

What is mental health?

Mental health refers to the ability to function and deal with daily life and everything it presents.

Mental ill health refers to a group of conditions that affect how a person thinks, interacts with others and copes with the demands of everyday life.

One in 10 children has a diagnosable mental health condition, however figures show that only 23% of parents feel confident that they would be able to identify the symptoms of mental ill health in their children.

Potentially negative impacts on mental health:

- ⇒ Lack of sleep
- ⇒ Poor diet
- ⇒ Social media
- ⇒ Alcohol or drugs
- ⇒ Trauma

Creating an environment where children feel comfortable to discuss their mental health can help you understand if your child is struggling.

For further information, contact the:

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For other sources of information and help:

Trafford Local Offer

Available from: www.trafforddirectory.co.uk

Special Educational Needs (SEN) - A Guide for Parents and Carers. Revised 2009.

Special Educational Needs Code of Practice

Both available from: www.direct.gov.uk

Engage, Motivate,
Inspire

A Parents Guide to Children's Mental Health



Trafford Alternative Education Provision

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Spotting the Signs

As parents you are well attuned to spotting changes in your child's behaviour, but it may be more difficult to spot mental health concerns.

What is anxiety?

Children may feel very worried about a number of everyday things, may find it hard to control the worry and may be restless or nervous. Anxiety also may cause you to feel nauseous, experience shortness of breath or chest pain, feel muscle tension, become tired easily, have trouble sleeping well, experience headaches or unexplained aches and pains.

There are different types of anxiety which your child may be experiencing, with different warning signs to look out for.

Generalised anxiety disorder:

- ⇒ Struggling to concentrate
- ⇒ Experiencing stomach problems

Social anxiety disorder:

- ⇒ Avoiding places where there will be other people
- ⇒ Cancelling planned social activities
- ⇒ Blushing, sweating or trembling around others.

What support is offered to your child



The school offers the following according to your child's mental health needs:

- ⇒ Pastoral staff available to talk
- ⇒ School nurse
- ⇒ One to one or small group work
- ⇒ Educational psychology
- ⇒ Mentoring (peer and TA)
- ⇒ Access to a 'key TA'

If your child is experiencing challenges with their mental health, support can be provided by:

- ⇒ Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
- ⇒ 42nd Street
- ⇒ Kooth
- ⇒ Samaritans

Speak to your GP or school if you require guidance and support.



Improving mental health and resilience



Exercise: exercise is good for the mind, as well as the body, and can help to release stress and anxiety.

Eat and drink well: a healthy, balanced diet can maintain steady levels of energy and clear thinking.



Writing things down: this can sometimes help people to see exactly what they're feeling and give them some control.

Sleep well: a healthy sleep pattern will mean they are well rested and can help to reduce stress and agitation. If they find getting to sleep is difficult, try listening to music in bed or relaxation techniques.



Speak to people: it might seem hard at first, but encouraging children to open up to friends and family can help them feel better and more understood.