

A guide to  
**health &  
well-being**  
for young people



# Introduction

Healthwatch Essex has spent the last few years actively engaging with young people. We asked you to share your experiences of health and care services in Essex, and in particular asked about your knowledge of available services for mental health, sexual health, drugs and alcohol, smoking, learning disabilities and young carers.

The findings of this study were published in our YEAH! report (Young Essex attitudes on health and social care) and are very mixed. Many of you reported positive experiences of kind frontline staff such as A&E nurses and paramedics. However, we also discovered that 7 in 10 of you had not heard of the 111 service and many of you had gone to A&E due to difficulties in accessing GPs or finding alternative appropriate services. Almost all of you had received information about the topics surveyed, yet few of you knew where to go for information and support.

As a direct response to the YEAH! report, we have produced this Essex-wide 'guide to health and well-being for young people'.

This guide will help to point you in the right direction towards a healthier, less stressful and more rewarding lifestyle. It tells you where you can get help and information and gives you clear and sensible ideas on what to do if you feel you need that extra bit of help.

As a young person it is important to start following a healthy lifestyle now in order to avoid any problems when you are older. Healthy habits are easier to get used to as a young person, and they can improve the rest of your life. You will also look and feel better, right now!

This guide also contains useful websites, agency advice and information about various key issues. So take a browse and read the sections which are of interest to you.

Now I need to be more **responsible** for my **own health** and **well-being** it is useful to **know** where I can **get** good **information** and **support**.

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# 4 Guide to services

In Essex we have a wide range of professionals and other services who are there to help and support you.

## Self-care

Now you are becoming more responsible for your own health and well-being there are lots of things you can do at home to help. Many minor illnesses and injuries can be treated at home using over the counter medicines from your local pharmacist and getting plenty of rest. If you are still worried call NHS 111.

## NHS 111

If you think you need help urgently during the day or night you should call NHS 111 before you go to any other health service. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and is free to call, including from a mobile. You will be directed straight away to the local service that can help you best. Call NHS 111:

- When you need help fast but it's not life-threatening.
- When you think you need to go to A&E or another NHS urgent care service.
- When it's outside of your GP's surgery hours.
- When you do not know who to call for medical help.
- If you do not have a local GP to call.



## Teachers

Teachers and tutors can be great people to talk to. If they cannot help they will be able to point you in the right direction.

## School nurse

The school nursing team and school staff will help support your health and development.

They provide confidential advice and support on issues such as sexual health, emotional health, physical health and long-term condition management.

## Dentist

It is really important that you visit your dentist twice a year and take care of your teeth and mouth daily.

## Essex Youth Service

Essex Youth Service is an excellent informal education, social and personal development service. They offer free support, counselling, activities, advice, sexual health products and much more to all young people between the ages of 13-19 years old and 13-25 years old for those with special needs. The service also supports young carers from age 8. Youth workers have the skills, knowledge and significant experience to work in schools and other educational establishments.

## Pharmacist

Your local pharmacist can provide advice on most common health issues. They can suggest and dispense medicines and other health products. There are often pharmacists in supermarkets and many are open late.

Visit [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) where you can find the service locator that will help you find the pharmacy nearest to you.

You can see your local pharmacist for a confidential consultation for a wide range of ailments including coughs, colds, sore throats, pain and temperature and lots more. Any medicine dispensed is free if you do not pay for your prescriptions.

## Sexual health services

Contraception and sexual health clinics offer confidential advice, all methods of contraception including free condoms, pregnancy testing, advice on unplanned pregnancy, chlamydia and gonorrhoea testing and treatment. All are free of charge.

## Essex Young People's Drug & Alcohol Service

The service offers counselling and advice to young people who think they may have a drug problem or are worried about someone else.

## GP (Doctor)

If you've just started college, university or you've moved away from home, it's a good idea to find a local GP practice and make an appointment to see a dentist. This means you don't need to go back home if you need medical help.

You will need to register with a GP - to find a GP in your area, use the NHS Choices, Find Services System at: [www.nhs.uk/servicedirectories](http://www.nhs.uk/servicedirectories)

Your GP can advise, give medicines and information and point you in the right direction if you need other specialist services. Everything said between a GP and a patient is confidential and a private matter between yourself and your GP.

You will need to make an appointment. After 6.30pm weekdays, at weekends and public holidays most services are covered by a GP out-of-hours service. Check with your local surgery.

## Confidentiality

Here are some facts about confidentiality when going to see your GP/practice nurse:

Young people have the same right to confidentiality as adults. This means that when you visit your GP (or another healthcare professional) they are not allowed to share what you talk about. So basically, they can't tell your parents/carers unless you give permission. The only time your GP will break this confidentiality is if you or someone else may be at risk of serious harm or abuse. In this instance, they would usually talk through with you the action they would need to take.

There may be times when your GP suggests that it might be helpful for you to discuss your problem with your parents/carers or that they phone and talk to them. They may be suggesting this because they think it would be helpful for you. However, if you are over 16 and you really don't want your parents/carers to know then you don't have to tell them and you can request that the GP does the same. If you are under 16 and the GP is worried that you don't fully understand the treatment you need, they have the right to contact your parents without your consent but would try and talk this through with you first.

The GP can't share information about your health with other professionals outside of the NHS without your permission (e.g. a social worker or teacher). However, if your GP refers you to another health professional within the NHS, they may ask you if they can share your notes with that person via their shared computer system. You can say no to this and the other health professional will not be able to see all of your notes.

## How to get the most out of your GP appointment

We know that some young people don't feel comfortable going to their GP, especially about their emotional well-being. We therefore hope that the following information will help you find the support you need.

You can see your GP about a range of issues including:

- Physical health
- Emotional well-being/mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, self-harm etc
- Sexual health
- Drug and alcohol issues

## Your rights!

We know from our recent consultation with young people (the YEAH! Report) that sometimes, going to see a GP can be stressful and at times a frustrating experience. We've pulled together a list of your rights which will hopefully help you get the most out of your appointment:

## Key findings YEAH! Report 2014 - 2015

- 71% reported problems with booking systems requiring them to call at surgery opening time.
- A third had missed school, college or work to attend appointments.
- Participants praised surgeries with flexible booking systems, or drop-in clinics.

## Did you know?

- You can ask for a double appointment (20 mins) if you need it (if you have lots to talk about).
- You can bring someone with you to your appointment.
- You have a choice about which GP you see. You can request a male or female and can ask to see the same GP each time.
- If you have a bad experience with a particular GP you have a right to ask for a different GP next time. If there is only one GP in your practice you have a right to move to a different practice.
- You don't have to have students & trainees in the room with you. You should always be asked.
- You will get more from your appointment if you are able to be honest with your GP and it might help to plan out what you want to say.
- If you are suffering with depression, anxiety etc, your GP should talk through options with you and not just offer medication. Counselling should be offered too.

## Want more help?

### [www.docready.org](http://www.docready.org)

This is a really useful website which has also been designed by young people for young people. Doc Ready helps you get ready for your GP visit and in particular, if you are going to discuss your emotional well-being. It has lots more information about your rights and confidentiality.

## How to make a complaint

If you're not happy with the service you have received and you want to make a complaint, all GP practices should have a complaints box or procedure.

If you are ill or injured, choose from the following services:

Concern	Service	What to do?
Grazed knee Sore throat Coughs and colds	Self-care	You can treat minor illnesses and injuries at home by using the recommended medicines and making sure you get plenty of rest <a href="http://www.nhs.uk">www.nhs.uk</a> .
Unsure Confused Need help	 NHS 111 For 24 hour health advice and information.	Call NHS 111 when it is less urgent than 999 Telephone: 111 <a href="http://www.nhs.uk/111">www.nhs.uk/111</a>
Mild diarrhoea Mild skin irritations (including spots/rash) Mild fever	Pharmacist For advice on common illnesses, injuries and medication.	To find your local pharmacy and its contact details visit: <a href="http://www.nhs.uk/chemist">www.nhs.uk/chemist</a>
High temperature Head injuries not involving loss of consciousness Persistent cough Worsening health conditions (inside GP hours) Minor bumps, cuts and possible fractures Dehydrated Headache Abdominal pain	GP For the treatment of illnesses and injuries that will not go away.	Use NHS 111 out-of-hours service
Severe pain Worsening health conditions Choking Loss of consciousness Fitting/convulsions Broken bones	Urgent Care When you need healthcare in a hurry 24 hours a day.  A&E or 999 For very severe or life-threatening conditions.	A&E

NHS 111 is free to call from any landline or contract mobile phone. Pay-as-you-go mobile phones require 1 pence credit to make a call.

If you are concerned or need advice, choose from the following services:

Concern	Service	What to do?
If you: Need advice on contraception Think you may have an STI Think you may be pregnant	Sexual health services	Local sexual health or GUM clinic Your GP If you are aged 16-24 you can request a free chlamydia testing kit
If you are: Feeling low or depressed Worried Self-harming Feeling suicidal	Mental Health Services Voluntary Services Childline 0800 111	GP NHS 111 Samaritans
If you are: Worried about personal safety Worried about domestic violence A victim of crime	999 emergency services Local Safeguarding Board	Call 999 in an emergency Domestic violence helpline 24 hour 0808 2000 247

# Know the basics

## Being prepared & knowing the signs

As you get older you need to start taking some responsibility for your health, well-being and safety. Physical health is not just about the health of your body but helping your body to work at its full potential which includes exercise and nutrition, knowing your body and how it works, and how to look after it.

Depression, anxiety and conduct disorder are common in young people. These are often a direct response to what is happening in their lives. Your emotional well-being is just as important as your physical health. It is important to speak up if you are feeling unwell or you are unhappy about something which is happening.

You will face choices that will affect your health now and in the future around smoking, alcohol or having sex.

- Take responsibility for your health, well-being and safety.
- Find out what to do if you are unwell or injured.
- Smoking or taking drugs puts your health in danger.
- It is not safe to have unprotected sex, find out more and do not be forced into doing anything you do not want to.
- Be aware of digital safety.
- Speak to an adult you trust if you are unhappy about something in your life.

Learn how to spot the signs of serious illness and how to cope if an accident happens. If you know the basics and you are prepared, you will find it easier to cope.

Keep a small supply of useful medicines at home. Make sure you always follow instructions carefully and check use by dates. Read the label carefully.

## Paracetamol & ibuprofen

Fever in itself is just a sign of your body fighting an infection. Consider using either sugar-free paracetamol or ibuprofen if you have a temperature of over 38°C, as these can help to reduce fever and pain.

Treat with either paracetamol OR ibuprofen in the first instance. It can take up to an hour for either of them to work. Paracetamol and ibuprofen should NOT be taken together at the same time. Children under 16 should not use aspirin.

## Health tips

1. **Register** with a local GP, dentist and optician.
2. **Get Condoms** (and contraception if required) - even if you don't plan to be sexually active it's good to be prepared. Find out more from your local sexual health clinic. Their service is confidential and discreet.
3. **Sleep and eat.** Getting enough sleep and eating well will mean you have a better chance of staying healthy.
4. Make taking showers, brushing your teeth, cleaning and drying your clothes and using deodorant a part of your **personal hygiene routine**.

Make sure you have all your health details - either your Red Book or Health Passport - as you may need this in the future. If you don't have them check with your parent/carer and they can help you get this information.

Source: [www.nhs.uk/Livewell](http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell)





**Around 80%** of teenagers get some form of **acne** and there are **many myths** about what causes it.

# Common illnesses & conditions

## Coughs & colds

There are some good things about catching a few coughs and colds - it helps build-up your natural defences and fight off viruses.

Most bugs will run their course without doing any real harm because they are viruses which get better on their own. However, there are things you can do at home to help:

- Drink lots of fluids.
- Try paracetamol or ibuprofen - always check the label for the correct information (children under 16 should not take aspirin).
- Keep away from smoke.
- Remember that coughing is the body's way of keeping the lungs clear.

## Diarrhoea & being sick

Gastroenteritis, otherwise known as a stomach bug or food poisoning, is something you are likely to get at some point. Most cases resolve themselves within a few days, without the need for medical treatment.

“Ensure you drink plenty of water so that you don't become dehydrated.”

Be extra careful with hand hygiene (use soap and water and dry hands well with a clean towel).

If the gastroenteritis lasts for more than three or four days, get advice from a health professional, such as your GP or pharmacist.

## Headaches & migraines

### Headaches

Headaches are quite common and most headaches are not due to a serious health problem. They can be brought on by skipping meals, not getting enough sleep, using computers, video games or other machines for a long time without breaks and occasionally from playing sport which can make you dehydrated. Sometimes headaches can be the result of stress, brought on

by things such as bullying or your parents splitting up. They can be avoided by making sure you get enough food, drink and sleep.

“Most headaches can be treated at home with paracetamol or ibuprofen.”

Always check the label for the correct dosage.

