

**ARE YOU WONDERING OR
CONCERNED ABOUT
A YOUNG PERSON'S
MENTAL AND
EMOTIONAL
WELLBEING?**

**RIGHT
HERE**

**A SUPPORT GUIDE FOR
PARENTS AND CARERS
IN BRIGHTON AND HOVE**

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This guide was designed by young volunteers aged 16-25 from the **Right Here Brighton and Hove** project, but it was informed by **local parents and carers** who gave their time to talk to us about their experiences of supporting their children through mental and emotional challenges.

You will also find **quotes and tips** from young people we spoke to - we felt it was important we included both sides of the parent-young person relationship.

We've included a pull-out section in the middle pages, which we encourage you to give to a young person who may benefit.

Many of the parents and carers we met spoke of feeling **isolated**, **embarrassed** and **ashamed** by the challenges they were facing. They also reported that when they had taken the step to seek professional help, they had sometimes come up against barriers in the form of not being taken seriously, being dealt with

insensitively and being bounced between services.

So, this guide is a way of drawing all those experiences together, positive and negative, and helping other parents and carers who are trying to support young people across our city.

Right Here Brighton and Hove is a youth-led award-winning project promoting the **emotional and mental wellbeing** of young people aged 16 to 25.

We made this guide because we identified that there was a lack of support for parents whose children had experienced mental health issues. Even though our project is run by 16-25 year olds, we decided that the guide should be for parents and carers of children who are younger than 16. In fact, we hope it will be useful to **any** parents and carers in the city.



COMMUNICATION



SOME THINGS TO TRY:

- Listen, *really listen*, with your full attention.
- Understand that what they're feeling is acceptable, even if it feels bad to them at that time.
- Accept your child for who they are and how they think. (Remember that teens think and perceive things differently to adults - and that's scientifically proven!)
- Give them opportunities to speak, but acknowledge they might not want to until they feel ready.
- Repeat back their words to show understanding. For example "Am I right in hearing that you're angry at John because he did XYZ?"
- Give them a choice about the words you use. For example, if they have a diagnosis of bipolar, say "what do you want me to call it?"
- Be honest with them about how *you* are feeling.

Very little can happen without communication. These lists were compiled from numerous conversations with parents, carers and young people in Brighton and Hove.

We know that a lot of this is easier said than done, especially at times when emotions or tempers are high, but if you try to be mindful of these ideas, they might just help.

...AND TRY TO AVOID:

- Patronising your child or belittling what they say.
- Judging them, no matter what they say.
- Bombarding with questions, a two-way chat is much better.
- Using a tone (or volume) that could be perceived as aggressive.
- Reacting in a way that causes your child to shut down.
- Interrupting, at all costs: instead, give them time to say what they need to say.
- Dismissing what they're feeling, for example "You shouldn't feel / say that."



STARTING A CONVERSATION

In our focus groups, we asked parents about their experiences of starting conversations with their children. They gave us some interesting (and inventive) techniques. These ideas won't work for everyone but one or two might work for you and your child.

Being **in a car together** can help initiate conversation, but be aware that emotions can distract you from your driving, and you may have to pull over.

Try chatting over a **shared, calming or creative activity** like cooking, walking, decorating a room, watching a film, or something that uses your hands like drawing or painting.

Ask them to **play music** that expresses how they feel. Make playlists together that help them feel better or reflect their feelings.

Be **active** yourself (see page 26) and promote activity to them, to build self-esteem and to have some common ground.

Help them build on an **interest** they have, bearing in mind this could well be different to what they used to love. And be creative: if they like animals for example, help them find out if they could walk your neighbours' dogs or volunteer at a local animal shelter.

A **light touch** on their arm or shoulder can say a lot to them, or, if they react well to physical touch, give them a **hug**.

Try **chatting online** using facebook or instant chat, even between rooms in the same house - it might be a way of communicating they're more familiar and comfortable with.

Bring out an old **photo album**.

