



**Supporting young people's  
wellbeing during physical  
activity sessions**

This guide was **co-produced with young people** and includes information on how to support them during your sessions.



You're not expected to be an expert, but it's helpful to know how to check-in and how to signpost to information and support.



## What is mental health?

Just like physical health, everybody has mental health and we need to take care of it. Everyone's mental health is on a spectrum and can range from good to poor. We all experience mental health differently too. Mental health problems aren't a sign of weakness.



Scan QR for more on:

- Mental health problems that young people experience – like depression, anxiety, eating problems.
- Symptoms young people experience – like anger, self-harm or panic attacks.



**Remember, you're not expected to be a mental health expert.**

## Spotting signs

A range of factors can impact young people's mental health. There may not be an obvious reason and a young person may not know why they're feeling the way they do.



## Focus on spotting changes in their behaviour, thoughts and feelings:

- Is the young person not enjoying activities they usually like?
- Do they appear tired or low in energy? Or do they appear more energetic than normal?
- Is the young person quieter and more withdrawn? Or being louder than usual?

- Are they detached, restless or struggling to concentrate on the session?
- Have their appearance and/or habits changed recently?



## Checking in

Use **non-judgemental language** and **open questions**:



- How have the last few days/weeks been for you?
- How have you been feeling?
- What's making you feel like that?
- You mention that you feel ..... – could you tell me more about that?

## Signposting to support

**Listen** before signposting.

**Empower** young people to choose how they access support by sharing options:

- Who's currently supporting you?
- What can I do to help / what would be helpful for you?
- Can I share some support options with you?

## Local support services

Search these databases for a range of support services for young people in your local area.



**Anna Freud**  
Youth  
Wellbeing  
Directory



**Hub of  
Hope**  
Database

Add details for your local services:

## CYP support services

**Childline** – 24hr helpline (0800 1111), email and online counselling service

**The Mix** – Online live chat and phone (0808 808 4994) counselling service

**YoungMinds** – 24/7 text line (text YM to 85258)



**Beat** – Online chat service to support young people with eating problems





## CAMHS

Young people may choose to speak to their **GP**, who can provide information or refer them to a specialist NHS service, such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

Waiting times vary, so offer a range of other support options.



## If it's an emergency

If a young person is experiencing a mental health crisis (i.e. they feel at breaking point) then they need urgent help.

Contact **NHS 111** for medical advice or **Samaritans (116 123)** for emotional support. If they aren't safe, stay with them and **call 999**.



## Following-up

It may take a young person time to seek help. Be patient.

Continue to show you care by checking-in and listening.

Simply saying, **“I’m here if you want to talk”** reminds a young person you’re there if needed.



## Supporting yourself

Supporting young people can be very rewarding. But, it can also be overwhelming. It's important that you **look after your own wellbeing.**

Explore how you can support yourself using the 5 ways to wellbeing:



**Connect** – put time aside to chat with another coach

**Be active** – go on a walk and reflect

**Take notice** – take a new route to your session

**Learn** – try a new skill

**Give** – take a break



## Support for coaches

**Mind:** Call 0300 123 3393  
(weekdays 9am–6pm) or  
visit our webpage

**Samaritans:** Call 116 123 (24/7)

**Shout:** Text 'SHOUT' 85258 (24/7)

Contact your **GP** or **NHS 111**





To find out more:  
**[mind.org.uk/sport](http://mind.org.uk/sport)**

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