### Migraines

Migraines are the most common cause of frequent headaches in young people. They often come on suddenly and as well as a headache, you may feel sick, have tummy ache, or have changes to your vision. You may want to avoid bright lights and loud noises as the pain often gets better after a sleep. Migraines are not usually serious, but can interfere with life, so talk to your GP if you are having frequent headaches or if they are associated with other symptoms such as dizziness, vomiting and fever.

### Acne

Around 80% of teenagers get some form of acne and there are many myths about what causes it. Acne consists of spots and painful bumps on the skin. It's most noticeable on the face, but can also appear on the back, shoulders and buttocks. Severe acne can cause scarring, so it is important to get treated.

“Acne is mostly due to the way skin reacts to hormonal changes.”

Cases of teenage acne are thought to be triggered by increased levels of a hormone called testosterone that occurs during puberty.

Treatments are available from your pharmacy but if there is no improvement, you should visit your GP who can assess how bad your acne is and discuss the options with you. If acne is severe, your GP can refer you to a dermatologist (an expert in treating skin conditions). Treatments can take between two to three months to work but, once they do, the results are usually effective.

# More serious conditions

## Diabetes

There are 2 types of diabetes (types 1 and 2). We talk mostly about type 1 diabetes as this is the type which happens to children and young people. You can't catch diabetes, it isn't a bug, you 'develop' it. Type 1 diabetes happens when the body does not produce enough insulin. This means that glucose produced in the breakdown of food (digestion) stays in the blood.

If you are diagnosed, (your GP or a health professional has confirmed you have it), you may feel overwhelmed, angry, and worried about the future. You will now need insulin injections, or insulin using an insulin pump. A diabetes care team will help and support you, you are not alone.

**“It's perfectly normal to have difficult feelings when you are diagnosed with diabetes.”**

However, the condition doesn't have to take away your freedom, or end your usual family life, it just means you have to carefully manage your condition as part of daily life.

## Early days

On diagnosis at the hospital, your specialist diabetes team will help and support you to manage your diabetes. Children and young people are cared for by a specialist diabetes team at the hospital. This team has:

- A consultant paediatrician who specialises in diabetes.
- Children and young person's specialist diabetes nurses.
- A dietician who is trained in the needs of children and young people.
- A psychologist with a speciality in children and young people.

Soon you'll be confident enough to take the first steps towards managing your diabetes. You will be in regular touch with your diabetes care team. The team keep in touch via clinics, some of which are in the evening as well as email and telephone. The specialist nurses can visit you at home and at school.

## Signs and symptoms

Contact your GP urgently if you notice the signs below. If you cannot get an appointment the same day please attend a Walk-In Centre or A&E and explain your symptoms.

- Feeling very thirsty and having a dry mouth.
- Going to the toilet frequently, particularly at night.
- Feeling very tired and drowsy.
- Weight loss.
- Signs that you could be seriously unwell - all of the above plus vomiting, abdominal pain and difficulty breathing.

## Meningitis & Septicaemia

Meningitis and meningococcal septicaemia (blood poisoning) are serious diseases that can affect anyone at any time. Fortunately, most young people in the UK have already had the MenC vaccine, but if you haven't or can't remember, getting vaccinated is a good way to protect yourself. But remember, vaccines can't prevent all forms of meningitis and septicaemia.

## What are the signs and symptoms?

Many of the early signs - vomiting, fever, aches, general tiredness and headaches - are also signs of less serious illnesses like colds and flu or even a hangover but someone with meningitis or septicaemia will become seriously ill in a matter of hours.

**“Symptoms can appear in any order and not everyone gets all of the symptoms.”**

The main signs and symptoms of meningitis include: fever, very bad headache, vomiting, stiff neck, dislike of bright lights, rash, confusion, delirium, severe sleepiness, losing consciousness, seizures.

## How is meningitis spread?

The bacteria that cause these diseases are spread by coughing, sneezing and intimate kissing. It can also be spread by sharing drinks. Outbreaks tend to occur where people live or work closely together, such as university halls of residence.

## The glass test

Press the side of a glass firmly against the rash so you can see if it fades

under pressure. If it doesn't fade call 999 or go to A&E immediately.

If you are feeling very ill, get help anyway, even if the rash fades or doesn't appear at all. It can be harder to see a rash on darker skin.

Students and young people will be offered a new Meningitis C vaccine. The Men ACWY vaccine is given by a single injection into the upper arm and protects against four different causes of meningitis and septicaemia. If you are going to college or university for the first time, contact your GP.

## Asthma

As you grow and develop as a young adult new opportunities and challenges come up every day. But what if you also have a life long condition, such as asthma, and are stepping out into the world for the first time on your own?

If you are travelling, staying with friends or moving out make sure you are prepared.

From friends, family, partner, people at school or college there will always be certain people that you may feel awkward or nervous talking to you about your asthma. It's your choice about who you choose to tell.

Feelings of stress or anxiety can be a trigger for your asthma. Study can be stressful especially around exam time. If you find it brings on your asthma speak to your GP/practice nurse and the welfare officer at your school, college or university to see what they can do to support you.

**“Everybody with asthma is different, and everybody deals with asthma differently.”**

For most people, asthma shouldn't stop you enjoying everything in life, including relationships.

Taking your medications as directed will help prevent long-term health problems. Always carry your relevant inhaler.

## Things you may be asked

Have a think about the sorts of things people might ask you. For example:

- What are your asthma symptoms? Everyone has different symptoms. For example, not everyone wheezes when they have an asthma attack.
- What are your asthma triggers?
- What are your asthma medicines and where do you keep them?
- What should I do when you have an asthma attack? You might like to give them an asthma attack card to keep.
- What does it feel like to have asthma? Not everyone relates to hard facts so you could make it personal to you. Then you may find that people understand a lot better.

## Do you have an asthma action plan?

If you use an asthma management plan you are four times less likely to have an attack that requires emergency hospital treatment. Fill this in with your GP/practice nurse. It will help you to know what medicine to take and when, how to recognise when your asthma symptoms change and what to do when this happens.





The vaccine is **99% effective** in preventing the cervical abnormalities that can lead to cervical **cancer**.

# HPV inoculation

## Protection for up to 20 years

All girls aged 12 to 13 are offered the HPV (human papillomavirus) vaccination as part of the NHS childhood vaccination programme. The vaccine protects against cervical cancer. This is a serious and potentially life threatening disease. It's usually given to girls in year eight at schools in England.

The HPV vaccine consists of two injections into the upper arm spaced at least six, and not more than 24 months apart.

**“It's a safe vaccine and there are very few girls who aren't suitable for HPV vaccination.”**

However, special precautions may need to be taken if the girl being vaccinated has certain health conditions, or has ever had a severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis). Talk to your school nurse if you are worried.

Research has indicated that the HPV vaccine protects against cervical cancer for at least 20 years.

## How is HPV infection spread?

HPV is spread through skin contact, often during sex. Using a barrier form of contraception can reduce your risk of becoming infected. However, as condoms do not cover the entire genital area and are often put on after sexual contact has begun, a condom is no guarantee against the spread of HPV. For most people, HPV infections come and go without any symptoms. Sometimes, the virus may remain inactive for months after infection.

Although most girls don't start having sex until after they're 16 years of age, it's important to get protection early enough and the very best time is in the early teenage years.

**“The HPV vaccine does not replace the importance of safe sex or the need for regular cervical screening.”**

Discuss this with your school nurse.

## Do I have to have the vaccine?

You will have to sign a consent form before you can be vaccinated. Make sure you have thought things through, the HPV vaccine has a good safety record and will protect you against cervical cancer for many years.

**“Speak to your school nurse if you want more information, on her own, or with your parent or carer if you prefer.”**

## Is the vaccine safe?

The vaccine has undergone rigorous safety testing as part of the licensing process required in the UK and other European countries.

## How effective is the HPV vaccine?

The vaccine is 99% effective in preventing the cervical abnormalities that can lead to cervical cancer caused by HPV types 16 and 18\*.

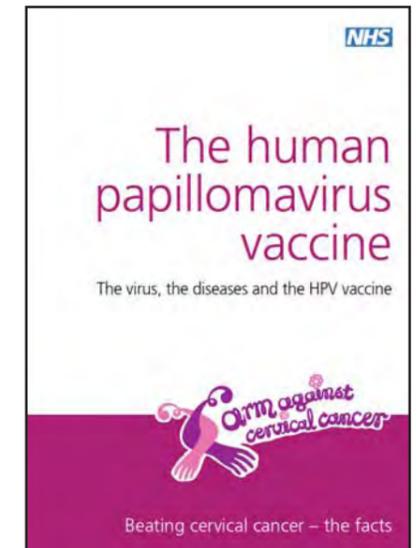
## Are there any side effects?

As with most vaccines, the most common side effect is mild to moderate swelling, redness and pain at the site where the injection is given. Other mild side effects might be slightly raised temperature, sickness and muscle aches. Very rarely, some people have an allergic reaction soon after immunisation. This reaction may be a rash or itching affecting part or all of the body. It is not a reason to stop having HPV vaccinations.

## Can girls who missed HPV vaccination still have it?

Yes, if a girl misses either of her vaccinations, for whatever reason, she can speak to her nurse or GP about making another appointment, ideally as close as possible to the original one.

Girls can have the HPV vaccination on the NHS up to the age of 18. Girls who have the HPV vaccination after the age of 15 will need three doses as the response to two doses is not so good in older girls.





**Cut down on sugar** particularly between meals.

# Oral health

## Looking after your teeth for life

To have a great smile and look good, you need to look after your teeth. Tooth decay occurs when bacteria in the mouth break down sugar to cause an acid attack, which then dissolves the teeth. How often we eat sugary foods or drinks can affect how much the teeth decay.

**“Reduce the risk of tooth decay by having fewer sugary foods and drinks less often.”**

Switch to water and milk where possible. Swap fizzy drinks for sugar-free drinks and drink through a straw to avoid erosion.

Brushing twice a day with a family toothpaste will prevent decay and keep your breath fresh. Avoid dog breath by brushing away the plaque carefully twice daily and especially at night, no one wants to kiss someone with stinky breath! Brush right up to and under all the gum margins - everywhere!

If you have decay in your tooth visit the dentist straight away. Missing or bad teeth look really bad!

Some people worry about the colour of their teeth. Teeth will appear whiter if they are clean and against slightly darker lip gloss or make up.

### Oral health & young people

Smoking has a bad effect on your mouth. It turns teeth yellow, causes bad breath and damages gums and increases risk of mouth cancer. Illegal drugs can also damage teeth and gums.

Keeping sugary foods to mealtimes will help reduce dental decay.

**“Eating disorders and repeated vomiting can lead to tooth problems.”**

Braces can trap plaque. A special brush can be recommended by your dentist.

Sexual practices such as unprotected oral sex can lead to getting a virus which can lead to mouth cancer.

Mouth piercing can cause mouth damage, infections, nerve damage and speech problems. Damage to the teeth can occur.

### Dentist says

- Cut down on sugar particularly between meals.
- Brush twice daily for 2 minutes, especially last thing at night.
- Use a fluoride toothpaste and spit don't rinse (so fluoride is not diluted).
- Visit a dentist regularly.
- Avoid smoking.



The **louder** the **sound**, the less time we can **safely listen** to it.

# Hearing loss

## Noise-related hearing loss is usually irreversible

Keeping our hearing healthy is largely about knowing how much loud sound we are exposed to. Most cases of deafness are caused by damage to the tiny hair cells in the inner ear. This damage can be the result of too much noise, and it is permanent. The key is to avoid loud noise. The louder the sound, the less time we can safely listen to it.

Recreational loud noise is the main problem, especially from MP3 players, such as iPods, and noisy clubs and music gigs. That's thought to be why hearing loss is increasingly affecting younger people. You can lose some hearing after being exposed to loud noise for too long, for example by standing close to speakers at a nightclub.

You've been listening too loudly or for too long if you have ringing in your ears or dull hearing after listening to loud music.

**“The best way to avoid developing noise-induced hearing loss is to keep away from loud noise as much as possible.”**

Hearing loss can also lead to other accidents. If you are listening to music on an MP3 player, texting or not paying attention it could be easy to become unaware of safety. Road accidents can be caused this way.

### Tips for safer listening

#### 1. Use earplugs

The louder the noise and the longer you're exposed to it, the greater the chance of damaging your hearing. Protect ears with ear protectors at live music events or fireworks parties.

#### 2. Turn down the music

If the music is uncomfortable for you to listen to, or you can't hear external sounds when you've got your headphones on, then it's too loud.

#### 3. Use the 60:60 rule

Listen to your music at 60% of the MP3 player's maximum volume for no more than 60 minutes a day.

#### 4. Wear headphones

When listening to a personal music player, opt for noise-cancelling headphones, or go retro with older muff-type headphones.