WHAT DO YOUNG PEOPLE SAY?

Be really **aware** if we are asking for help: we might not spell it out.

Respect our wishes: if we want to be left alone, please leave us alone.

Do things with us that we love to do and go to places we love to go. If you don't know what these are, **ask us**.

Knowing there is just someone there to talk to is **reassuring**.

My mum asked if I'd prefer to write it in a letter or draw it out rather than talk. This **made me feel like she really cared** about what I was going through, as she seemed determined to help me.



WHAT TO SAY (AND WHAT NOT TO SAY)

Communication with your child is vital, which makes the way you word things crucial so they don't feel threatened, judged, or isolated from you. Here are some phrases that parents have told us were helpful in getting their children to open up to them, and some of our own ideas too.

"What would be helpful for you?"

"If you don't want to talk to me, let's find somebody you feel happy to chat to."

"How can I support you?"

"What do you need me to understand?"

"What can I do to help you?"

"I'm here to listen, when you feel ready to talk."

"I understand you're feeling [use their words here.] It must be tough for you."

"I love you, no matter what."

And if you don't know what to say or do, just acknowledge that out loud. Your child is likely to appreciate your honesty, and the fact that you're a human being, accepting your limits.

We love this comic strip, it really says it all:



© www.etsy.com/shop/Moosekleenex

WHAT DO YOUNG PEOPLE SAY?

Whatever you do, **please don't ever say** "calm down", "chill out" or "cheer up."

Please don't tell us that we're "going through a phase". This isn't a phase; we need your **help and support**.

Try not to **patronise** us as we generally don't respond well to that and it could stop us from telling you how we feel in the future.

Try not to **shout**, or question us constantly.

Understand that mental health issues often go hand in hand with **fatigue**, and so we may not want to do the activities that we once enjoyed, or see people very often.

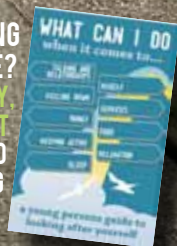
Be patient with us. It's daunting telling people how you really feel.



WHAT DO YOUNG PEOPLE SAY?

My parents offered to look into therapy with me. This helped me feel less alone and made me feel that they actively wanted to be a part of my healing process.

HAVE YOU SEEN OUR YOUNG PERSON'S WELLBEING GUIDE?
FIND ONE AT YOUR GP SURGERY, SCHOOL, OR DOWNLOAD IT AT WWW.RIGHT-HERE-BRIGHTONANDHOVE.ORG.UK/WELLBEING



SUPPORT FOR YOUR CHILD

We've included pull-out pages for young people overleaf, including lots of places your child can find support in Brighton and Hove and online, but here are some things you should know, as parents and carers, about what is out there for them.

First, browse **WHERE TO GO FOR** which contains over 100 support services for young people in Brighton and Hove: www.wheretogofor.co.uk

Your child's **GP** should be able to help. Before their appointment, suggest they visit www.docready.org and watch the short film at www.howcanifilm.com so they are prepared and know their rights.

Until they're 18, your child can ask to be referred to **CAMHS** (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services), or the GP may decide to refer them. Expect at least a month before a counsellor or psychiatrist calls them, and they might want to meet different CAMHS professionals until they find one they feel comfortable working with. Adult Mental Health Services are for people aged 18 and over.

Mental health workers known as **TAPAs** (Teen to Adult Personal Advisors) offer wellbeing advice and support to 14-25 year olds, including those who are inbetween CAMHS and Adult Mental Health Services. One TAPA works specifically with LGTBU young people and another with BME young people. Check our glossary on page 28 if you're unsure about these terms. Find full details at www.ow.ly/sNzUe

The Council's **EARLY HELP TEAM** supports 13-19 year olds (25 with special educational needs) through their *Youth Service*, *Youth Employability Service*, *Integrated Team for Families* and *Youth Offending Service*. Email youth@brighton-hove.gov.uk for more information.

