

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS WEEK 2023: COMMUNICATIONS TOOLKIT



Working together to improve the health and wellbeing of our communities



COMMUNICATIONS TOOLKIT

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WHAT IS
MENTAL
HEALTH
AWARENESS
WEEK?



Mental Health Awareness Week 2023 - 15-21st May

Mental Health Awareness Week is an annual event which prompts everyone to focus on achieving good mental health.

The Mental Health Foundation started the event and continues to set the theme, organise and host the week.

The event has grown to become one of the biggest awareness weeks across the UK and globally



Mental Health
Foundation

This year the theme is
Anxiety.

Anxiety is one of the most common mental health problems that effect us. In a recent survey carried out by The Mental Health Foundation, a 1/4 of adults said they felt so anxious that it stopped them from doing the things they want to do some or all of the time. 6 in 10 adults feel this way, at least some of the time.

By focusing on Anxiety as the theme this year, it will help to raise awareness and understanding, as well as providing people with the tools they need to help stop it from becoming a problem.





This years' theme is
Anxiety

What is Anxiety?



Experiencing a certain amount of stress and anxiety is perfectly normal, but when that develops into a feeling of apprehension or dread in a situation where there is no actual real threat and is disproportionate to the situation being faced, this may become a problem.

Unlike stress, anxiety persists even after the situation has passed. In some cases, anxiety can escalate into panic attacks or an anxiety disorder and can affect a person's day-to-day life.(1)

Living with anxiety can be difficult, but there are ways to deal with anxiety that really work, and spotting the signs of anxiety is the first step.

Signs & Symptoms of Anxiety

Feeling tired,
restless or
irritable
pins and needles

Trouble
sleeping

Worrying about the
past or future, or
thinking something
bad will happen

Feeling shaky or
trembly, dizzy
or sweating
more

Dry
mouth

Headaches,
tummy aches
or muscle pain

Being unable to
concentrate or
make decisions

Noticing your
heartbeat gets
stronger, faster or
irregular, or you get
short of breath when
you start feeling
anxious

Different Types of Anxiety

There are many different types of anxiety, but here are some examples of common types of anxiety:

Generalised anxiety disorder (GAD)

The main symptom of GAD is excessive worrying about different activities and events. You may feel anxious a lot of the time if you have GAD. You might feel 'on edge' and hyper-alert to your surroundings.

Panic disorder

Panic disorder means you have regular panic attacks with no particular trigger. They can happen suddenly and feel very intense and frightening. You could feel detached from your body during an attack, or be fearful about having panic attacks in the future.

Social anxiety disorder

It's normal to worry about social or performance situations. Social anxiety disorder, also known as social phobia, is when you will have an intense fear or dread of social situations. This can happen before, during or after an event.

Phobias

A phobia is an overwhelming fear of an object, place, situation, feeling or animal. Phobias are a more intense feeling than fear. They develop when a person has heightened feelings of danger towards a situation or object.

More information can be found here:
[Types of anxiety - Mental Health UK \(mentalhealthuk.org\)](https://www.mentalhealthuk.org/types-of-anxiety)
[Types of Anxiety - Anxiety UK](https://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/types-of-anxiety)

every mind matters

Make the first move for your mental health with Better Health Every Mind Matters



<https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters> This gives info about the overall programme. When the campaign launches you will be able to download Couch to 5k and Active 10 from the homepage.



This Mental Health Awareness Week the **NHS - endorsed Better Health, Every Mind Matters campaign** is trying to get people to recognise they're experiencing symptoms of anxiety and nudge them towards the positive gains of movement/activity in order to reduce their symptoms of anxiety.

Call to action - is simply get people to **search 'Every Mind Matters'**

Example message - Doing little things every day to be more active can really lift your mood and put a smile on your face.

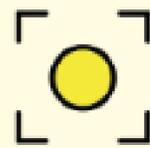
Resources to support the campaign will be available on the **Campaign Resource Centre.**



every mind matters

Tips on managing anxiety

Try building these self-care tips into your daily routine, as doing them regularly can make a big difference.



Shift your focus

Some people find mindfulness and meditation (including breathing exercises and relaxation) help to calm anxiety and reduce tension by focussing awareness on the present moment. Try these [NHS-recommended relaxation exercises](#)



Understand your anxiety

Keeping a diary of what you are doing and how you feel at different times may help you understand why you're anxious and identify ways to manage or get rid of anxiety.



Face your fears gradually

Avoiding situations or relying on habits we think will keep us safe might actually make our anxiety worse. Slowly facing up to a situation might help, and eventually it will feel OK.



Try self-help techniques

Our short videos and practical guides to cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) can help you deal with worries, anxiety and unhelpful thoughts by working through problems in new ways and helping you build resilience. Try our [self-help CBT techniques](#)



