# Things that can help keep children and young people mentally well

Good emotional and mental health allows children and young people to develop the resilience to cope better. This means they grow into well-rounded, healthy adults.

Children and young people (CYP) experience a range of emotions, feelings or moods every day. Some of these experiences can feel distressing to the CYP and their families. However, it usually falls within the range of what we could expect within our emotional development.

However, research tells us that mental ill health affects about 1 in 4 children and young people. This may present as a range of behaviours from exam stress and low mood to depression, anxiety and suicidal ideation. These also may or may not be a clinically diagnosed conditions and are often in response to an individual's life experiences.

The advice and guidance in this portal has been put together to support all education settings.

Our emotional wellbeing and mental health is as important as our physical health. It is important that we look after ourselves and each other. We can do this best by offering compassion, kindness, hope, belonging and connection.

Things that can help keep children and young people mentally well include:

* being in good physical health, eating a balanced diet and getting regular exercise
* having time and the freedom to play, indoors and outdoors
* being part of a family that gets along well most of the time
* going to a school that looks after the wellbeing of all its pupils
* taking part in local activities for young people

Other factors are also important, including:

* feeling loved, trusted, understood, valued and safe
* being interested in life and having opportunities to enjoy themselves
* being hopeful and optimistic
* being able to learn and having opportunities to succeed
* accepting who they are and recognising what they are good at
* having a sense of belonging in their family, school and community
* feeling they have some control over their own life
* having the strength to cope when something is wrong (resilience) and the ability to solve problems

It is important for young people to access the appropriate interventions at a sufficiently early age. This could have an impact on their emotional development and future.