Continued overleaf...

PULL-OUT
SECTION FOR
YOUNG PEOPLE

ADVOCACY is available for young people (or adults) with emotional and mental health issues. Advocates listen, discuss your rights and choices, and help you put your point of view to professionals. Contact Mind on **01273 666950**.

E-MOTION provides **FREE** online counselling for anyone aged 13-25 in Brighton and Hove. www.e-motionbh.org.uk

FIND GET GIVE is a new online guide to young people's mental health support services (launching Spring 2014!) www.findgetgive.com

YOUTH CLUBS AND PROJECTS are dotted all around the city. They offer positive activities, support, and emotional and sexual health advice for young people, and some offer free counselling. All of these are listed in the pull-out section for young people.

- **YOUNG PEOPLE'S CENTRE (YPC)**
01273 887886 / 69 Ship St, BN1 1AE / ypc.ebabel.org.uk (no www!)
- **YOUTH ADVICE CENTRE (YAC)**
01273 828828 / Ovest House, 58 West Street, BN1 2RA
Email youthadvicecentre@sussexcentralymca.org.uk
- **COMMUNITY COUNSELLING @ DIALOGUE**
07739 893707 / 65 Blatchington Road, Hove, BN3 3YJ
Email community.counselling@sussexcentralymca.org.uk
www.dialoguecentre.org.uk
- **YOUTH COLLECTIVE CLUBS**
www.brightonyouthcentre.org.uk (*Central Brighton*)
www.crewclub.co.uk (*Whitehawk*)
www.deansyouthproject.org (*Woodingdean and Rottingdean*)
www.hkproject.org.uk (*Hangleton & Knoll*)
www.tarnerland.org.uk (*Kemptown & Hanover*)
Find full details at www.wheretogofor.co.uk/youth-collective

THE NEXT 4 PAGES ARE A PULL-OUT SECTION:
PLEASE GIVE THESE PAGES TO A YOUNG PERSON
YOU KNOW WHO MIGHT BENEFIT

HOW TO GET YOUR PARENTS/CARERS TO COMMUNICATE BETTER WITH YOU

These pages are from a mini-booklet written by volunteers aged 16-25 living in Brighton and Hove.

We are trying to help parents and carers to support their children and young people more, but conversations work much better if they are two-way. We've given parents loads of tips to improve *their* communication in the rest of the booklet, but these are some ideas for you. We hope they help.

Any comments or to get involved, email info@right-here-brightonandhove.org.uk or tweet us [@RightHereBH](https://twitter.com/RightHereBH)

A FEW KEY TIPS:

- If you want to be heard, it sounds strange but try to *speak softly*. Most people find it harder to hear - or listen - if you shout.
- If you find it hard talking about how you're feeling, it could help to learn some new words (www.right-here-brightonandhove.org.uk/vocab) or build a checklist at www.docready.org
- Think about the phrases you use: we've included some suggestions on the next page.
- If talking feels too awkward right now, maybe write a letter to your parent/carer instead, or to someone who you feel could support you.

Here are some things we've found get a better response from our parents, and seem to help them to understand us a bit better:

INSTEAD OF...	TRY SAYING...
I can't be bothered	I don't have the energy
You don't understand	It feels like you're not understanding me right now
Leave me alone	I need some space
You never listen to me	Please listen to me / I need you to listen to me / This is important to me
Saying nothing	I don't want to talk right now

STARTING 'THAT' CONVERSATION

If you can regularly tick one or more of these boxes, we really suggest you talk to someone: a parent, carer or other relative, a friend, teacher, youth worker, doctor... really it can be anyone at all.