#### 5. Turn down the volume

Turn down the volume a notch. Even a small reduction in volume can make a big difference.

#### 6. Be careful in the car

Listening to music in a confined space increases the risk of hearing damage.

#### 7. Have a hearing detox!

Give the ears time to recover after they've been exposed to loud noise. According to Deafness Research UK, our ears need at least 16 hours of rest to recover after spending around two hours in a club.

Source: [www.nhs.uk/Livewell/hearing-problems](http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/hearing-problems)

### Ear care tips

- Clean your ears with care. Wipe the outer ear with a flannel or damp cotton wool. Do not push cotton buds into your ears, these may injure the ear canal or eardrum.
- Earwax is the ear's mechanism for self-cleaning. If there is a build-up of wax that is blocking the hearing, see your GP.
- If there is itching or pain, consult your GP.
- If you have pierced ears, clean earrings and earlobes regularly with alcohol wipes.
- Reduce the risk of ear infections by treating ears, nose and throat infections promptly.

Action on Hearing Loss provide an online hearing check which is designed to help identify people who have hearing loss and encourage them to take action. It is a hearing check rather than a full hearing assessment so anyone who is concerned about their hearing check result should seek more detailed advice from a GP or audiologist. [www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk](http://www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk)



**Food** is burned in our bodies to create energy. If we **don't use it**, we **get fat - simple!**

# Healthy lifestyles

## Balance is the key

Being healthy is a big part of being happy. A healthy lifestyle simply means that the way you are day to day, makes you feel physically and mentally fit and well.

What is a healthy lifestyle?

**“Balance is the key, it's about what you put into your body and also how you burn that energy off.”**

Food is burned in our bodies to create energy. If we don't use it, we get fat - simple!

If your lifestyle is not a healthy balance - for instance through not exercising, eating too much fatty and sugary foods, drinking alcohol, getting involved in drugs or by keeping worries and problems to yourself - you are more likely to become ill, have trouble concentrating at school or work or be unhappy or depressed. Being active can reduce your stress levels and can give you the time to think clearly.

Your lifestyle has a big effect on how you feel and what you get out of life, both now and in the future. So it's a good idea to find out more about how to live healthily.

**“There are many other areas of our health we need to think about like sexual health, healthy teeth, drugs, alcohol and generally looking after ourselves.”**

### What you can do

- Be responsible for your own health, only you know how you feel.
- Keep it fun! Healthy living is all about getting the balance right, enjoying yourself and being happy is a key part of a healthy lifestyle.
- Get active! See if your friends would like to go rollerblading or play football rather than watching TV.
- You don't need to join an expensive gym to get fit. Jog in the park or walk home, every bit helps!
- If you feel anxious or depressed talk to your parent or carer, GP or teacher.

## Five Ways to Well-being

### Connect...

with family, friends, colleagues and neighbours at home, school, work, or in your local community.

### Be active...

Being active makes you feel good.

### Take notice...

Be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling.

### Keep learning...

Learning new things is fun and will make you feel more confident.

### Give...

Do something nice for someone.

## Sunburn: Stay safe in the sun

It's the damage done to your skin when you're young that could lead to skin cancer developing in later life, so it's vital to get clued up now and protect yourself from the sun.

### Love the sun, respect your skin.

Avoid the pain and shame of the lobster look by following our five simple steps.

1. Cover up your skin. Throw on a long sleeved shirt or top that ideally has a collar and a sarong or long shorts to banish those burning rays.
2. Slap on the suncream. Apply generous amounts of water resistant suncream of at least SPF30 and above, to clean, dry skin before going out in the sun. Make sure you re-apply regularly throughout the day.
3. Wear a hat or cap. Whether it's a stylish fedora, a trilby or a baseball cap, all can help to keep the heat off your head, face, neck and ears.
4. Style it up with shades. Slip on those sunglasses to make sure your eyes are protected from the strong rays of the sun.
5. Chill out in the shade. When the sun's rays are strongest between 11am and 3pm, find a shady spot to avoid the burn.

### Fake it!

Use an instant tanner instead.

[www.teenagecancertrust.org](http://www.teenagecancertrust.org)

## Sunbeds

Sunbeds aren't a safe alternative to tanning outdoors. Like the sun, sunbeds give out harmful ultraviolet light which damage the DNA in our skin cells and can cause skin cancer.

Sunbeds also cause premature skin ageing, which means that your skin becomes coarse, leathery and wrinkled at a younger age. So when the tan fades, the damage remains.

People with fair skin that tends to burn are at higher risk of problems from sunbed use than those with darker skin. Young people also have delicate skin and are more likely to damage it by using sunbeds.

**“You should NEVER use a sunbed if you are under 18.”**

[www.sunsmart.org.uk](http://www.sunsmart.org.uk)

# Drugs, substances & alcohol

There are many **risks**, with any **drink** or **drug use**, so ask yourself, **is it really worth it?**

## It's a choice - you can say 'no'

Lots of young people want to know about drugs and alcohol - this doesn't mean you have to take them or feel like you should just because people around you might be.

There are lots of reasons why people drink or take drugs, sometimes it is because they think it's going to be fun. Drugs can seriously affect your health and the way you see the world around you - what may seem fun at first can easily start leading to serious problems which you may find difficult to try and solve without additional support. It is easy to get into drug debts, start dropping out of education or training, have arguments at home, be exploited or get involved in an accident or criminal activity. There are many risks with any drink or drug use, so ask yourself, is it really worth it?

Prescription medicines and those that are available from a pharmacist can often be misused. Extreme care should be taken when using medicines as they can have serious side effects. Even too much paracetamol can have a life-long effect on your liver! Only use them for the purposes they have been prescribed. Children under 16 should not use aspirin.

### 'Legal highs'

“People use all sorts of substances, both legal and illegal to get 'high'.”

Some people also think that 'legal highs' are safe - the term is misleading as many so-called 'legal highs' have been linked to serious incidents and in some cases, death.

Legal highs are substances that have similar effects to illegal drugs like cocaine or cannabis. They are sometimes called 'club drugs' or new psychoactive substances (NPS). Some of these drugs are legal to

possess but this does not mean they are safe. Legal highs carry serious health risks

It is possible to buy drugs online which claim to improve your sport performance, burn fat or give instant weight loss - these are untested, unsafe and often illegal.

Other legal substances are also harmful and addictive such as cigarettes, alcohol, glue, petrol and aerosols.

### Are you drinking too much?

Most young people choose not to use drugs or alcohol and it is a myth that you need to drink or use drugs to enjoy yourself. It's a good idea to make sure that you have good factual information about these substances before you decide if you are going to use them.

“Health officials tell us that an alcohol-free childhood is the healthiest and best option.”

They say that it is best not to drink until at least the age of 15. If you are between 15 and 17 and are going to drink alcohol, it is safer to drink only very small amounts under adult supervision. Even small amounts of alcohol can lead to a number of health problems as well as becoming a victim of crime, being vulnerable to assault and doing something you may regret later. Alcohol can affect different people in different ways, even what may seem like a very small amount can be harmful.

If you think you may be drinking too much or you or other people are worried about your drinking then seek information about cutting down.

If you feel under pressure to drink alcohol or are drinking because you have problems, try to address this by talking to an adult you trust or a sensible friend.

## Key findings YEAH! Report 2014 - 2015

- Almost all participants had received information about drugs and alcohol, and smoking.
- However, few knew of where to go for information and support surrounding these issues.
- Participants had disengaged with traditional methods of learning, and wanted the opportunity to ask questions without judgement, and make informed choices for themselves.



If you do feel that you are **overweight**, **talk** to an **adult** you can **trust**.

# A positive body image

## Getting the balance right

Turn on the TV, browse social media sites or flick through a magazine and chances are you'll see pictures of perfect looking celebrities staring back. This might affect your body image and could make you feel bad about yourself or that you should try to change the way you are.

Many young people who are perfectly normal and healthy feel that they don't look 'right' because they are comparing themselves to role models such as pop stars, models or other celebrities who are often seen as skinny. This can lead to an unhealthy body image. If you do feel that you are overweight, talk to an adult you can trust and try to find out more about healthy eating and exercise.

**“It's a good idea to eat well and stay a healthy weight but some young people, can take dieting too far and develop an eating disorder.”**

The two main types of eating disorders are anorexia nervosa which is when you starve yourself and bulimia nervosa which is when you make yourself sick after you eat or take laxatives. They are both very bad for you.

Make sure you talk to an adult or friend you trust to get the help you need.

### Could this be you?

#### If you have an eating disorder:

- It's hard to cope with an eating disorder alone - talk to someone you trust.
- If you are worried ask your parent or carer to make an appointment for you with your GP.
- Remember that the sooner you get some help, the easier it will be for you to beat your problem.

#### If a friend has an eating disorder:

- Tell them that you're worried and that you're there for them.
- Get them to see their GP.
- Set a good example and show your friend how important it is to have a healthy diet.

#### Facts about eating disorders:

1. Eating disorders can be beaten.
2. An eating disorder is serious.
3. An eating disorder is not a dieting craze.
4. An eating disorder is not attention seeking.
5. An eating disorder is an illness.

**“Boys as well as girls can have eating disorders.”**

#### Look out for:

##### Signs of Anorexia include:

- Eating less and less.
- Losing a lot of weight very quickly.
- Growing more body hair (usually girls).

##### Signs of Bulimia include:

- Eating too much in one go.
- Going to the toilet after eating to be sick.
- Sore throat and mouth infections.

#### Skinny & fat shaming

We usually hear about body shaming being directed at women with curves. But that's not always the case - skinny shaming can be just as damaging.

This may be a simple comment like 'when did you last have a good meal?' from a friend or perhaps more damaging messages from strangers via facebook and twitter.

It's up to all of us to stop the well known stereotype of a thing called thin shaming. Thin shaming and fat shaming are not separate, opposing issues - they are the same issue. We are all equal and all bodies are beautiful. Accept yourself for YOU and others for who they are and you will be truly beautiful.



Treat people the way you would **like** to be **treated** and **listen** to what they're **saying**.

# Relationships

## Talk about it

“I try to treat people I cross paths with in the same way I would like to be treated.”

You can have all sorts of different relationships that can be fulfilling and rewarding, for example with friends, parents, families, neighbours and teachers. However, relationships aren't always easy and you might have problems sometimes. Just remember to keep talking to each other. Talking and communicating helps in many ways.

Friends are very important to young people. They are good for mental health, well-being and self-confidence. It's hard when you argue, and you can feel confused and upset. It's better to have a few friends who want the best for you than lots of friends who try and make you do things you don't want to do.

Many young people think that having a boyfriend or girlfriend is the most important relationship - but don't feel you have to just because your friends are, or do anything you're not ready for.

“Similarly you may feel put under pressure to be in a relationship which may even include a forced marriage.”

## Signs include

- Becoming unhappy or withdrawn.
- Missing school.
- You should not be made to do anything you don't want to do or encouraged to take part in things which make you scared.

## Talking helps

- To have good relationships with people, you need to talk about how you're feeling.
- Treat people the way you'd like to be treated and listen to what they're saying.
- If you're having problems with your parents or carer, talk to someone outside the family who you trust, like a friend or teacher.

## Grooming & exploitation

Grooming is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse or exploitation.

Sometimes people are not who we think, or want us to think they are. Paedophile networks groom young people, by making them believe they are their friends. They have sophisticated tactics. They befriend young people, giving them gifts, money, drugs and alcohol and use violence and intimidation to control them, subjecting them to abuse.

Children and young people can be groomed online or in the real world, by a stranger or by someone they know - for example a family member, friend or professional. Groomers may be male or female. They could be any age. They are not your friends and you must speak out as soon as you can, before things get any worse.

Sometimes young people can be radicalised into changing their beliefs and groomed by extremists to commit crimes and get involved in terrorist activity.



You have the **right to be 'you'** - so **don't change.**

# Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT)

## You are not alone

Sexuality comes in many different forms and can in some cases be quite difficult to deal with. It may even be possible that up until now you have never considered the idea that you may not be straight.

There are people who can describe themselves as 'gay' or 'straight', whilst others feel they don't fit into either category. Whatever you're feeling in terms of sexuality you are perfectly normal. There is no rulebook which talks about what is right or wrong.

**“You may be afraid to tell friends or parents how you feel. It may take time, but they will often accept the fact or maybe they know already.”**

You have the right to be 'you' - so don't change! Accept and understand the way you feel. It may also surprise you to know there are many people out there in exactly the same situation as you!

## Look out for

- There are no physical signs to look out for with sexuality.
- Understanding sexuality can be confusing and people might need support and guidance.
- If you experience discrimination regarding your sexuality, talk to an adult you trust or see our 'Useful Contacts' section for local information.
- If you experience homophobia or discrimination talk to an adult you trust.

