when we feel down, stressed, worried, anxious or frightened. These feelings are normal.

Most of the time these feelings pass. But sometimes they can develop into something more serious and this can happen to any one of us. Everyone is different and everyone has different levels and means of bouncing back after a setback, some quicker than others.

In fact your mental health doesn't always stay the same, it can change through a whole array of life circumstances as we move through it.

It is a continuum that applies to everyone.

One thing that I think we are learning is that it is healthy to talk about how you are feeling.

However, no matter how you are/have been feeling YOU ARE NOT ALONE when feeling this way. It is not a sign of weakness. It is ALWAYS ok to ask for help.

Most people know someone who has experienced a mental health problem. It can happen to anyone, in all walks of life, and it is likely that when you find a combination of self-care, treatment and support that works for you, you can get better.

## How to improve your wellbeing.

Everyone needs to look after their mental health and wellbeing. There is support out there and is available if you need it.

Attached to this newsletter is a series of strategies and advice from the charity, Mind, to look after your mental health and wellbeing.

### Seeking Help

If you are feeling in need of support, there are many ways to do this and in no particular order to try them in.

- Your doctor
- A trained therapist
- Charity organisations and helplines (attached)
- Workplace support
- Friends, family, carers and neighbours
- Peer support
- Community support services

If at any point you can not keep yourself safe, get straight to A&E.

Finally - in a world where you can be anything, be kind, no one knows the true battles another is facing.

## **Useful contacts**

### **Mind's services**

- Helplines – all mind's helplines provide information and support by phone and email.
  - o Mind's Infoline – 0300 123 3393, [info@mind](mailto:info@mind)
  - o Mind's Legal Line – 0300 466 6463, [legal@mind](mailto:legal@mind)
- Local Minds – there are over 140 local Mind's across England and Wales which provide services such as talking treatments, peer support, and advocacy.
- Elefriends is a supportive online community for anyone experiencing a mental health problem.

### **Anxiety UK**

[anxietyuk.org.uk](http://anxietyuk.org.uk)

08444 775 774

Advice and support for people living with anxiety.

### **b-eat**

[b-eat.co.uk](http://b-eat.co.uk)

Adult helpline: 0808 801 0677

Youthline: 0808 801 0711

Supporting people affected by eating disorders

### **British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy**

[itsgoodtotalk.org.uk](http://itsgoodtotalk.org.uk)

01455 883 300

Information and details of accredited practitioners.

### **Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM)**

[thecalmzone.net](http://thecalmzone.net)

0800 58 58 58

Information and support for men.

### **Carers UK**

[carersuk.org](http://carersuk.org)

0808 808 7777

Independent information and support for carers.

### **Disability Rights UK**

[disabilityrightsuk.org](http://disabilityrightsuk.org)

Information and support for people living with a disability, including contact details of local disability groups.

### **FRANK**

[talktofrank.com](http://talktofrank.com)

0300 123 6600

Confidential drugs advice and information.

### **HealthTalkOnline**

[healthtalkonline.org](http://healthtalkonline.org)

A place to share experiences and hear from other people facing health problems.

### **Hearing Voices Network**

[hearing-voices.org](http://hearing-voices.org)

01142 718 210

Information and support for people who hear voices or have other unshared perceptions.

### **The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE)**

[nice.org.uk](http://nice.org.uk)

Evidence-based guidelines on treatments.

**NHS Choices**

[nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk)

Provides information on a wide range of health and social care topics. Also provides an online search tool to find NHS services near you.

**No Panic**

[nopanic.org.uk](https://www.nopanic.org.uk)

helpline: 0844 967 4848 (10am–10pm)

Provides a helpline, step-by-step programmes, and support for people with anxiety disorders.

**Papyrus**

0800 068 4141 (weekdays 10am–10pm, weekends 2pm–10pm and bank holidays 2pm– 10pm)

[papyrus-uk.org](https://www.papyrus-uk.org)

Provides information and support for anyone under 35 who is struggling with suicidal feelings, or anyone concerned about a young person who might be struggling.

**Samaritans**

[samaritans.org](https://www.samaritans.org)

24-hour helpline: 116 123 (freephone)

[jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

Freepost: RSRB-KKBY-CYJK, PO Box 90 90, Stirling FK8 2SA

Emotional support for anyone feeling down, experiencing distress or struggling to cope.

**Sane**

[sane.org.uk](https://www.sane.org.uk)

SANEline: 0300 304 7000 (4.30pm–10.30pm)

Offers emotional support and information to anyone affected by mental health problems.

**Student Minds**

[studentminds.org.uk](https://www.studentminds.org.uk)

Mental health support for students.

**Time to Change**

England: [time-to-change.org.uk](https://www.time-to-change.org.uk)

Wales: [timetochangewales.org.uk](https://www.timetochangewales.org.uk)

020 8215 2356

National campaign to end stigma and discrimination against people with mental health problems in England (Time to Change) and Wales (Time to Change Wales). Run by Mind and Rethink Mental Illness.

**Turning Point**

[turning-point.co.uk](https://www.turning-point.co.uk)

02074 817 600

Provides services for people with drug, alcohol and mental health problems.

**YoungMinds**

[youngminds.org.uk](https://www.youngminds.org.uk)

parent helpline: 0808 802 5544

Information for both parents and young people.