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> feeling tearful | <input type="checkbox"/> avoiding being with other people | <input type="checkbox"/> mood swings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> difficulty concentrating | <input type="checkbox"/> feeling overtired | <input type="checkbox"/> overeating or not eating |
| <input type="checkbox"/> feeling agitated or panicky | <input type="checkbox"/> using alcohol or drugs to cope with your feelings | <input type="checkbox"/> self-harming |
| <input type="checkbox"/> negative thoughts | | <input type="checkbox"/> suicidal thoughts |

Starting is often the hardest bit. You could try saying "I'm finding (...) really hard right now." or "Can we have a chat about (...)" or "If you've got a moment I could really do with a chat."

And check out www.docready.org: it was designed by young people in Brighton and Hove to help prepare you to talk to your doctor, but it could be useful to start any conversation about how you're feeling.

NEED SOME SUPPORT?



- www.wheretogofor.co.uk is a map of Brighton and Hove containing **over 100 places** you'll find help.
- www.e-motionbh.org.uk provides FREE online counselling for 13-25 year olds in Brighton and Hove.
- www.findgetgive.com is a brand new online guide to young people's mental health support services (launching Spring 2014!)
- www.time-to-change.org.uk/youngpeople is a great **no-nonsense website** where you'll find loads of support (they're also at www.facebook.com/timetochange)
- www.mindfull.org provides support, information and advice for 11-17 year olds about mental health and emotional wellbeing, helping you overcome life's ups and downs and feel confident and happy about who you are.
- www.youngminds.org.uk is the voice of young people and you'll find lots of information, advice and true stories.

THINGS TO DO & FINDING WORK

There are **free / cheap activities** going on for young people:

www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/activeforlife
www.right-here-brightonandhove.org.uk/activities
www.facebook.com/brightonandhoveyouth

For help with jobs, apprenticeships, benefits and interview skills:
www.facebook.com/yesbrightonhove or call **01273 294247**

IF YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT...

- ...alcohol or substance misuse: www.ruokservice.co.uk
- ...being a young carer: www.thecarerscentre.org
- ...your gender or sexuality: www.allsortsyouth.org.uk
- ...refugee / asylum seeker issues: www.facebook.com/rasp.brighton
- ...the black and minority ethnic project: www.bmeypp.org.uk
- ...how you're feeling: **anywhere above or on the next page...**

PULL-OUT
SECTION FOR
YOUNG PEOPLE

PLACES YOU CAN TALK TO SOMEONE

There might be someone you feel you can talk to at home or where you study. If not, there are lots of places you will find a listening ear. You don't have to go through anything on your own, you can take a friend or family member with you to any of these places.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S CENTRE (YPC)

01273 887886
69 Ship St, BN1 1AE
ypc.ebabel.org.uk (no www!)

YOUTH ADVICE CENTRE (YAC)

01273 828828 / Ovest House,
58 West Street, BN1 2RA
Email youthadvicecentre@
sussexcentralymca.org.uk

YOUTH COLLECTIVE CLUBS

There are youth clubs and projects all around the city, all offering positive activities, support, and emotional and sexual health advice.

- www.brightonyouthcentre.org.uk (Central Brighton)
- www.crewclub.co.uk (Whitehawk)
- www.deansyouthproject.org (Woodingdean and Rottingdean)
- www.hkproject.org.uk (Hangleton & Knoll)
- www.tarnerland.org.uk (Kempton & Hanover)

Find more details at www.wheretogofor.co.uk/youth-collective

You can also talk to your **doctor** about your **mental health**, not just about physical health.

They might want to refer you to talk to someone from **CAMHS** (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) or you can ask them to refer you. **You have a choice** about your treatment, so ask questions.

Before your appointment, watch the film at www.howcanifilm.com for your rights, and www.docready.org to help you prepare what to say.

DOCREADY

COMMUNITY COUNSELLING @DIALOGUE

07739 893707
65 Blatchington Rd, Hove, BN3 3YJ
Email community.counselling@
sussexcentralymca.org.uk

TAPAS (Teen to Adult Personal Advisors)

These advisors support 14-25 year olds on emotional issues and more. Full details at www.ow.ly/sNzUe



SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES

There is a lot of local support but it can be difficult to know where to start. On these pages we list the services other local parents and carers have told us they found useful: some offer training and some are specific counselling services, but at all of them you'll find support from other parents and the opportunity to share ideas and gain confidence.