## Useful definitions:

**Bisexual** - physically, romantically and/or emotionally attracted to men and women.

**Coming out** - people forge a lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender identity first to themselves and then may reveal it to others. Publicly identifying one's orientation may or may not be part of coming out.

**Gay** - used to refer to a male or female whose sexual orientation is attraction to persons of the same sex and/or gender.

**Lesbian** - a woman whose enduring physical, romantic and/or emotional attraction is to other women.

**Heterosexual** - used to describe people whose enduring physical, romantic and/or emotional attraction is to people of the opposite sex. Also known as straight.

**Homophobia** - used to refer to a range of negative attitudes and feelings towards lesbian, gay and in some cases bisexual, transgender people.

**Homosexual** - outdated clinical term considered derogatory and offensive by many gay and lesbian people.

**Transgender** - term for people whose gender identity differs from what is typically associated with the sex they were assigned at birth.

**Transsexual** - appearing as, wishing to be considered as, or having undergone surgery to become a member of the opposite sex.



Go to your **GP**,  
or **Sexual Health  
Clinic** to find out about  
different **types** of  
**contraception**.

# Sex & sexual health

## It's not worth the risk

“If you are sexually active, it is important that you use contraception which both partners have agreed to in order to avoid pregnancy.”

Most contraception is 99% reliable. You can get pregnant or get a Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) even if it is the first time you have sex so use a condom to prevent STIs. Use a LARC (long-acting reversible contraception) like an implant to prevent pregnancy.

Becoming a teenage parent can be challenging so it is a good idea to think and plan contraception, so you are prepared. It is also unpleasant and painful to have an STI.

There is a C-card scheme and you will need to register for a card which you can use to get free condoms as well as advice and help. It is a confidential service for all young people which offers condoms even if you are 15 or under and you have discussed your needs with our sexual health professionals and they agree.

## What to do

“If you have had unprotected sex, emergency contraception can stop you getting pregnant as long as you take it within 120 hours.”

Ask your GP, pharmacist or sexual health clinic for advice.

If you've had unprotected sex and your period is late, take a pregnancy test at your GP, pharmacist or sexual health clinic.

Go to your GP or sexual health clinic to find out about different types of contraception. Talk to your parent/carer about what to do. If you feel you can't there are lots of places to get help and advice.

## Under pressure

- Don't have sex because your boyfriend or girlfriend wants you to but you're not sure. It's completely up to you.
- Remember it's against the law to have sex if you're under 16.
- Don't let your judgement be affected by drugs or alcohol. You may be drunk and agree or do something you would not normally do. Try to plan ahead and think what you would do if you get into a difficult situation. Be prepared with a condom.

## Chlamydia is a real risk

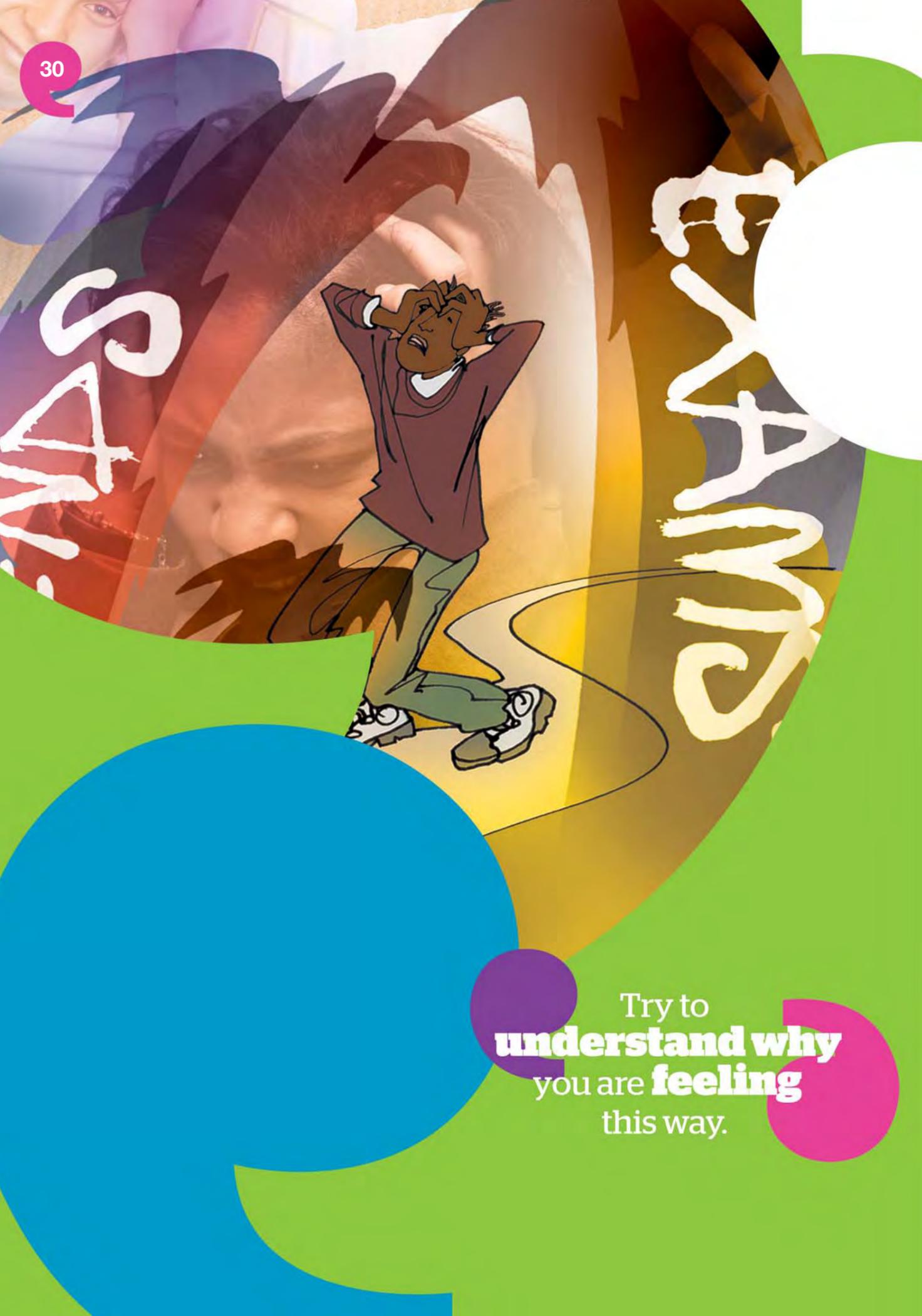
Chlamydia is the most commonly diagnosed STI.

“Most people who are infected have no symptoms, so they do not know they have it.”

If left untreated, it can cause complications including infertility. Condoms can protect against chlamydia.

## Key findings YEAH! Report 2014 - 2015

- Almost all participants receive information on sexual health, yet the vast majority were unaware of services they could access around these topics.



Try to  
**understand why**  
you are **feeling**  
this way.

# Stressed out or feeling low

## How to cope

Depression, stress and anxiety are serious and common problems. The first step to getting help is to be able to recognise the problem. Sometimes it is easy to put ourselves under too much pressure; we can worry about how we look, about exams or about what other people think of us.

“People are more at risk of becoming depressed if they are under a lot of stress and have no one to share their worries with.”

Depression is commonly caused by a mixture of things rather than any one thing alone. Some people have experiences that lead to depression including family breakdown, the death or loss of a loved one, stress, abuse, bullying and physical illness. Depression can also be triggered if too many changes happen in your life too quickly.

### Depression can cause serious problems, such as:

- Difficulties getting on with friends and family.
- Loss of friends.
- Loss of confidence and difficulty making decisions.
- Inability to study, work and perform well in exams.
- Difficulty with day to day tasks.
- Eating problems, turning to food for comfort and eating or dieting excessively.
- Lying, stealing and missing school.

Simply talking to someone you trust and who you feel understands can lighten the burden. It can also make it easier to work out practical solutions to problems. For example, if you are stressed out by exams or study, you could talk to your teacher.

“Keep as active and as occupied as possible and allow for fun and leisure time.”

### Could this be you?

- Being self-critical, self-blaming and hating yourself.
- Feeling out of control.
- Becoming stressed about minor things.
- Becoming withdrawn, avoiding friends, family and regular activities.
- Feeling guilty or bad, being self-critical and self-blaming and hating yourself.
- Feeling unhappy, miserable and lonely a lot of the time.
- Finding it difficult to concentrate.
- Not looking after your personal appearance.
- Changes in sleep pattern, tiredness and lack of energy.
- Frequent minor health problems.
- Not enjoying life anymore.
- Depression increases the risk of using drugs, alcohol or solvents.
- Are you being bullied, exploited or suffering abuse?

### What to do next

- Try to understand why you are feeling this way.
- Talk to someone and don't keep it to yourself.
- You can talk to your GP in confidence if you have felt down for a long time.

## Key findings YEAH! Report 2014 - 2015

- 8 in 10 participants had received no mental health information, and did not know how to access mental health support.
- 9 in 10 participants felt it important to receive mental health awareness alongside physical health information.
- 15% of participants self-identified as having, or having had, a mental health problem.



Keep a **diary** and **save** all **text messages** as **evidence** of what happens.

# Bullying & peer pressure

## The real story

Bullying at school, can often be things like name calling, hitting, happy-slapping or stealing someone's things. It also includes stuff that's less visible, like sending nasty texts or spreading gossip about someone.

People get picked on for lots of reasons. Being bullied can make you dread going to school and can also make you feel depressed, lonely and even suicidal.

If you're being bullied, you're not alone. You might feel that there's no way out but there are lots of ways to get help.

**“If people are making nasty remarks about you then it may be because they are jealous.”**

Perhaps you're better looking than they are, work harder or perhaps the teachers like you better. One way of dealing with remarks is to simply ignore them each time so that you show them that it isn't having the effect of upsetting you in the way they think.

The bullies will have worked out what buttons to push to make you upset. Don't try to hide it or ignore it - tell a friend, tell a teacher and tell your parents/carers. It won't stop unless you do.

## Spotting the signs

### Signs someone's being bullied:

- They become unhappy or withdrawn.
- They start missing school.
- They've got physical injuries they don't want to talk about or try to hide.
- They pretend to be ill.

### Are you being bullied?

- It probably won't stop until you tell someone you trust.
- Act confidently to send out the message that you're not afraid.
- Stay with others - you're more likely to be picked on if you're on your own.
- Keep a diary and save all text messages as evidence.

### Is your friend being bullied?

- Take their worries seriously.
- Stick up for them.
- They might want you to be with them for support when they tell their parents, carers or teacher.

## Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying by text, instant messaging or email messages. It can be making insulting comments about someone on the internet through a website or through social networking sites. It can also be the uploading of embarrassing videos or photographs by people you trusted on the internet or distributing them by mobile phones. This is called 'sexting'.

Do not respond to the messages, save them or take a screen shot as evidence. There are 'report abuse' facilities on many websites.

## Peer pressure

Peer pressure is when you think you should do something because other people your age say you should, or because you think everyone else is doing it too. Sometimes people do things because they want to be liked, or they worry that they'll get teased if they don't follow the crowd.

Some of the things you might feel pressure to do now or in the future:

- Wear the same clothes as your mates.
- Drink alcohol, smoke or take drugs.
- Commit a crime.
- Change your friends because your other mates don't like them.
- Skip school.
- Have a boyfriend or girlfriend.
- Start having sex.

**“It's normal to want to fit in with everyone else, but in the end people will think you're a lot cooler if you learn to make your own decisions.”**

Just because people say they are doing something, doesn't mean that they are.

### Are you feeling peer pressure?

- It's hard if you're the only one saying 'no' but be brave.
- If your friends want you to do something, ask yourself how you really feel about it, and stick to what you believe in.
- If you say 'no' to something, real friends should respect your decision. If they don't, maybe you need to find new friends.
- It's better to have a few friends than lots of friends who try and make you do things you don't want to do.

### Is a friend of yours feeling peer pressure?

- If your friend doesn't want to do something either, back them up. This can really help them, and make peer pressure easier to resist.
- Help them to make their own choices - they will gain confidence.
- Don't put pressure on your friends.



If you are **self-harming**, there is **help available** and it is important to get the **support** you **need**.

# Self-harm

## Understanding and support

Self-harming is hurting yourself on purpose so you bleed, leave a scar, mark, bruise or take an overdose. The most common ways to self-harm are cutting, scratching, hair pulling and burning. Some may use drugs or alcohol as a form of self-harm. Girls are thought to be more likely to self-harm than boys, but this is because boys are more likely to punch out at walls, which isn't always recognised as self-harm.

People self-harm for different reasons. Some people feel bad because they're being bullied or abused, some may be stressed or are suffering a loss or maybe missing someone.

“Self-harming is dangerous. It is a sign that you have an underlying problem and if it got out of hand, you could risk killing yourself accidentally. Get help as soon as possible.”

