

The Good Mental Health Handbook

A guide for parents and carers



Being the parent/carer of a child who is struggling with their mental health can be utterly heart-breaking and extremely challenging. No one likes to see someone they love in so much pain.

The impact can be far reaching, effecting family dynamics, our ability to work, changing relationships with friends and impacting our own mental and physical wellbeing.

Our worlds can become very small as we focus our time and energy on helping our child, fighting for the right support, and trying to find any strategies or helpful advice we can.

Frustratingly, there is not one answer or solution. Our children and our families are all individual, needing individual approaches and intervention.

The Good Mental Health Handbook has been developed by Hampshire CAMHS and parents/carers. Within its pages it contains information, short videos, and workshops to support our children's mental health challenges.

YOU CAN ACCESS THE ENTIRE HANDBOOK ON OUR SCHOOL WEBSITE

The handbook also contains information on parental wellbeing. Remember the airplane analogy: *In an emergency, we are told to put our own mask on first, so that we are able to help others.*

It can feel like yet another 'thing' we must do and finding the time or energy to care for ourselves can feel impossible. However, even learning how to breathe in tricky moments helps to bring control. Managing our own emotional regulation not only helps us to cope but our children also begin to recognise how effective such strategies can be.

The guide gives instant access to information, short videos and workshops. Parents and Carers want strategies, ideas, suggestions, helpful hints, top tips, a guide or anything to try to help their child—a toolkit of information that they can look through when they have the time and energy.

The Good Mental Health Handbook is that toolkit.

<https://www.marchwood-jun.hants.sch.uk/page/?title=Support&pid=76>



MJS

Supporting Families

TICS AND TOURETTES SYNDROME

Tics and Tourettes Syndrome

Tics are involuntary repetitive sounds or movements. Tics can be 'simple', involving one movement or sound or they can be 'complex' which involve various movements and or sounds.

Examples of simple tics

- Sudden movements of body parts such as moving the head.
- Blinking and winking.
- Facial twitches.
- Touching one's face repeatedly.
- Coughing.
- Sniffing.
- Clearing one's throat.
- Licking/biting lips.
- Grunting/screeching/making unusual sounds.

Examples of complex tics

- Performing things in a certain order or manner.
- A combination of simple tics.
- Saying words or phrases (particularly out of context).

Tics can be common in childhood and will quite often improve without any intervention.

Tics can both lead to and be exacerbated by stress or anxiety. Those who experience tics may also feel embarrassed and shame.

Tourette's Syndrome is diagnosed when a person has multiple tics which have lasted for longer than a year and impact on their wellbeing or functioning.

Things that might help a child or your person who experiences tics

- It's important to remember that often tics are involuntary (they are not doing it on purpose) so getting cross or frustrated and telling them to stop will only add to their anxiety, frustration and shame. Try to be compassionate and understanding.
- Finding ways to manage anxiety and stress can be very helpful.
- Share concerns with your child's school/college and identify whether additional pastoral support is available.
- Seek advice, guidance and support from YoungMinds Parent Helpline: **0808 802 5544**
- PDF worksheet on tic attacks and how to cope with them: [tourettes-action.org.uk/storage/downloads/1615388654_Factsheet---Tic-Attacks.pdf](https://www.tourettes-action.org.uk/storage/downloads/1615388654_Factsheet---Tic-Attacks.pdf) short link: bit.ly/3EEEGVk
- More information and advice is available from Great Ormond Street Hospital: [gosh.nhs.uk/conditions-and-treatments/conditions-we-treat/tourette-syndrome/](https://www.gosh.nhs.uk/conditions-and-treatments/conditions-we-treat/tourette-syndrome/) short link: bit.ly/3CTuA8I
- More information and advice is available from Tourette's Action: [Tourettes-Action.org.uk](https://www.Tourettes-Action.org.uk)

A coping strategy film on how to make your own self-soothe box: bit.ly/2H6uDU1



A coping strategy film on how to perform the coping strategy of progressive muscle relaxation: bit.ly/3fcoINN



Leaves on a Stream - a video on mindfulness: bit.ly/44wXoxU



A short film listing an A-Z of suggested coping strategies to try: bit.ly/3lBwUp7



Coping strategy film on breathing techniques: bit.ly/3UyD3Vk



A workshop on supporting a young person with anxiety: bit.ly/3EiWc6v



Teenage Turmoil - a workshop for parents to better understand why the teenage years are so challenging: bit.ly/3Bzt1KD



A workshop on getting good sleep: bit.ly/45vAmc9



Passing Clouds - a guided mindfulness video: bit.ly/3R2EdsB



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MJS Supporting Families SLEEP

Sleep

Lots of children and young people find getting to sleep, staying asleep or waking up a real problem. Disrupted, broken or insufficient sleep can really impact on people's mood and ability to cope with daily life.

Sleep is important for growth and development. Teenagers aged 13-18 years should regularly sleep 8-11 hours per 24 hours.

Factors that impact on quality and amount of sleep

- The sleep environment may be too noisy, messy, too hot or too cold.
- The bed being uncomfortable.
- Not having a regular sleep routine.
- Not getting enough physical exercise during the day.
- Eating too late in the evening- and finding it hard to get off to sleep because of feeling full, uncomfortable or having provided your body with a boost of energy (particularly if sugary food has been eaten).
- Going to bed hungry and waking up too early because of hunger.
- Drinks containing caffeine, such as tea, coffee and energy drinks.
- Illness, pain, or a high temperature.
- Feeling worried or low in mood.
- Overthinking and having a busy brain.
- Medications that affect sleep.
- Drug and alcohol misuse.
- Engaging in stimulating activity such as using a phone, watching TV or playing games on a console immediately before bed.

What can help a child or young people get good quality and enough sleep

- Create a calming and peaceful sleeping environment. Rooms that are dark and cool are best for sleep.
- Aim to have a regular bedtime routine and sleep pattern, this includes going to bed and getting up at the same time every day.
- If at all possible, avoid using the bed for studying, reading or listening to music. Ideally, the bed space should only be used for sleeping.
- Avoid napping during the day.
- Avoid drinking caffeinated drinks (tea, coffee, energy drinks) particularly before bedtime.
- Avoid drinking too much before bed and go to the toilet as part of a night time routine.
- Avoid engaging in highly stimulating activities before bedtime such as using a phone, watching TV or playing games on a console.
- Avoid exercising right before bedtime.
- Exercise during the day.
- Get organised for the day ahead so this reduces any worry or thinking about what needs to be done.
- Encourage your child to talk to someone they trust about anything that's bothering them that might be keeping them awake.

Hampshire CAMHS sleep help and guidance:
bit.ly/3etqTMZ



The Sleep Council:
sleepcouncil.org.uk



The Sleep Foundation:
bit.ly/3etr8rn



A coping strategy film on breathing techniques:
bit.ly/3UyD3Vk



A workshop on getting good sleep:
bit.ly/45vAmc9



A coping strategy film on how to perform the coping strategy of progressive muscle relaxation: bit.ly/3fcoINN



The Sleep Charity:
thesleepcharity.org.uk