LOCAL SUPPORT

PARENT SUPPORT GROUPS

Two groups meet regularly: Mental Health Matters (email rebeccaljenner@aol.co.uk) and another at St Richards at Egmont Road in Hove (email catherine.howe@hkproject.org.uk)

If your child has ADHD, autism or aspergers, or you have adopted a child, email info@brightontherapycentre.org.uk about groups.

Research has shown that sexual orientation and gender identity can have implications for emotional and mental health in young people; Allsorts runs a group specifically for parents/carers of LGBTU young people: email elliotklimek@allsortsyouth.org.uk

AMAZE offers information, support, advice (eg on benefits) and the Compass Card for parents/carers of children with disabilities or special needs. **01273 772289** or www.amazebrighton.org.uk

BREAK 4 CHANGE is a group work programme to support families where a young person is abusive or violent towards their parent or carer, and the young person is aged 13-16. Contact Sara Fisher (Integrated Team for Families) on **01273 290477**

THE CARERS CENTRE offers 1:1 support, groups and activities for both young and adult carers. You can also find out about the Carers Card for discounts on health and wellbeing activities. **01273 746222** or www.thecarerscentre.org

Continued overleaf...

SUPPORT AND SIGNPOSTING

RISE supports women, children, young people and LGBTU people affected by domestic abuse. **01273 622822** or www.riseuk.org.uk

SAFETY NET supports families of children under 16 and promotes safety for children. **01273 419725** or www.safety-net.org.uk

SPIN offers support for all local single parents. **07948 971 559** email spin@live.co.uk or visit www.spinbrighton.org

TRIPLE P is the Positive Parenting Programme, free through *Amaze* and *Safety Net* and the Council on **01273 294471**

WISE (What Is Sexual Exploitation?) is there if you're worried that your child is in an inappropriate relationship with an adult **01273 222550** or email wise@sussexcentralymca.org.uk

YOUNG OASIS provides creative therapy, support groups and more for families, children and young people affected by alcohol and drug problems. **01273 696970** or www.oasisproject.org.uk

RECOMMENDED READING

- Mental Health and the Resilient Therapy Toolkit (free to download!) by young people for parents: visit www.boingboing.org.uk, 'Getting hold of our stuff' and scroll down to find it
- The Artist's Way For Parents: Raising Creative Children *by Julia Cameron and Emma Lively*
- Get Out of My Life But First Take Me and Alex Into Town *by Tony Wolf and Suzanne Franks*
- Parenting Without Punishment *by Emily Slinguff*

PAID SUPPORT

THE DIALOGUE CENTRE provides counselling for families and young people. **01273 320500** or visit www.dialoguecentre.org.uk

WILD NATURE was described by one parent as "the camp which saved my son's soul": www.wildnature.org.uk

ONLINE SUPPORT

 = www.facebook.com

LOCAL PARENT SUPPORT are at /MentalHealthMattersCYPPC and /groups/campaignforbettermentalhealthservices

YOUNGMINDS has an excellent Parents Support Guide and provides a helpline **0808 802 5544** (Mon-Fri 9.30am-4pm) which parents told us is very supportive. www.youngminds.org.uk/for_parents or /youngmindsuk

TIME TO CHANGE is the UK's biggest programme to challenge mental health stigma and discrimination, and does loads of good with young people. www.time-to-change.org.uk or /timetochange

FAMILY LIVES is a national charity providing help 24/7 in all aspects of family life. www.familylives.org.uk or /familylives

PEACEFUL PARENT includes a thoughtful, understanding newsletter you can sign up for. www.peacefulparent.com or /TheWayOfThePeacefulParent

TED TALKS are great for inspiration. www.ted.com or /TED

PARENTS' TIP:
IT CAN BE A GOOD
IDEA TO CLEAR
YOUR INTERNET
HISTORY!