You may feel powerless right now but once you have talked it through you can work towards understanding why you are self-harming and how to go about working through this difficult time.

### What to do

#### If you are self-harming:

- You are not on your own, so don't suffer alone! Don't bottle it up, go and speak to someone you trust.
- Contact your GP.
- Keep a record of how you feel when you want to self-harm.
- Keep wounds clean or they may become infected, seek medical attention if necessary.

#### If a friend is self-harming:

- Listen to them and let them talk about how they feel.
- It might help them if they know you're there for them.
- Encourage them to see their GP who will be able to get them some counselling. This will help them talk about why they self-harm.
- Visit websites and contacts for support.

### Who can help

If you are self-harming, there is help available and it is important to get the support you need.

Many young people who self-harm do so privately and do not want to talk to other people about it, sometimes for fear of how people will react, thinking that they might not understand.

“If you can talk to someone, this may help how you are feeling.”

If you don't want to talk to your parents or carer, you could talk to your grandparents, another relative, friend, school nurse, youth worker or teacher or if you don't feel like you can confide in anyone, then go and talk to your GP.



Remember, it's  
**not your fault,**  
and you **don't** have  
to **cope alone.**

# Difficulties at home

## You don't have to cope alone

Young people often experience tensions at home. Your relationships with the people you live with can be the source of all kinds of problems. Sometimes the situation is more serious than others, but whatever is going on, it can take up a lot of your head-space and make you feel bad.

Remember, it's not your fault and you don't have to cope alone.

**“Talk it through with someone you trust, like a parent/carer, teacher or friend, and get the help and support you need.”**

Or get in touch with one of the support organisations listed under 'Useful Contacts'. When communication breaks down you can lose perspective on what is happening. The key is to find ways to build up your resilience, so that you can cope better.

You may be experiencing abuse (physical, emotional or sexual) at home, or maybe you have a parent/carer or sibling who is taking drugs or drinking too much and you feel that things are getting out of control. It can be just as upsetting to feel caught up in problems between other family members. It is important that you keep yourself safe. Talk to someone to get some help and support.

## Domestic violence

**“Domestic violence includes threatening behaviour, violence, psychological, sexual, financial or emotional abuse.”**

It also includes forced marriage, female genital mutilation and so called honour killings. Domestic abuse is a crime and a major social problem affecting many families.

If you are worried about domestic violence, talk to someone who understands such as your school nurse or the 24-hour National Domestic Violence Freephone Helpline 0808 2000 247.

## Living with parents

If living at home with your parents is a problem, there may be steps you can take to improve things. Find out what to do if you don't feel safe at home.

Don't feel you have to move before you're ready. But if you don't feel safe at home, or if your parents tell you to leave, get advice on what to do next. Once you are 16 years old, if your parents ask you to leave, you probably have to go.

If you're under 16, your parents have a legal responsibility to look after you and make sure you have somewhere safe to stay otherwise you can get help from social services. However, if you are not getting on with them, they may make you leave anyway.

Get advice immediately if you find yourself in this situation. Call Shelter's free housing advice helpline on 0808 800 4444 for advice on where to stay.

Think about the practicalities of leaving home and getting your own place (rent, bills, doing your own washing and cleaning and so on) as well as all the good things. If you know anyone who has recently left home, talk to them about their experiences.

## Talk to your family about wanting to leave home

Explain your reasons to your family for wanting to leave home. They may be able to help you find a new home or help you to organise all the things you need to live on your own. They may even be able to help you with a tenancy deposit.

Visit your council's housing options centre to discuss your options.

## Running away

There are a number of reasons why you may want to leave home, but getting help while you're still at home is usually a better option than running away.

Source: Shelter.org.uk



**Drug, alcohol abuse and violence,**  
can sometimes become  
**part of a homeless**  
young person's **life.**

# Homelessness

## A significant problem for young people

Homelessness has a serious impact on every aspect of the life of a young person. Many describe their lives as being 'on hold' while they are homeless, making it much harder for them to achieve their goals and ensure their own well-being. Young homeless people can lack confidence, motivation and a sense of purpose which not only negatively affects their mental health but leads to an apathy in seeking help and caring for themselves.

**“Young homeless people often do not consider their health and well-being to be a problem or priority for them.”**

Other issues such as the need for housing and employment are far more pressing. Many young homeless people go to desperate measures to avoid sleeping rough, including committing crime or resorting to sex work to get a roof over their head. Drug, alcohol abuse and violence can sometimes become part of a homeless young person's life. Apart from the obvious issues around eating well, getting enough sleep, keeping warm and dry, violence, risk of exploitation and harm are real dangers.

Homeless people often face multiple health problems and those with mental health problems are particularly at risk. Homeless people face great inequalities in accessing mental health services, yet their mental health often suffers as a result of being homeless.

**“The biggest cause of homelessness for young people is being told to leave the family home by their parents.”**

Other common causes are leaving care and being unable to pay rent. Many do not have a network of support and both mental and physical health can suffer.

There are an estimated 2,300 young runaways in Essex\*. Young homeless people are considerably more vulnerable than the overall homeless

population. Up to half of single homeless young people have been in care, 40% have experienced abuse at home and 33% self-harm. Leaving home before you are 18 is a serious step and should not be taken lightly. Think about involving a mediator or social care professional to help you talk to your parents or carers to see whether things can be sorted out before you get to this stage.

### Where can I get help?

If you're under 16 and having serious problems at home, contact children's services at your local council. They'll try and help you sort things out so you can stay at home.

If you are aged 16 or 17, you are normally entitled to housing and support from your local council. In most cases, it's the social services department that has to take responsibility for finding you somewhere to live.

You are entitled to register with a GP when you are homeless. You can do this using a temporary address, such as a friend's place or a day centre. You can find a GP in your area through NHS Choices or by calling the NHS helpline on 111.

There are also specialist medical centres for people who are homeless or sleeping rough.

## Key findings YEAH! Report 2014 - 2015

- Long waiting times lead to a lack of timely care which is especially vital in this group who often seek help, particularly for mental health issues, at the point of crisis.
- Appointments are often short and with different healthcare professionals meaning issues are not fully addressed and young people often have to recount distressing personal stories repeatedly.
- Lack of money to attend appointments is a particular issue due to the transient nature of the lives of the young homeless population.
- Chaotic lifestyles can lead to challenges with continuity of care, keeping appointments and following healthcare recommendations.



It's okay to have some time doing things you enjoy, like **relaxing** with friends or **listening to music**.

# Young carers

## It's not always easy

If you are under 18 and look after a parent or relative who is ill, has a long-term illness, has a physical or mental disability or is addicted to drugs or alcohol, then you could be a young carer.

“You may be doing the household chores such as washing, cooking, and cleaning on behalf of the whole family.”

You may be providing personal or nursing care like giving medication, changing dressings, helping with mobility, or intimate care such as washing, dressing, assisting with toilet requirements, or giving emotional support. This can feel stressful or overwhelming at times. Sometimes you may feel under pressure to take time off school or college to help around the house, or may not have time to go out with your friends, do homework, or play.

Many young carers find it difficult to talk about being a carer. You may worry that people will think you aren't coping, or that your family will be split up if you don't carry on with your caring role. But it's important to understand there are organisations who can help and support you, so you can balance your responsibilities with your personal life, and not miss out on things.

It can be hard to think about your future, whether you plan to get a job or apprenticeship, go to college or university. But you have to live your life too. That doesn't mean that you love your family any less. It's good to talk about how you feel and ask for help if you need it.

“Caring for someone can make you feel tired so try to look after yourself, both physically and mentally.”

It's okay to have some time doing things you enjoy, like relaxing with friends or listening to music. The person you are caring for wants you to enjoy life too.

## Being a carer

- Being a carer means looking after someone who could not cope without your support, you could be offering support for just a couple of hours a week.
- It is common for carers to forget about their own health and well-being and often miss GP, dental appointments and health checks.
- If you're finding things hard, is there anyone else who can share the caring?
- Not talking about how you feel means you might miss out on getting the support you need.
- Unfortunately some young carers are bullied at school or fall behind in lessons. Talk to your parents, teacher or an adult you trust.
- If you're planning to work in the future, some companies have Carers' Policies to make it as easy as possible for you.

## Key findings YEAH! Report 2014 - 2015

- 57% of participants had received an understanding of what it meant to be a young carer.
- Participants feel it is important to receive this information in the course of their education.
- Young carers benefit from age-appropriate services which support them.
- It can be difficult to speak about being a young carer to peers who cannot relate to those experiences.



Just because you have a **disability** of some sort **does not mean** you can't live a **full and exciting life**.

# Young people with disabilities

## Understanding not sympathy

Young people with disabilities are exactly the same as young people without disabilities, however, having a disability could mean you are unable to do the things that other people can do. You may face more challenges, but life can still be as fun and full of achievement.

**“Being a teenager can be a tough time, sometimes it's even harder with a disability.”**

Everyone wants to fit in and it can be easy to feel you are alone. Remember you don't have to go it alone - there's loads of support, practical and financial help out there for you.

This can be an exciting time. Up until now, your parents have probably made all your decisions - now you can start to make some choices for yourself.

Whether you're at a special needs, mainstream school or college, a good education can improve your chances later in life, education is important for everyone.

Just because you have a disability of some sort does not mean you can't live a full and exciting life.

### When you're 16: If you have a disability, these things can change:

- You can choose where you live for example, you might want to stay at home with your parents or apply for sheltered housing.
- You can leave school and start work if you want to. Disability employment advisers at your local job centre can help you.
- Personal Independence Payment (PIP) can be paid directly to you.
- You may get Employment and Support Allowance if you can't work.
- If you want to continue with your education, you may get extra money with a Disabled Students' Allowance.

### Healthcare

In healthcare, the word 'transition' is used to describe the planning, preparing and moving on from children's healthcare to adult healthcare. It's a gradual process and gives everyone time to talk about what healthcare you will need as an adult, choose which adult hospital or services are best for you and make sure you are ready for the move.

Most young people move on to an adult hospital and adult hospital services between 16 and 18 years old. Sometimes, young people move from a children's hospital to an adolescent unit at 13 or 14 years old, instead of moving straight to an adult hospital. You can ask the consultant or clinical nurse specialist about when you will be making the move.

Young people will be given a lot more independence, where appropriate and will be encouraged to learn about their condition, so that they can be more involved in their care and decision making and take responsibility for their medicines.

Try to keep a list of important emergency telephone numbers. You may find an 'Alert' bracelet useful, if you have a condition that may change suddenly.

Think about making your own appointments. At the adult service, during appointments or admissions, doctors, nurses and other staff will spend more time talking to the young person than their parents, although they are still encouraged to attend the appointments.

If you are not able to make your own decisions after the age of 16 talk to your personal adviser or social worker for advice on mental capacity and the role of deputyship in regards to health matters.

## Key findings YEAH! Report 2014 - 2015

- 9 in 10 had not received information about learning disabilities, but felt it was important to be aware.
- Participants with learning disabilities valued scribes, readers and teaching support assistants.
- Participants claimed that separating students with learning disabilities from their peers can lead to bullying and feelings of isolation and shame.

**Health & well-being**

**Common illnesses & conditions**

www.nhs.uk/Conditions  
www.nhs.uk/livewell

**More serious conditions**

www.nhs.uk/Conditions  
Young teenagers, sixth formers and 'fresher' students going to university for the first time are advised to have a vaccination to prevent meningitis W disease.

www.nhs.uk/Conditions/vaccinations/Pages/men-acwy-vaccine.aspx

**Meningitis Research Foundation**

www.meningitis.org  
Helpline: 080 8800 3344

**Meningitis Now**

www.meningitisnow.org  
Helpline: 080 8801 0388

**Asthma UK**

www.asthma.org.uk  
Ask a Nurse Helpline: 0300 222 5800

**The British Lung Foundation**

www.blf.org.uk/asthma  
Helpline: 03000 030 555  
www.blf.org.uk/BreatheEasy (for local Breathe Easy Groups in Essex)

**Diabetes UK**

www.diabetes.org.uk  
Careline: 0345 123 2399  
Type 2 Together Service -  
www.diabetes.org.uk/type-2-together  
A new volunteer-led approach to providing support, and learning about living with diabetes.  
There are local groups based in Mid-Essex (Braintree, Witham, Chelmsford and Maldon) and North East Essex (Colchester and Clacton)

**Black and Ethnic Minority**

**Diabetes Association**  
www.bemda.org

**National Children & Young People's Diabetes Network**

www.cypdiabetesnetwork.nhs.uk

**Children with Diabetes in the UK**

www.childrenwithdiabetesuk.org

**HPV inoculation**

www.nhs.uk/Conditions/vaccinations

**HPV wise**

www.hpvwise.co.uk

**Oral health**

www.nhs.uk/livewell/dentalhealth

**British Dental Health Foundation**

www.dentalhealth.org  
Helpline: 01788 539780

**Hearing loss**

www.nhs.uk/Livewell

**Action on Hearing Loss**

www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk  
Helpline: 0808 808 0123  
For local services in North East Essex  
Telephone/SMS: 07442 538939  
Email: todorina.hammond@hearingloss.org.uk

**Local contacts:**

**Hearing Help Essex**  
www.hearinghelpessex.org.uk  
Telephone: 01245 496347 or 01245 348440 - Contact to find out about local Hearing Help sessions.

