



MAKING
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EVERY
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CONTACT
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COUNT

Mental health and wellbeing

Key messages

- Mental health and wellbeing - this is about how you think and feel and how well you can cope with day to day life. Good mental health means we can realise our full potential and feel safe and secure. It also means we thrive in everyday life.
- Mental wellbeing is a dynamic state and can change from day to day.
- We are all different. What affects someone's mental wellbeing may not affect others in the same way. However, some common things that can affect your mental wellbeing include loss or bereavement, loneliness, relationship problems, issues at work or worries about money.

Other important messages to share:

- There is a close link between mental wellbeing and physical health. If we have good mental health it is easier for us to make healthy lifestyle choices and stick to them.
- Often people use alcohol or smoking as a coping mechanism to deal with their problems and to handle stress. However, in the long term this increases stress and anxiety. Therefore it is important to consider potential underlying causes.

Stress

Stress can take it's toll on your body and immune system. Getting things under control can boost your immune system and help prevent serious health problems such as high blood pressure and heart disease.

We all experience challenges or situations in life that we find difficult, however if we make small changes to our lifestyle this can have a big impact on the way we think, feel and deal with these challenges.

Self help

Five Ways to Wellbeing

These are five simple things that can really help to boost our mental wellbeing and may help to relieve stress:

Connect

Connect with the people around you - friends, family, colleagues and neighbours. Spend time strengthening relationships with people who are close to you and broadening relationships in your community.

Be Active

Find something you enjoy such as dancing, walking, gardening or sports and think about how to fit more of these activities into your daily life. Physical activity is thought to cause chemical changes in the brain, which can help to positively change our mood.

Keep Learning

Learning new skills can be fun and give you a sense of achievement. Why not try cooking a new recipe, start a DIY project or learn to play an instrument?

Give

Even the smallest acts of kindness count, such as helping a neighbour, listening to someone or saying thank you. Larger acts such as volunteering can also improve your mental wellbeing and help you to build new social networks.

Be Mindful

It can be easy to rush through life without stopping to notice much. Paying more attention to the present moment - to your own thoughts and feelings, and to the world around you, can improve your mental wellbeing.

Why is it important?

1 in 4 of us will be affected by a poor mental wellbeing such as depression or anxiety at some point in our lives, so it's important to find ways to cope and seek support when we need it.

Stress can affect how you feel and how you react to people. Learning how to manage stress can help you build and maintain positive relationships.

Reducing your stress levels and feeling more in control boosts your mood and means you are more able to cope with day to day life.

Feeling stressed can affect your sleep pattern and routine and this may make you feel more stressed.

Helpful contacts

Living Life to the Full - provides web-based self help materials and free online courses covering things like low mood and stress. Work out why you feel as you do, how to tackle problems, build confidence, get going again, feel happier, stay calm, tackle upsetting thinking and more www.lttf.com/

Road to Wellbeing - a tool for managing the stress of everyday life. A booklet and audio to help with relaxation methods and breathing techniques www.healthydudley.co.uk/ageing-well/road-to-wellbeing/

One You - provides information about stress, what causes it, how it can impact on your life and how to control it. www.nhs.uk/oneyou/stress

Mind - provides information, support and tips for everyday living for anyone experiencing a mental health problem, or their family and friends www.mind.org.uk/

Mental Health Foundation - provides information on stress including podcasts and videos. www.mentalhealth.org.uk/a-to-z

Health & Safety Executive - provides information on stress at work www.hse.gov.uk/stress/

Local services

If you are struggling to cope you can speak to your GP. Doctors can support you with mental wellbeing and they can refer you to services that can help.

Dudley NHS Talking Therapies for anxiety and depression

www.blackcountryhealthcare.nhs.uk/talking-therapies/dudley-talking-therapies-service

Telephone **0800 953 0404**.

For urgent support you can also contact Black Country 24/7 Urgent Mental Health Helpline. Call **111 (option 2)**, or text **07860 025281**. Alternatively, visit www.blackcountryhealthcare.nhs.uk/contact-us/help-crisis

Self-Management Programme

A free six-week course for adults with a long-term health condition, or adults who have a caring responsibility.

Email: smp@dudleycabx.org Tel: **07976 637404**

Get involved

It can be hard to know what to do when supporting someone with poor mental wellbeing.

www.mind.org.uk/information-support/helping-someone-else/ has tips on how to support people with different types of mental health conditions, including stress, depression and loneliness.



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