WHAT HAVE I LEARNT FROM MY TEENAGE SON?

ONE MOTHER'S VOICE

“The main thing he has taught me is that as parents today, we simply cannot apply the parenting we experienced. Kids today are more informed, more savvy, they have a voice. Our job is to listen to that voice. If we don't, their voices either get louder, or disappear.

Just think: “What can I learn here? What is my child trying to communicate to me?”

No matter how strong their anger or words, they are trying to communicate difficult feelings. Our job is to decipher them. And validate them. Then help them and guide them to a more peaceful inner self.

Acceptance is key: acceptance of our child exactly as they are, and of our own limits.

The lessons from my 15 year old son in the last eight months have been terrifying, bewildering and a true awakening. I thank him for that.”



EATING DISORDERS

It can be hard to notice an eating disorder as symptoms are often quite subtle but if you have noticed a change in your child's eating habits or are even slightly concerned, you can use these services for advice:

BEAT www.b-eat.org.uk

Parent hotline: 0845 634 1414 or help@b-eat.co.uk

Youth hotline: 0845 634 7650 or fyp@b-eat.co.uk

To Be Honest (Anorexia, Bulimia Care) www.tobehonest.org.uk

Hotline 03000 11 12 13 or email mail@anorexiabulimiare.org.uk

Men Get Eating Disorders Too www.mengetedstoo.co.uk

Email sam@mengetedstoo.co.uk

SELF HARM

It can be really difficult for someone to open up and talk about if they are self-harming. The best thing is not to panic. You could try to find out why they self-harm (it's important to focus on the reasons and not the injuries) and listen to them. Be prepared that the young person may not understand why they self harm, and may not be able to answer this question. Here are some reliable sites where you'll find support and advice:

Right Here self harm support guide: www.right-here-brightonandhove.org.uk/selfharm

Two great websites: www.nshn.co.uk *and* www.lifesigns.org.uk

Royal College of Psychiatrists factsheet: www.rcpsych.ac.uk/healthadvice/parentsandyouthinfo/parentscarers/self-harm.aspx

Do's & Don'ts: www.adolescentselfinjuryfoundation.com/page7

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

It's not uncommon for teenagers to experiment with substances, but if you feel like your child is losing control, here are some numbers and websites to give both of you some support:

Patched (0800 085 4450) and **Oasis** (01273 696970) offer advice and support to families and young people affected by drug or alcohol problems.

For young people, **RU-OK** at www.ruokservice.co.uk and **CRI** at www.cri.org.uk offer drop-in appointments across Brighton and Hove and non-judgemental support.

Your children (and you) can find honest information about drugs and alcohol at **Talk To Frank:** www.talktofrank.com or via text, email, online messenger and a free hotline 0300 123 6600.

SEXUAL HEALTH

Young people can feel embarrassed or shy talking about sex, but if you are comfortable, they are more likely to also feel that way, and to come to you with their questions. Giving reassurance and honest answers, and signposting to places they can get support with their sexual health can help.

Morley Street CASH Service Contraception and Sexual Health 01273 242091 to book an appointment or call 07827 081702 between 12 and 2pm to speak to a nurse for advice.

Claude Nicol Centre for walk-in sexual health check ups 01273 664721 www.brightonsexualhealth.com

SWISH provides information about sex, sexual health, and relationships for people in Brighton & Hove www.swish.org.uk

Brook offers free and confidential sexual health info for under 25s. Call 0808 802 1234 or visit www.brook.org.uk

SUICIDAL THOUGHTS

At times, your child might experience dark or suicidal thoughts, which could be very scary for them especially if they have no one to talk to about them. As a parent or carer, you might not notice any signs that they're feeling this way - even if you do, it could be difficult to talk about, and they may not even want to talk to you about it.

