



Young People and Mental Health

A guide to working with young people dealing with
issues of mental health and how to help them.



Young People and Mental Health

Many young people are dealing with difficult issues or circumstances. For some they have excellent support from family, church and friends. For others they feel like they have nowhere to turn.

Many teenagers are also carrying their friends through difficult times, do they know where they can turn? What is our role as church leaders and youth leaders to give space for young people to process the hard stuff?

Statistics

In any given year, about 20% of adolescents will experience a mental health problem, most commonly depression or anxiety. [WHO, Fact Sheet on Adolescent health, 2015]

Mental health issues are not only reserved for girls but the below recent Girl Guiding survey highlights the extent to which young people are dealing with mental health issues.

Girls' mental well-being worries start from as young as seven – escalating as they get older with two in five girls aged 11 to 21 needing to seek help with mental health concerns.

Self-harming emerges as the top health concern for girls aged 11 to 21, closely followed by smoking, mental illness, depression and eating disorders. In 2010, girls' top three health concerns were binge drinking, smoking and drug abuse.

62 per cent of girls aged 11 to 21 know a girl their age who has experienced a mental health problem, while almost half of girls aged 17 to 21 (46 per cent) have personally needed help with their mental health. (Girls attitudes survey 2015)

Mental health concerns featured in 1 in 3 ChildLine counselling sessions last year (1 April 2015- 31 March 2016), with 3 out of the top 5 reasons for children contacting the helpline now relating to this problem.

There were 92,891 ChildLine counselling sessions about mental health related concerns last year, with 5,644 cases also involving abuse or neglect.



Low self-esteem was the top concern and was also the issue with one of the biggest increases since 2014/15, rising by 19% to over 42,000 counselling sessions. Suicide concerns have also increased by 10% when compared to 14/15.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/fighting-for-childhood/news-opinion/mental-health-problems-most-common-reason-contact-childline/>

As a youth leader myself, I often feel ill-equipped or out of my depth when trying to walk with young people who are struggling. There are loads of resources out there to help you (see below) and do make sure if an issue feels too big for you to handle that (with permission from the young person) you talk to a minister or leader in charge.

Also here at IMYC we are willing to talk to you in to help you work out the best way to support young people by signposting you to organisations with expertise, so do feel free to contact us.

Below are some helpful resources we have found and been referred to by experts, surrounding young people and mental health.

The Big House

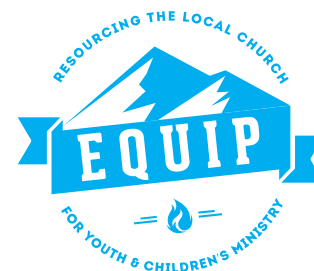
<http://www.thebighouse.org.uk>

The Big House exists to help young people to know God's love as they encounter Jesus and are cared for by the church, especially when they dealing with difficult issues or circumstances.

We highly recommend The Big House as a resource and training organisation around issues of mental health. Keep an eye out for the training they provide and events throughout the year.

Training videos on self harm

<https://vimeo.com/channels/bighousetraining2016>



General mental health information, accessing support and referral

<http://www.mentalhealthaccesspack.org>

This site is designed for busy church leaders who want to understand mental health issues better. You can use it to develop the care and support your church can offer those struggling with mental health issues. You'll find an overview of mental health matters, plus signposts to additional resources.

This is a particularly helpful page on working with CAMHS (Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services), it outlines what help is available for Young people and children, how referral happens, How to support a young person through this etc...

<http://www.mentalhealthaccesspack.org/practical-tips/working-with-camhs/>

Good advice and information on how to access help

<http://www.mentalhealthaccesspack.org/practical-tips/accessing-help/>

<http://www.youngminds.org.uk>

Excellent website that has information for children and young people, parents, professional etc

<http://www.youngminds.org.uk/whatsworryingyou> - outlines common mental health problems

http://www.youngminds.org.uk/for_parents/services_children_young_people - services for children and young people

www.childline.org.uk

Service provided by NSPCC, the content is aimed at young people and children. There are some useful resources for adults too at <http://www.childline.org.uk/Pages/InformationForAdults.aspx>

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk>

The NSPCC has a 24 hour helpline which you can ring if you are concerned about a young person or child and unsure of what to do.

<http://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/a-z-mental-health/>

Useful mental health A-Z



<http://www.lifelinehelpline.info>

Anyone of any age living in Northern Ireland can call Lifeline free of charge on 0808 808 8000 if they are experiencing distress or despair. The Lifeline helpline is open 24 hours a day, every day of the year.

<http://www.mindingyourhead.info/services>

List of useful services and organisations for referral and advice.

<http://www.themix.org.uk/mental-health>

Aimed at 16-25 year olds, facing many of life's difficult issues, this link is specifically about mental health.

Eating Disorders

<https://www.b-eat.co.uk/about-eating-disorders/types-of-eating-disorder/anorexia>

Useful information on the various types of eating disorder and the signs of each

Self Harm

<http://www.nshn.co.uk/friends.html>

Helpful dos and don'ts for those caring for someone who is self harming.

selfharm.co.uk

Useful website focusing on young people and self harm, helpful info for a young person on getting an appointment with their GP and for parents and carers.

<http://alumina.selfharm.co.uk>

Online support group for young people struggling with issues surrounding self harm.