**Healthy lifestyles**

**Looking after yourself**  
www.nhs.uk/livewell  
www.nhs.uk/livewell/fitness

**Change4Life**

www.nhs.uk/change4life

**Local contacts:**

**Living Well Essex**  
www.livingwellessex.org.uk

**Active Essex**

www.activeessex.org

**Drugs, substances & alcohol**

**Teen Challenge UK**  
www.teenchallenge.org.uk  
Telephone: 01664 822 221

**Project 6**

www.project6.org.uk  
Telephone: 01535 610180

**FRANK**

www.talktofrank.com  
Freephone number: 0300 123 6600 - 24 hours a day in confidence.

**Alcohol Concern**

www.alcoholconcern.org.uk  
Drinkline (Confidential)  
Call free on 0300 123 1110 (weekdays 9am-8pm, weekends 11am-4pm)

**National Association for Children of Alcoholics**

www.nacoa.org.uk  
Helpline: 0800 358 3456  
Email: helpline@nacoa.org.uk

**Children of Addicted Parents (COAP)**

www.coap.org.uk  
COAP is an online community for young people living with a family member's addiction to drugs, alcohol or behaviour such as gambling.

**Local contacts:**

**Essex Young People's Drug & Alcohol Service (EYPDAS)**  
www.eypdas.org.uk  
Telephone: 08444 991 323 or 01245 493311  
Text: EYPDAS to 80800 (free) - your call will be returned within 72 hours.  
Email: eypdas@childrenssociety.org.uk  
Drop In Service (Chelmsford) -  
Telephone: 01245 493311 to make an appointment.

**Open Road**

Provides drug and alcohol services across Essex.  
www.openroad.org.uk  
Telephone: 0844 499 1323  
Local Centres:  
Basildon: 01268 531435  
Chelmsford: 01245 284772  
Clacton: 01255 434186  
Colchester: 01206 766096  
Harlow: 01279 434621

**Canvey Island Youth Project**

www.canveyislandyouthproject.org.uk  
Telephone: 01268 683431  
Email: ciyouthproject@virgin.net  
A small local charity based on Canvey Island, Essex helping young people between 11 and 25 years. They have an advice and support drop-in which is open Monday to Friday 10am to 5pm as well as counselling and befriending services. They also offer specialist support for homelessness, drug and alcohol, sexual health, under 18, young parents and special needs (learning difficulties).

**Bar N Bus Trust**

www.barnbus.org.uk  
Email: team@barnbus.org.uk  
Counselling for young people aged 11-18. The organisation deals with a range of issues, including bullying, loneliness, stress, alcohol and drug issues and relationship difficulties. Counselling takes place at secondary schools in the Castle Point area during term-time only. They also operate a mobile bus project which goes out into the community with a free tea and coffee bar and an area to socialise and relax.

**A positive body image**

**Beat (beating eating disorders)**

www.b-eat.co.uk  
Parents, teachers or any concerned adults should call the Beat Adult Helpline (open to anyone over 18): 0345 634 1414  
Email: help@b-eat.co.uk  
The Beat Youthline is open to anyone under 25. Youthline: 0345 634 7650  
Email: fyp@b-eat.co.uk  
Text: 07786 20 18 20.

If you would like a call back, send the text message 'call back'. They will aim to get back to you within 24 hours and during Youthline open hours.

**Anorexia & Bulimia Care**

www.anorexiabulimiacare.org.uk  
Helpline: 03000 11 12 13  
Email: support@anorexiabulimiacare.org.uk

**Get Connected**

Offers a telephone counselling service for anyone aged 25 or under.  
www.getconnected.org.uk  
Telephone: 0808 808 4994 (Open from 11am-11pm every day)

**Supportline**

www.supportline.org.uk  
Helpline: 01708 765200  
Email: info@supportline.org.uk

**Young Minds**

www.youngminds.org.uk  
Parent Helpline: 0808 802 5544

**Childline**

Emotional support for children and young people on issues relating to child abuse, bullying etc.  
Helpline: 0800 1111  
www.childline.org.uk

**Men Get Eating Disorders Too**

http://mengetedstoo.co.uk/  
Email: sam@mengetedstoo.co.uk

**Local contacts:**

**EAS-ED**

A parent-led initiative to share skills & information & provide mutual support for those caring for a loved one with an eating disorder. Runs a support group plus 'walk and talk' activities. Based in Essex.  
www.eas-ed.co.uk

**BEAMS (Basildon Eating Disorders and Mental Health Support)**

Telephone: 07944 189640 (Colleen Weedon)  
Email: cwsbedsedas@hotmail.co.uk  
A local voluntary service set up to provide support and information for those affected by eating disorders in Basildon and the surrounding areas.

**COPE (Community Organisation for Problem Eating), Colchester**

Telephone: 01206 656020  
Email: info@copecic.co.uk  
COPE offers early intervention, therapeutic support and counselling to young people aged 11-17 years old with disordered eating/eating disorders living in north east Essex.

**Sexual health & relationships**

**Relationships**

**Get Connected**

www.getconnected.org.uk  
Telephone: 0808 808 4994 (Open from 11am-11pm every day)

**Relate**

www.relate.org.uk  
Telephone: 0300 100 1234

**Local contacts:**

**Essex, North & Herts, East Relate Centre**  
Deliver services in Chelmsford, Colchester and Harlow.  
www.relate-northersex.org  
Email: admin@relate-northersex.org

**Basildon Relate**

www.relatesouthessex.co.uk  
Telephone: 01702 342901  
Email: enquiries@relatese.plus.com

**LGBT**

**Stonewall**

www.stonewall.org.uk  
Information service: 08000 50 20 20

**Get Connected**

Offers a telephone counselling service for anyone aged 25 or under.  
www.getconnected.org.uk  
Telephone: 0808 808 4994 (Open from 11am-11pm every day)

**Switchboard (LGBT+ helpline)**

http://switchboard.lgbt  
Telephone: 0300 330 0630 (11am-11pm, everyday)  
Email: chris@switchboard.lgbt

**Broken Rainbow UK**

www.brokenrainbow.org.uk  
Telephone: 0800 999 5428  
Email: help@brokenrainbow.org.uk  
National helpline specifically for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people experiencing domestic violence.

**Relate**

www.relate.org.uk  
Telephone: 0300 100 1234

**Local contacts:**

**Essex, North & Herts, East Relate Centre**

Deliver services in Chelmsford, Colchester and Harlow.  
www.relate-northersex.org  
Email: admin@relate-northersex.org

**Basildon Relate**

www.relatesouthessex.co.uk  
Telephone: 01702 342901  
Email: enquiries@relatese.plus.com

**Essex Pride**

www.essexpride.org

**Living Well Essex**

Lists a number of national and local organisations that support the LGBT community.  
www.livingwellessex.org.uk/going-out/social-activities/lgbtplus-activity-and-social-groups

**Outhouse East**

www.outhouseeast.org.uk  
Helpline: 0345 123 23 88

**GEMS (Gay Essex Men's Social Group)**

www.gemsgroup.co.uk  
Telephone: 01702 471021  
Email: admin@gemsgroup.co.uk

**Basildon and Thurrock Friend**

www.basildonandthurrockfriend.co.uk  
Email: admin@basildonandthurrockfriend.co.uk  
An internet and telephone call-back service for the Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual communities of Basildon and Thurrock. They provide information, support and guidance for the LGB community and all who are concerned with LGB issues.

**Sex & sexual health****NHS Choices**

[www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Sexandyoungpeople](http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Sexandyoungpeople)

**SXT**

[www.sxt.org.uk](http://www.sxt.org.uk)

Helps find sexual and reproductive health care services in your local area. Just text your POSTCODE to 07781 470056 and they will text you back a list of choices.

**Supportline**

[www.supportline.org.uk](http://www.supportline.org.uk)

Helpline: 01708 765200

Email: [info@supportline.org.uk](mailto:info@supportline.org.uk)

**Get Connected**

Offers a telephone counselling service for anyone aged 25 or under. [www.getconnected.org.uk](http://www.getconnected.org.uk)  
Telephone: 0808 808 4994 (Open from 11am-11pm every day)

**Family Planning Association**

[www.fpa.org.uk](http://www.fpa.org.uk)

**Terrence Higgins Trust**

[www.tht.org.uk](http://www.tht.org.uk)

THT Direct: 0808 802 1221

Email: [info@tht.org.uk](mailto:info@tht.org.uk)

**Brook**

[www.brook.org.uk](http://www.brook.org.uk)

Ask Brook - Confidential text and webchat service for young people under 25 offering sexual health information, support and signposting. You can contact an Ask Brook advisor by text on 07717 989 023 (standard SMS rates) and webchat (IM).

**Freetest.me**

The freetest.me service offers free chlamydia testing and HIV testing in participating regions. Simply visit [freetest.me](http://freetest.me) to see if you're eligible to order a free STI test kit. [www.freetest.me](http://www.freetest.me)  
Email: [info@freetest.me](mailto:info@freetest.me)

**Local contacts:****Living Well Essex**

[www.livingwellessex.org.uk/health-and-well-being/taking-care-of-yourself/sexual-health](http://www.livingwellessex.org.uk/health-and-well-being/taking-care-of-yourself/sexual-health)

**Providers of contraceptive and sexual health services in Essex:****North East, South and West Essex: Anglian Community Enterprise (ACE)**

[www.ancelifestyle.org/sexual-health/drop-clinics](http://www.ancelifestyle.org/sexual-health/drop-clinics)  
Telephone: 0800 022 4524

**Mid Essex (Maldon, Braintree and Chelmsford):****Provide**

[www.provide.org.uk/service/sexual-health-services](http://www.provide.org.uk/service/sexual-health-services)  
Telephone: 0300 003 1212

**GUM services:**

Addison Health Care Complex, Harlow: 01279 827676  
Fairfield Centre, Chelmsford: 01245 315901  
Colchester Sexual Health Clinic: 01206 745371/745372/745373  
Anthony Wisdom Centre, Orsett Hospital: 01268 592214  
Southend Hospital: 01702 385120 (male) 01702 385121 (female)  
Clacton and District Hospital: 01255 201698  
Fryatt Hospital, Harwich: 01255 201216

**Essex Young People's Drug & Alcohol Service**

[www.eypdas.org.uk/children-and-young-people/sexual-health.aspx](http://www.eypdas.org.uk/children-and-young-people/sexual-health.aspx)

**Canvey Island Youth Project**

[www.canveyislandyouthproject.org.uk](http://www.canveyislandyouthproject.org.uk)  
Telephone: 01268 683431  
Email: [ciyouthproject@virgin.net](mailto:ciyouthproject@virgin.net)  
A small local charity based on Canvey Island, Essex helping young people between 11 and 25 years. They have an advice and support drop-in which is open Monday to Friday 10am to 5pm as well as counselling and befriending services. They also offer specialist support for homelessness, drug and alcohol, sexual health, under 18, young parents and special needs (learning difficulties).

**Colchester and Tendring Youth Enquiry Service**

[www.yesyouthenquiryservice.org](http://www.yesyouthenquiryservice.org)  
Telephone: 01206 710771 (Colchester) or 01255 434601 (Tendring) - 24 hour answerphone  
y.e.s. provides a confidential, non-judgemental and informal service for young people between the ages of 11 and 25 within Colchester and Tendring, who are facing difficulties in their lives.