If you do suspect your child is having suicidal thoughts, reading this may help you understand what they might be experiencing: www.metanoia.org/suicide. It's more important than ever to *listen without judging or advising*, and to gently reassure them you are there and that you love them. Acknowledge their feelings and signpost them to support as soon as possible. You'll find support here:

- **Your family GP** can help, and your child can take a friend (or you) with them if they want to. Encourage them to go urgently, and to use www.docready.org before they go.
- **Grassroots Suicide Prevention** is a Brighton and Hove project doing lots of good work in this area. Their excellent resource page is: www.prevent-suicide.org.uk/find_help.html
- **Papyrus** offers confidential suicide prevention advice for young people. Visit www.papyrus-uk.org or call their HOPELineUK 0800 068 4141, text 07786 209697 or email pat@papyrus-uk.org
- **Samaritans** are there 24/7 for anonymous confidential support for *anyone* going through a crisis. Call 01273 772277, text 07725 90 90 90 or email jo@samaritans.org
- **SOS (Survivors of Suicide)** group is for anyone who has experienced suicidal thoughts or attempted suicide, or are the family or carer of someone going through this. Call 01273 709060 visit www.rethink.org or email sosmentos@rethink.org

FOR URGENT MEDICAL ATTENTION go with your child to **A&E** or call **999** for an ambulance. And keep listening to how they're feeling, without question or judgement.



LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF

You don't need us to tell you how important it is for you to take (or make) time to look after yourself: keeping yourself emotionally strong means you'll be in a better place to support children or young people in your care.

There are some formal ways (such as courses available at www.selfmanagementuk.org or www.amazebrighton.org.uk) but the parents we spoke to came up with some other ideas:

IT'S GOOD TO TALK

Talk as openly and as often as possible to other parents and friends who **really understand or are in similar situations** (face-to-face or on online forums - see pages 18-19 for ideas). This will help reduce isolation and the potential co-dependency between you and your child.

It can be hard to talk to old friends who don't understand - you may feel you have to justify your child or feel judged as a parent.

We all need extra help sometimes - **don't be afraid to ask.**

Continued overleaf...

STAY ACTIVE

Listen to music (great for releasing emotions and calming nerves)

Take classes or practice alone or with a friend: yoga, pilates, meditation or mindfulness... and singing!

Go jogging, walk the dog, and dance (out or in the kitchen!)

Check out the free or low cost activities for people of all ages at

www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/activeforlife

BACK TO BASICS

Eat healthily - easier said than done, but worth a bit of thought as food really does affect mood.

Carry on working, if you want to.

Focus on one positive thing each day, however small.

Have a long hot soak in a bubble bath.

Get enough sleep - and allow yourself to have a lie-in.

Reduce your own stress by giving your child a choice about their daily life (within reason) for example: *"How would you like me to wake you up in the morning?"*

LET IT GO

You're **only human** - and your child needs a human response. Be yourself, and no one else.

You can't get it right all the time - **everyone makes mistakes**, so feel your way and know your limits.

It's ok to lose your temper, but if you do, just **apologise**: this lets your child know it's ok to make mistakes too.

Try not to judge yourself if things don't go the way you plan them.

Pick your battles - sometimes the best thing is to walk away.

**DON'T BLAME
YOUR CHILD...
OR YOURSELF.**

BE PREPARED

- Even your family and closest friends may not understand. Excuse their ignorance, and avoid holding grudges. Accept that what some people consider as helpful ("Why don't you...?" "You should...") may sound judgemental to you. That's nobody's fault. Ask them to listen or hug you instead, and find someone who *does* understand - there are lots of people who do.
- Learning your child's triggers can prepare you for more difficult times - and help you anticipate when those might be.
- You might come across the attitude (from professionals, friends or acquaintances) that your child's behaviour is your fault. If you're feeling like this, you are not alone. Your child's behaviour is not your responsibility.
- Your child may well become angry or aggressive. It may be hard but try not to take their insults personally.
- Consider the idea of seeking counselling yourself, as your child's behaviour may trigger old traumas from your own past, and affect the way you cope with life - and with your child. The Dialogue Centre (01273 320500) is a good place to start.
- Accept that it's likely that you may not be the best person to help your child, and your role could be more to signpost. Often parents are so involved that their judgement can become clouded. You may need to find an alternative role model or someone else they can talk to.
- Respect that everyone has their own timescale for processing and recovery. Some things take time and you might need to find new levels of patience.



