

Hands Up 4 Healthy Minds toolkit:

Understanding young people's mental health

Young people's emotional health is just as important as their physical health, but information and support for mental wellbeing can be harder to come by. Here are some key facts about mental ill health in those under the age of 24.

Mental health issues, such as depression, anxiety and eating disorders, are common and often start at a young age.

- 10% of children and young people (aged 5-16 years) have a clinically diagnosable mental health issue
- 50% of mental health issues are established by age 14 and 75% by age 24
- Suicide is the most common cause of death for people aged 5-19
- 27% of students report having a mental health issue. Nearly half say these issues prevent them from completing some daily tasks.
- 80% of young people say exam pressure has a big impact on their mental health

But...

- 25% of young people with a diagnosable mental health issue get access to the treatment and care they need.
- 10 years is the average delay between a young person first showing symptoms of mental ill health and getting help.

Signs to look out for

- Changes in appetite
- Alcohol and/or drug misuse
- Sleep problems, tired all the time
- Unexplained aches, pains or injuries
- Silent, withdrawn or distracted
- Incoherent speech

- Unable to concentrate, memory loss
- Tearful
- Uncooperative
- Drop in academic performance
- Erratic timekeeping
- Poor attendance
- Disruptive or aggressive behaviour
- Excessive risk-taking
- Lack of personal hygiene
- Overworking

Any of these can be signs that suggest a young person may need support with their mental health. [Starting a conversation](#) with them can be the first step on that journey to support. Visit mhfaengland.org for more information

For tips on young people's mental health find us on social media. Search 'MHFA England' on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#) or [YouTube](#).