**Mental health & feelings****Stressed out or feeling low****Young Minds**

[www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)  
Parent Helpline: 0808 802 5544

**Supportline**

[www.supportline.org.uk](http://www.supportline.org.uk)  
Helpline: 01708 765200  
Email: [info@supportline.org.uk](mailto:info@supportline.org.uk)

**Samaritans**

[www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)  
Freephone: 116 123  
Local branches:

Chelmsford and Mid Essex  
Telephone: 08457 9090 90  
Basildon and Thurrock  
Telephone: 01268 412000  
Southend  
Telephone: 01702 611911  
Colchester, Tendring and Suffolk  
Telephone: 01206 561234

**Barnardos**

[www.barnardos.org.uk/what\\_we\\_do/our\\_work/mental\\_health.htm](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/mental_health.htm)  
Regional Office (South East & East Anglia)  
Telephone: 01293 610 660

**Get Connected**

Offers a telephone counselling service for anyone aged 25 or under. [www.getconnected.org.uk](http://www.getconnected.org.uk)  
Telephone: 0808 808 4994 (Open from 11am-11pm every day)

**Childline**

Emotional support for children and young people on issues relating to child abuse, bullying etc.  
Helpline: 0800 1111  
[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

**Mind**

[www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)  
Infoline: 0300 123 3393 - Open 9am to 6pm, Monday to Friday (except for bank holidays)  
Email: [info@mind.org.uk](mailto:info@mind.org.uk)  
Text: 86463

**PAPYRUS (Prevention of Young Suicide)**

[www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org)  
National Confidential Helpline - HOPELineUK: 0800 068 41 41 (Mon-Fri 10am to 10pm; Weekends 2pm to 10pm; Bank Holidays 2pm to 5pm)

**Local contacts:****Local offices:****Basildon Mind**

Telephone: 01268 28 41 30  
Email: [info@basmind.org](mailto:info@basmind.org)  
Website: <http://basmind.org>

**Brentwood Mind**

Telephone: 01277 263613 or 01277 234 246  
Email: [enquiries@brentwoodmind.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@brentwoodmind.org.uk)  
Website: [www.brentwoodmind.org.uk](http://www.brentwoodmind.org.uk)

**Colchester Mind**

Telephone: 01206 764600  
Email: [enquiries@colchestermind.org](mailto:enquiries@colchestermind.org)  
Website: [www.colchestermind.org](http://www.colchestermind.org)

**Maldon Mind**

Telephone: 01621 853211  
Email: [admin@mid-essex-mind.org.uk](mailto:admin@mid-essex-mind.org.uk)  
Website: [www.mid-essex-mind.org.uk](http://www.mid-essex-mind.org.uk)

**South East & Central Mind**

Telephone: 01702 60 11 23  
Email: [office@SEandCESsexMind.org.uk](mailto:office@SEandCESsexMind.org.uk)  
Website: [www.SEandCESsexMind.org.uk](http://www.SEandCESsexMind.org.uk)

**West Essex Mind**

Great Dunmow Office  
Telephone: 01371 876 641  
Email: [admin@westessexmind.org.uk](mailto:admin@westessexmind.org.uk)  
Harlow Office  
Telephone: 01279 421 308  
Email: [admin@westessexmind.org.uk](mailto:admin@westessexmind.org.uk)  
Website: [www.westessexmind.org.uk](http://www.westessexmind.org.uk)

**Bar N Bus Trust**

[www.barnbus.org.uk](http://www.barnbus.org.uk)  
Email: [team@barnbus.org.uk](mailto:team@barnbus.org.uk)  
Counselling for young people aged 11-18. The organisation deals with a range of issues, including bullying, loneliness, stress, alcohol and drug issues and relationship difficulties. Counselling takes place at secondary schools in the Castle Point area during term-time only. They also operate a mobile bus project which goes out into the community with a free tea and coffee bar and an area to socialise and relax.

**Colchester and Tendring Youth Enquiry Service**

[www.yesyouthenquiryservice.org](http://www.yesyouthenquiryservice.org)  
Telephone: 01206 710771 (Colchester) or 01255 434601 (Tendring) - 24 hour answerphone  
y.e.s. provides a confidential, non-judgemental and informal service for young people between the ages of 11 and 25 within Colchester and Tendring, who are facing difficulties in their lives.

**Emotional wellbeing and mental health service (EWMHS)**

[www.nelft.nhs.uk/services-ewmhs](http://www.nelft.nhs.uk/services-ewmhs)  
Telephone: 0300 300 1600  
Provided by NELFT NHS Foundation Trust, this service is for anybody aged between 0-18, living in Essex. The service is also for young people with special educational needs (SEN) up to the age of 25. Any young person experiencing emotional well-being or mental health problems, or any parent, guardian, professional or teacher of a child who is experiencing emotional well-being and mental health difficulties, may access the service. You can access our service in two different ways:

- By a referral to our service via your GP, or other professional, or
  - By self-referral, via telephone to the main EWMHS contact number (9am-5pm, Monday-Friday)
- For out of hours and weekend Crisis Support Service, please call the general NELFT switchboard on 0300 555 1201 to be put through to immediate Crisis Support help.

**Bullying & peer pressure****Bullying UK**

[www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)  
Helpline: 0808 800 2222

**Supportline**

[www.supportline.org.uk](http://www.supportline.org.uk)  
Helpline: 01708 765200  
Email: [info@supportline.org.uk](mailto:info@supportline.org.uk)

**Childline**

Emotional support for children and young people on issues relating to child abuse, bullying etc.  
Helpline: 0800 1111  
[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

**Samaritans**

[www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)  
Freephone: 116 123  
Local branches:  
Chelmsford and Mid Essex  
Telephone: 08457 9090 90  
Basildon and Thurrock  
Telephone: 01268 412000  
Southend  
Telephone: 01702 611911  
Colchester, Tendring and Suffolk  
Telephone: 01206 561234

**Kidscape**

[www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)  
Telephone: 020 7730 3300

**Get Connected**

Offers a telephone counselling service for anyone aged 25 or under. [www.getconnected.org.uk](http://www.getconnected.org.uk)  
Telephone: 0808 808 4994 (Open from 11am-11pm every day)

**Stand Against Violence**

[www.standagainstviolence.co.uk](http://www.standagainstviolence.co.uk)  
Telephone: 0300 456 4223

**PAPYRUS (Prevention of Young Suicide)**

[www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org)  
National Confidential Helpline - HOPELineUK: 0800 068 41 41 (Mon-Fri 10am to 10pm; Weekends 2pm to 10pm; Bank Holidays 2pm to 5pm)

**Local contacts:****Bar N Bus Trust**

[www.barnbus.org.uk](http://www.barnbus.org.uk)  
Email: [team@barnbus.org.uk](mailto:team@barnbus.org.uk)  
Counselling for young people aged 11-18. The organisation deals with a range of issues, including bullying, loneliness, stress, alcohol and drug issues and relationship difficulties. Counselling takes place at secondary schools in the Castle Point area during term-time only. They also operate a mobile bus project which goes out into the community with a free tea and coffee bar and an area to socialise and relax.

**Colchester and Tendring Youth Enquiry Service**

[www.yesyouthenquiryservice.org](http://www.yesyouthenquiryservice.org)  
Telephone: 01206 710771 (Colchester) or 01255 434601 (Tendring) - 24 hour answerphone  
y.e.s. provides a confidential, non-judgemental and informal service for young people between the ages of 11 and 25 within Colchester and Tendring, who are facing difficulties in their lives.

**Emotional wellbeing and mental health service (EWMHS)**

[www.nelft.nhs.uk/services-ewmhs](http://www.nelft.nhs.uk/services-ewmhs)  
Telephone: 0300 300 1600  
Provided by NELFT NHS Foundation Trust, this service is for anybody aged between 0-18, living in Essex.

The service is also for young people with special educational needs (SEN) up to the age of 25. Any young person experiencing emotional well-being or mental health problems, or any parent, guardian, professional or teacher of a child who is experiencing emotional well-being and mental health difficulties, may access the service. You can access our service in two different ways:

- By a referral to our service via your GP, or other professional, or
- By self-referral, via telephone to the main EWMHS contact number (9am-5pm, Monday-Friday)

For out of hours and weekend Crisis Support Service, please call the general NELFT switchboard on 0300 555 1201 to be put through to immediate Crisis Support help.

### Difficulties at home

#### Childline

Emotional support for children and young people on issues relating to child abuse, bullying etc.  
Helpline: 0800 1111  
[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

#### Stand Against Violence

[www.standagainstviolence.co.uk](http://www.standagainstviolence.co.uk)  
Telephone: 0300 456 4223

#### National 24-Hour Domestic Violence Helpline

[www.nationaldomesticviolence-helpline.org.uk](http://www.nationaldomesticviolence-helpline.org.uk)  
Telephone: 0808 2000 247

#### Missing People

If thinking of running away.  
[www.missingpeople.org.uk](http://www.missingpeople.org.uk)  
Freephone or free text: 116 000  
Email: 116000@runawayhelpline.org.uk

#### Muslim Women's Helpline

[www.mwnhelpline.co.uk](http://www.mwnhelpline.co.uk)  
Telephone: 0800 999 5786 (free from landlines)  
Telephone: 0303 999 5786 (use to call from mobiles)

#### Muslim Youth Helpline

[www.myh.org.uk](http://www.myh.org.uk)  
Helpline: 0808 808 2008  
Email: [help@myh.org.uk](mailto:help@myh.org.uk)

#### PAPYRUS (Prevention of Young Suicide)

[www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org)  
National Confidential Helpline - HOPELineUK: 0800 068 41 41

(Mon-Fri 10am to 10pm; Weekends 2pm to 10pm; Bank Holidays 2pm to 5pm)

#### Broken Rainbow UK

[www.brokenrainbow.org.uk](http://www.brokenrainbow.org.uk)  
Telephone: 0800 999 5428  
Email: [help@brokenrainbow.org.uk](mailto:help@brokenrainbow.org.uk)  
National helpline specifically for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people experiencing domestic violence.

#### Local contacts:

##### Essex Mediation

Offers mediation for young people.  
[www.essexmediation.co.uk](http://www.essexmediation.co.uk)  
Telephone: 01245 492200

##### Bar N Bus Trust

[www.barnbus.org.uk](http://www.barnbus.org.uk)  
Email: [team@barnbus.org.uk](mailto:team@barnbus.org.uk)  
Counselling for young people aged 11-18. The organisation deals with a range of issues, including bullying, loneliness, stress, alcohol and drug issues and relationship difficulties. Counselling takes place at secondary schools in the Castle Point area during term-time only. They also operate a mobile bus project which goes out into the community with a free tea and coffee bar and an area to socialise and relax.

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- By a referral to our service via your

GP, or other professional, or

- By self-referral, via telephone to the main EWMHS contact number (9am-5pm, Monday-Friday)

For out of hours and weekend Crisis Support Service, please call the general NELFT switchboard on 0300 555 1201 to be put through to immediate Crisis Support help.

##### Centre for Action on Rape and Abuse, Colchester

[www.caraessex.org.uk](http://www.caraessex.org.uk)  
Telephone: 01206 769795  
(Confidential 24 hour answerphone)  
Email: [info@caraessex.org.uk](mailto:info@caraessex.org.uk)  
CARA is a confidential support service run by women for women children and young people of both genders under the age of 19 living in north or mid-Essex who have suffered any form of sexual violence, past or present. They provide formal counselling for rape and sexual assault, including child sexual abuse. They also offer an advocacy service.

##### South Essex Family Mediation Service

[www.mediation4families.co.uk](http://www.mediation4families.co.uk)  
Telephone: 01268 286577 or 01268 270479  
Email: [enquiries.mediationse@gmail.com](mailto:enquiries.mediationse@gmail.com)

### Homelessness

#### Samaritans

[www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)  
Freephone: 116 123  
Local branches:  
Chelmsford and Mid Essex  
Telephone: 08457 9090 90  
Basildon and Thurrock  
Telephone: 01268 412000  
Southend  
Telephone: 01702 611911  
Colchester, Tendring and Suffolk  
Telephone: 01206 561234

#### Barnardos

[www.barnardos.org.uk/what\\_we\\_do/our\\_work/homelessness.htm](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/homelessness.htm)  
Regional Office (South East & East Anglia).  
Telephone: 01293 610 660

#### Get Connected

Offers a telephone counselling service for anyone aged 25 or under.  
[www.getconnected.org.uk](http://www.getconnected.org.uk)  
Telephone: 0808 808 4994 (Open from 11am-11pm every day)

#### Centrepoint

[www.centrepoint.org.uk](http://www.centrepoint.org.uk)  
Telephone: 0845 466 3400

#### Citizens Advice

[www.citizensadvice.org.uk/housing](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/housing)

#### National 24-Hour Domestic Violence Helpline

[www.nationaldomesticviolence-helpline.org.uk](http://www.nationaldomesticviolence-helpline.org.uk)  
Telephone: 0808 2000 247

#### Homeless UK

Information on over 9,000 services - hostels, day centres and other advice and support services for homeless people and those at risk of homelessness.  
[www.homelessuk.org](http://www.homelessuk.org)

#### Shelter

[www.shelter.org.uk](http://www.shelter.org.uk)  
Helpline: 0808 800 4444  
Help from your council when homeless.  
[http://england.shelter.org.uk/get\\_advice/homelessness/help\\_from\\_the\\_council\\_when\\_homeless](http://england.shelter.org.uk/get_advice/homelessness/help_from_the_council_when_homeless)

#### PAPYRUS (Prevention of Young Suicide)

[www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org)  
National Confidential Helpline - HOPELineUK: 0800 068 41 41  
(Mon-Fri 10am to 10pm; Weekends 2pm to 10pm; Bank Holidays 2pm to 5pm)

#### Local contacts:

IF YOU ARE UNDER 16 and feeling unsafe where you live or are having to leave home, call Essex Social Care (Social Services). They also provide advice and support to help you keep a roof over your head.  
Day time help: 0845 603 7634  
Evenings and night: 0845 606 1212  
Email: [initialresponseteam@essex.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:initialresponseteam@essex.gcsx.gov.uk)

#### Essex Young People's Drug & Alcohol Service (EYPDAS)

[www.eypdas.org.uk](http://www.eypdas.org.uk)  
Telephone: 08444 991 323 or 01245 493311  
Text: EYPDAS to 80800 (free) - your call will be returned within 72 hours  
Email: [eypdas@childrenssociety.org.uk](mailto:eypdas@childrenssociety.org.uk)  
Drop In Service (Chelmsford) - Telephone: 01245 493311 to make an appointment.