GLOSSARY

There's a lot of jargon around these days. Here we help to clear up the meaning of some words you might come across in this guide, or as you go on a journey with your child.

ADD (INCLUDING ADHD): behavioural symptoms that include hyperactivity and impulsiveness.

ANOREXIA: an eating disorder characterized by immoderate food restriction and irrational fear of gaining weight, as well as a distorted body self-perception.

ANXIETY DISORDERS: range from feelings of uneasiness to immobilising bouts of terror, including panic attacks. If a person cannot shake their worries, or if the feelings are affecting their everyday activities, talking to someone would be the first step.

BIPOLAR DISORDER: aka manic depression, often with extreme mood swings with recurrent episodes of depression and mania (being high or up).

BME: Black and Minority Ethnic.

CAMHS: Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.

CBT: Cognitive Behaviour Therapy, a talking therapy that can help someone manage problems by altering the way they think and therefore behave.

COUNSELLOR: someone who provides advice and support to another person or persons.

DEPRESSION: a mood disorder characterized by intense feelings of sadness that persist beyond a few weeks. It is associated with many physical symptoms such as disturbance of sleep, appetite, and concentration. Often associated with anxiety.

CPN: Community Practice Nurse.

DUAL DIAGNOSIS: a term used to describe patients with both mental health issues and substance misuse

EMDR: Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing, a therapy to try and reduce your reaction to memories and triggers, often related to a traumatic event.

HEALTHWATCH: the best way to give your feedback about any health service you have received: www.healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk

LGBTU: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Unsure.

OCD: Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, which can cause severe anxiety in those affected.

PANIC ATTACK: a period of intense fear or apprehension that can happen suddenly and last minutes or hours.

PERSONALITY DISORDERS: a group of conditions characterised by an inability to get on with other people and learn from experience. People with a personality disorder may find that their beliefs and attitudes are different from those of most other people. Others may find their behaviour unusual, unexpected or perhaps offensive.

PRIMARY CARE: health service provided by your GP (General Practitioner).

PSYCHIATRIST: someone who diagnoses mental health problems and prescribes medication.

PSYCHOLOGIST: someone who deals with the way the mind works and helps people to cope more effectively with their mental health issues.

PSYCHOSIS: a mental health issue that may stop a person from telling the difference between reality and their imagination.

PTSD: Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, a type of anxiety caused by stressful, frightening or distressing event or events.

RESILIENCE: the ability to recover quickly from difficulties or problems.

SCHIZOPHRENIA: a disorder that can make people experience things that may not be real, there are many different types of schizophrenia and one person's experiences may be different from others.

SELF HARM: a way in which someone might express distress or choose to communicate. There are many different forms, for example scratching, cutting or hitting.

SUICIDAL THOUGHTS: a thought about ending your own life, possibly including making plans.

SECONDARY CARE: medical care provided by a specialist or facility, usually through a referral from a GP.

STIGMA: judging something negatively before you fully understand it.

WELLBEING: someone's mental state, how they feel and how well they can cope day to day. Our wellbeing can change from day to day, month to month or year to year.

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In this Right Here guide you'll find real-life experiences of parents and carers in Brighton and Hove who have supported their children with mental and emotional challenges. You'll also see what young people have to say about the support they've received (or not) from their parents.

If you are worried about your teenage child or a young person you know, picking up this guide could be the first step to opening up one of the most important conversations of their lives.



To contact us with any comments or updates, please visit:

WWW.RIGHT-HERE-BRIGHTONANDHOVE.ORG.UK/PARENTS



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