

Social media

The internet can provide a wealth of educational and positive content, but it can also subject children to the threat of cyber bullying.

Peer pressure

It's natural for children to want to feel accepted by their peers. It can take a lot of courage to say no to friends, if they pressure you into doing something you'd rather not do.

AMH MensSana

Action Mental Health's MensSana project supports children and their key contacts through a range of activities. If you are concerned about the mental health of a child, MensSana Project Workers can be contacted in confidence for information on available sources of support in your area.

All MensSana mental health awareness programmes underpin and endorse the five ways to well-being message promoting a culture of prioritising mental health as much as physical health. The Five Ways to Well-being are a great example of how we can make small changes in our everyday life with maximum effect.

For more information on AMH MensSana call 028 9182 8494 or email amhmenssana@amh.org.uk

REMEMBER: help is available

Lifeline 0808 808 8000

Childline 0800 1111

Samaritans 116 123

www.rcpsych.ac.uk/healthadvice/parentsandyoungpeople.aspx

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Good mental health is not just something that concerns adults. Children are also affected by mental health issues. Good mental health means feeling positive about yourself and being able to cope with things like school, parents and siblings, and friendships.

Looking after your mental health is just as important as looking after your physical health. In fact, poor mental health can lead to poor physical health.

Ten per cent of children as young as five live with a clinically diagnosable mental health problem.

Children can experience problems at school ranging from exam and peer pressure, to bullying and much more. At home, some children might be living with abuse, or parents or carers who argue a lot, are separated or divorced, or have mums and dads with physical or mental health problems themselves. All of these problems can make children feel worried, angry or upset.

Neglect and abuse

Mental health issues can be triggered by psychological trauma, such as the loss of a parent, severe emotional, physical or sexual abuse or neglect. Stressful or traumatic events can lead to mental health disorders if not addressed early on.

Busy lives

Many kids are too busy with homework and extra-curricular activities to have time to play creatively or relax and thoroughly wind down after school.

World strife

What children see and hear about world affairs can often cause great stress among children. Kids who see disturbing images on TV or hear talk of natural disasters, war, and terrorism may worry about their own safety and that of the people they love.

School pressures

In pre-schoolers, separation from parents can cause anxiety. As kids get older, academic and social pressures, including the need to 'fit in', can also create stress. Children anxious to live up to parental expectations can feel very overwhelmed too. Most pupils in fact, will face some sort of issue during their time at school but the important thing is to recognise there's a problem to be solved and to seek help as soon as possible.

Parents' and carers' worries

Children's stress may be intensified by what is happening at home. Children are often aware when parents are dealing with difficulties such as financial, marital or ill-health and can start to worry themselves.

Friendships

Some children make friends very easily but for others it is more difficult. Many parents worry that their children don't have a large circle of friends but studies have shown it is the depth of friendships that is most important to your child's mental well-being.