#### Open Road

Provides drug and alcohol services across Essex.  
[www.openroad.org.uk](http://www.openroad.org.uk)  
Telephone: 0844 499 1323  
Local Centres:  
Basildon: 01268 531435  
Chelmsford: 01245 284772

Clacton: 01255 434186  
Colchester: 01206 766096  
Harlow: 01279 434621

Call the police on 999 if your safety is threatened.

#### Canvey Island Youth Project

[www.canveyislandyouthproject.org.uk](http://www.canveyislandyouthproject.org.uk)  
Telephone: 01268 683431  
Email: [ciyouthproject@virgin.net](mailto:ciyouthproject@virgin.net)  
A small local charity based on Canvey Island, Essex helping young people between 11 and 25 years. They have an advice and support drop-in which is open Monday to Friday 10am to 5pm as well as counselling and befriending services. They also offer specialist support for homelessness, drug and alcohol, sexual health, under 18, young parents and special needs (learning difficulties).

#### Colchester and Tendring Youth Enquiry Service

[www.yesyouthenquiryservice.org](http://www.yesyouthenquiryservice.org)  
Telephone: 01206 710771 (Colchester) or 01255 434601 (Tendring) - 24 hour answerphone  
y.e.s. provides a confidential, non-judgemental and informal service for young people between the ages of 11 and 25 within Colchester and Tendring, who are facing difficulties in their lives.

#### Emotional wellbeing and mental health service (EWMHS)

[www.nelft.nhs.uk/services-ewmhs](http://www.nelft.nhs.uk/services-ewmhs)  
Telephone: 0300 300 1600  
Provided by NELFT NHS Foundation Trust, this service is for anybody aged between 0-18, living in Essex. The service is also for young people with special educational needs (SEN) up to the age of 25. Any young person experiencing emotional well-being or mental health problems, or any parent, guardian, professional or teacher of a child who is experiencing emotional well-being and mental health difficulties, may access the service. You can access our service in two different ways:

- By a referral to our service via your GP, or other professional, or
- By self-referral, via telephone to the main EWMHS contact number (9am-5pm, Monday-Friday)

For out of hours and weekend Crisis Support Service, please call the general NELFT switchboard on 0300 555 1201 to be put through to immediate Crisis Support help.

### Young carers

#### Childline

Emotional support for children and young people on issues relating to child abuse, bullying etc.  
Helpline: 0800 1111  
[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)  
[www.childline.org.uk/explore/homefamilies/pages/youngcarers.aspx](http://www.childline.org.uk/explore/homefamilies/pages/youngcarers.aspx)

#### Barnardos

[www.barnardos.org.uk/what\\_we\\_do/our\\_work/young\\_carers.htm](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/young_carers.htm)  
Regional Office (South East & East Anglia)  
Telephone: 01293 610 660

#### The Children's Society Include Programme

[www.youngcarer.com](http://www.youngcarer.com)  
Telephone: 01962 711511

#### Carers Trust

[www.carers.org/help-directory/young-adult-carers-guide](http://www.carers.org/help-directory/young-adult-carers-guide)  
[www.carers.org/young-carers-stories](http://www.carers.org/young-carers-stories)  
Telephone: 0844 800 4361  
Email: [support@carers.org](mailto:support@carers.org)  
Babble: Babble has been created by Carers Trust as an online space where those aged under 18 who are caring for a family member or friend can chat, share their experiences and access information and advice.  
[www.babble.carers.org](http://www.babble.carers.org)

#### NHS Choices

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/pages/young-carers-rights.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/pages/young-carers-rights.aspx)

#### PAPYRUS (Prevention of Young Suicide)

[www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org)  
National Confidential Helpline - HOPELineUK: 0800 068 41 41  
(Mon-Fri 10am to 10pm; Weekends 2pm to 10pm; Bank Holidays 2pm to 5pm)

#### Matter

[www.youngercarersmatter.org](http://www.youngercarersmatter.org)  
Email: [matter@carers.org](mailto:matter@carers.org)  
Matter is a dedicated website and online community for young adult carers aged 16-25 to connect with each other, find useful information and get support online. Designed by and for young adult carers, it provides a safe space to take time out, make friends and share news and support. Content can be posted publicly or privately to the Matter community and the site is moderated by an Online Support team who are on hand to offer advice or provide one-to-one support via email.

**Local contacts:****Essex County Council**

[www.essex.gov.uk/Health-Social-Care/Families-and-childrens-social-care/Essex-Young-Carers](http://www.essex.gov.uk/Health-Social-Care/Families-and-childrens-social-care/Essex-Young-Carers)

**Essex Youth Service**

Targeted Youth Adviser Team,  
Chelmsford Youth Hub  
Telephone: 0333 013 8969  
Email: [young.carers@essex.gov.uk](mailto:young.carers@essex.gov.uk)

**Living Well Essex**

[www.livingwellessex.org/looking-after-someone/being-a-carer/young-carers](http://www.livingwellessex.org/looking-after-someone/being-a-carer/young-carers)

**Essex Young People's Drug & Alcohol Service (EYPDAS)**

[www.eypdas.org.uk](http://www.eypdas.org.uk)  
Telephone: 08444 991 323 or 01245 493311  
Text: EYPDAS to 80800 (free) - your call will be returned within 72 hours.  
Email: [eypdas@childrenssociety.org.uk](mailto:eypdas@childrenssociety.org.uk)  
Drop-In Service (Chelmsford) -  
Telephone: 01245 493311 to make an appointment.  
Talk to someone you trust about how you feel, it may be a teacher, school nurse, friend or relative. Also, there are also a number of local and national organisations who offer support and advice.

**Supporting Carers in Essex**

[www.carersinessex.org.uk](http://www.carersinessex.org.uk)  
Telephone: 0300 770 80 90  
Email: [info@carersinessex.org.uk](mailto:info@carersinessex.org.uk)

**Essex Carers Support**

[www.essexcarerssupport.org.uk](http://www.essexcarerssupport.org.uk)  
Telephone: 01255 474410  
Email: [admin@essexcarerssupport.org.uk](mailto:admin@essexcarerssupport.org.uk)

**Action for Young Carers**

[www.affc.org.uk/young-carers](http://www.affc.org.uk/young-carers)  
Telephone: 01621 851640 (free and confidential service)

**Emotional wellbeing and mental health service (EWMHS)**

[www.nelft.nhs.uk/services-ewmhs](http://www.nelft.nhs.uk/services-ewmhs)  
Telephone: 0300 300 1600  
Provided by NELFT NHS Foundation Trust, this service is for anybody aged between 0-18, living in Essex. The service is also for young people with special educational needs (SEN) up to the age of 25. Any young person experiencing emotional well-being or mental health problems, or any parent, guardian, professional or teacher of a child who is experiencing

emotional well-being and mental health difficulties, may access the service. You can access our service in two different ways:

- By a referral to our service via your GP, or other professional, or
- By self-referral, via telephone to the main EWMHS contact number (9am-5pm, Monday-Friday)

For out of hours and weekend Crisis Support Service, please call the general NELFT switchboard on 0300 555 1201 to be put through to immediate Crisis Support help.

**Supporting Carers and Families Together (SCAFT)**

[www.scaft.org](http://www.scaft.org)  
Telephone: 01268 741811  
Email: [info@scaft.org.uk](mailto:info@scaft.org.uk)  
Offers support to young carers in the Rochford District and the surrounding areas.

**Carers Choices**

[www.carerschoices.org](http://www.carerschoices.org)  
Telephone: 01268 881130  
Email: [care@carerschoices.org](mailto:care@carerschoices.org)  
Support young carers in Castle Point, Basildon and Wickford areas.

**Crossroads Care (Brentwood, Basildon and Districts)**

[www.brentwoodcrossroads.org.uk](http://www.brentwoodcrossroads.org.uk)  
Telephone: 01277 201789  
Email: [info@brentwoodcrossroads.org.uk](mailto:info@brentwoodcrossroads.org.uk)  
Run a Young Carers Club for carers aged 8-19 years in Brentwood.

**Chelmsford YMCA**

[www.chelmsfordymca.co.uk](http://www.chelmsfordymca.co.uk)  
Telephone: 01245 355677  
Runs a group for young carers (7-17 year olds) every Saturday.

**Colchester Carers Centre**

[www.colchestercarerscentre.co.uk](http://www.colchestercarerscentre.co.uk)  
Telephone: 01206 560997  
Email: [info@colchestercarerscentre.co.uk](mailto:info@colchestercarerscentre.co.uk)  
Runs a young carers project which offers respite, support and leisure time activities to young people (aged 8-12 years old) who are providing care for an adult family member.

**Crossroads Care Braintree District & Chelmsford**

[www.braintreecrossroadscare.org.uk](http://www.braintreecrossroadscare.org.uk)  
Telephone: 01376 529985  
Email: [braintreexroads@btconnect.com](mailto:braintreexroads@btconnect.com)  
Runs young carers clubs in Braintree and Halstead.

**Young people with disabilities****Whizz-Kidz**

[www.whizz-kidz.org.uk/get-our-help/young-people](http://www.whizz-kidz.org.uk/get-our-help/young-people)  
Telephone: 020 7233 6600  
Email: [info@whizz-kidz.org.uk](mailto:info@whizz-kidz.org.uk)

**Barnardos**

[www.barnardos.org.uk/what\\_we\\_do/our\\_work/disability](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/disability)  
Short breaks for disabled children:  
[www.barnardos.org.uk/what\\_we\\_do/our\\_work/disability-short-breaks.htm](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/disability-short-breaks.htm)  
Regional Office (South East & East Anglia)  
Telephone: 01293 610660

**Action for Kids**

[www.actionforkids.org](http://www.actionforkids.org)  
Telephone: 020 8347 8111

**Scope**

[www.scope.org.uk](http://www.scope.org.uk)  
Helpline: 0808 800 3333

**Sibs**

For brothers and sisters of disabled children and adults.  
[www.sibs.org.uk](http://www.sibs.org.uk)  
Telephone: 01535 645453  
Email: [info@sibs.org.uk](mailto:info@sibs.org.uk)

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National Confidential Helpline - HOPELineUK: 0800 068 41 41 (Mon-Fri 10am to 10pm; Weekends 2pm to 10pm; Bank Holidays 2pm to 5pm)

**Local contacts:****Essex Local Offer**

Run by Essex County Council for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) up to the age of 25.  
[www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk](http://www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk)

**IS Essex**

Help Essex parents and young people with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) understand the local referral process and understand the range of local services available to them.  
Telephone: 01245 608300.  
Text/Call: 07506 566856  
Email: [info@isessex.org](mailto:info@isessex.org)  
One of the iEssex team will get back to you within 2 working days.

**Disability Essex**

[www.disabilityessex.org](http://www.disabilityessex.org)  
Helpline: 0844 412 1770

**DIAL Basildon and South Essex**

[www.dialbasildon.co.uk](http://www.dialbasildon.co.uk)  
Telephone: 01268 285676  
Email: [enquiries@dialbasildon.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@dialbasildon.co.uk)

**Autism Anglia**

[www.autism-anglia.org.uk](http://www.autism-anglia.org.uk)  
Telephone: 01206 577678  
Email: [info@autism-anglia.org.uk](mailto:info@autism-anglia.org.uk)

**Youth Plus Ongar**

A club for Young People with disabilities  
[www.youthplus.net](http://www.youthplus.net)  
Telephone: 01277 363307  
Email: [Brenda@youthplus.net](mailto:Brenda@youthplus.net)

**Canvey Island Youth Project**

[www.canveyislandyouthproject.org.uk](http://www.canveyislandyouthproject.org.uk)  
Telephone: 01268 683431  
Email: [ciyouthproject@virgin.net](mailto:ciyouthproject@virgin.net)  
A small local charity based on Canvey Island, Essex helping young people between 11 and 25 years. They have an advice and support drop-in which is open Monday to Friday 10am to 5pm as well as counselling and befriending services. They also offer specialist support for homelessness, drug and alcohol, sexual health, under 18, young parents and special needs (learning difficulties).

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