



MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT TEAM

Information for parents and carers

The Mental Health Support Team (MHST) is a service to support children, young people and their families in achieving good mental wellbeing. We work with children and young people who are experiencing:

- Mild to moderate low mood
- Mild to moderate anxiety
- Emotional regulation difficulties

We work with children, young people, their parents/carers and their school to help improve resilience, problem-solve difficulties and develop coping strategies to support mental health.

We offer short term (8-10 sessions), evidence-based guided self-help interventions that are catered to the needs of your child or young person. We might also put your child in touch with other professionals who can offer other support.

How can I get help? Talk to your child's teacher or SENCo about making a MHST referral, or you can use our online referral form yourself. The form can be found at: www.brighterfuturesforchildren.org/MHST

If you have been referred to us, we will contact you to discuss your child's needs and look at what you would like to change.

We offer: one-to-one or group support at your child's school; support over the telephone or online via Microsoft Teams.

Supporting anxiety (Feelings of worry, fear and panic)

It's normal to worry. Anxiety is a normal human response to feeling threatened or in danger, even if that threat or danger is a thought, image or memory.

As well as emotional feelings, your child or young person might:

- experience physical (body) sensations such as a racing heart, breathing fast, sweaty hands, dry mouth and feeling shaky.
- have "what if" or negative thoughts pop into their head.

When these feelings begin to get in the way of doing things they enjoy and other aspects of life it is a sign that they may need some extra support.

MHST can offer (group or 1:1):

- **Worry management** - strategies to help your child or young person relax in anxious situations
- **Graded exposure** - a plan towards facing your child or young person's worries
- **Therapeutic story writing** - a group intervention to build your child or young person's emotional resilience

- **FRIENDS for life** - a group intervention to support your child or young person's wellbeing and positive mental health
- **Support with exam stress**
- **Support for parents** – using the Helping Your Child with Fears and Worries programme.



Supporting low mood/ depression

Feeling sad sometimes is normal, but when that sadness still won't go away after two weeks, your child/young person may need a little extra support.

It can:

- impact on the way they feel, think and behave
- happen as a reaction to difficult experiences such as bullying or family relationship difficulties
- sometimes happen without any obvious reason

What it's like:

- they could feel a range of emotions including sadness, stress, hopelessness, loneliness, anger or emptiness
- they may often have negative thoughts about themselves, other people, the future or life in general
- it can be hard to carry out usual routines and tasks including self-care.

MHST can offer:

- **Behavioural activation** - exploring the things that are important to your child and carefully planning them into their day-to-day routines.

This is usually on a 1:1 basis.

Behaviour management issues

MHST can offer:

- **Engagement work with our outreach worker** – This might be 1:1 or in a group.
- **Support for parents of primary aged pupils** – using the Webster Stratton Incredible Years programme. This is usually on a 1:1 basis.
- **Story links** - support to develop a positive relationship with your child. This is on a 1:1 basis.

MHST also offers workshops for parents and carers to help understand your child or young person's emotions and supporting your child or young person with exam stress.

The MHST operates 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday.

For urgent mental health concerns, where no medical treatment is required, contact **NHS111**, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for people who need help fast but it's not an emergency. If needed, NHS111 will refer to the locality CAMHS team for further support.

Go to A&E if a person is in a life threatening condition needing urgent emergency medical attention eg. they have recently overdosed, ingested harmful liquids or cut themselves significantly, with deep cuts, or burns that are blistering/red or they have lost consciousness

You could also contact:

Samaritans www.samaritans.org or phone: 116123

Childline www.childline.org.uk 0800 1111 or text 'shout' to 85258

www.brighterfuturesforchildren.org

0118 937 3641 | info@brighterfuturesforchildren.org

Brighter Futures for Children, Civic Offices, Bridge Street, Reading RG1 2LU

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