Make time for worries

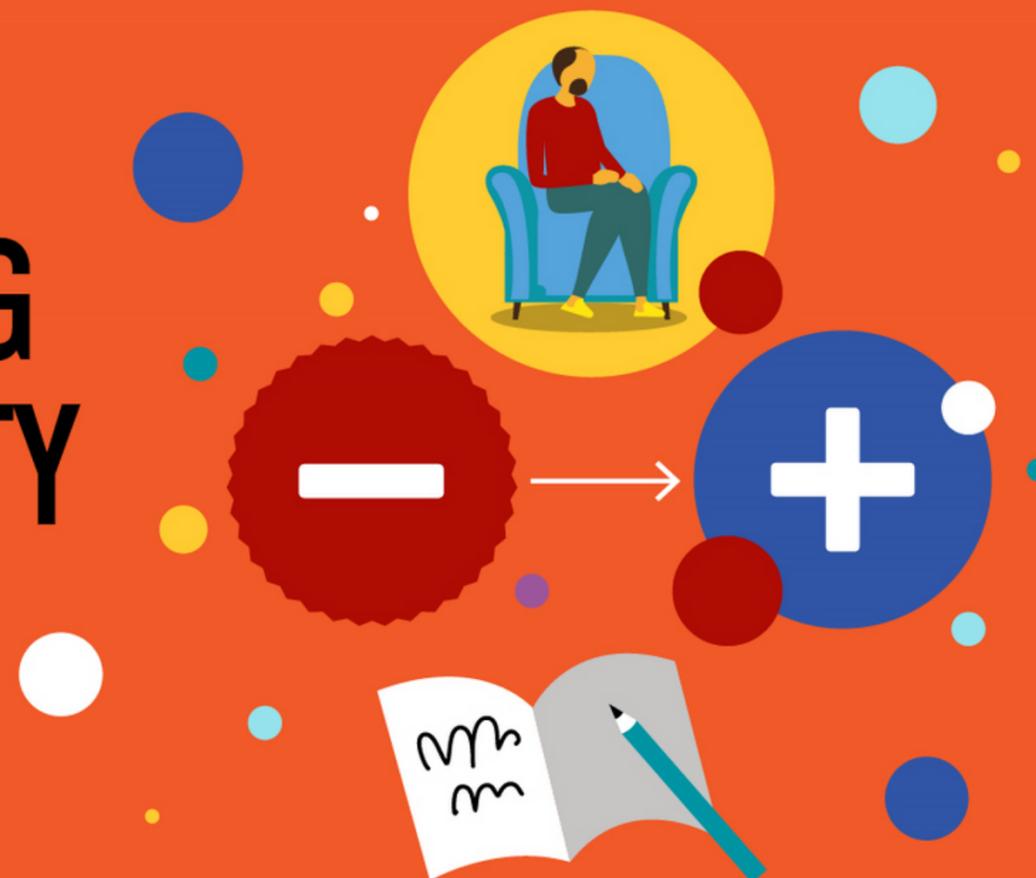
If anxiety or worry is taking over your day, try setting a daily "worry time" to go through your concerns. Doing this at a set time every day can help you to focus on other things. Check out our [video on tackling your worries](#)



Look at the bigger picture

If we're feeling anxious about something, we might get stuck on the details and stop seeing things clearly. Thinking about your problem or situation from someone else's view can make it easier to come up with a plan for tackling it. What advice would you give to a friend?

TOP TIPS FOR DEALING WITH ANXIETY



TIP 01

Try a short breathing exercise

TIP 02

Learn how to manage anxious thoughts

TIP 03

Keep a mood diary

Visit **Every Mind Matters** for more tips and advice

Sign up to our free anxiety-easing email programme that offers expert advice to help you stay on top of your mental wellbeing and shows you how to make these new steps part of your daily routine

Search [Every Mind Matters](#) to make the first move for your mental health

Anxiety and cost of living

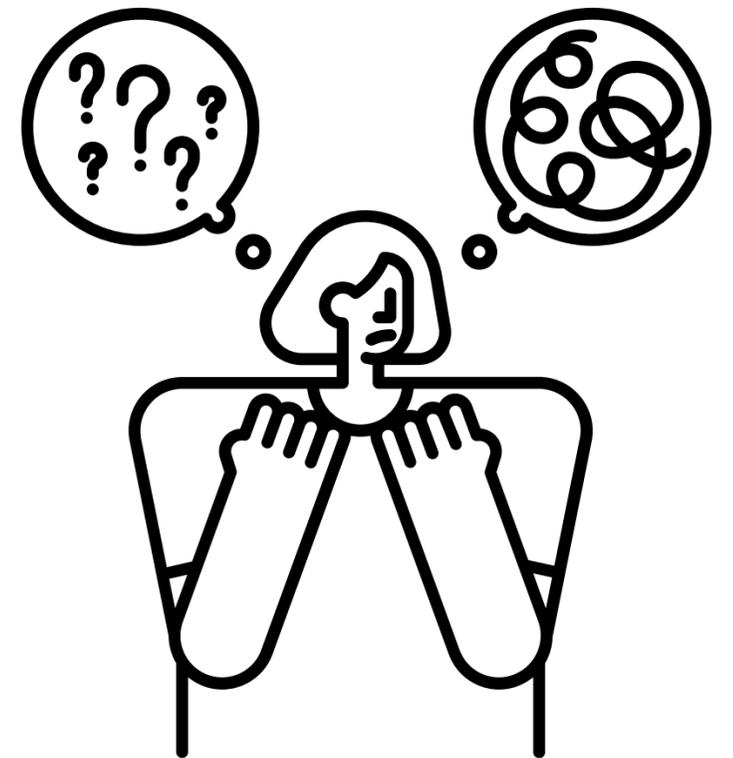
"UK adults are most concerned about not being able to maintain their standard of living (71%), heat their home (66%) or pay general monthly household bills (61%). Significantly, half (50%) of UK adults were at least a little worried about being able to afford food over the next few months, rising to 67% of younger adults aged 18 to 34."

Mental Health Foundation

Many of us will be facing the worry and anxiety that comes with the effects of the rising cost of living, and it can be overwhelming knowing where to start in getting the support you need. Getting advice and support can really help manage these worries.

Here are some websites which offer tips on debt management, housing concerns, unemployment and general self-care:

- [Getting support -cost-of-living_|_Mental Health Foundation](#)
- [The link between money and mental health - Mind](#)
- [Mental Health Advice - Cost-Of-Living _|_YoungMinds](#)
- [Mental health and money : Mental Health & Money Advice](#)



Mental Health in the Workplace



Why is this important?

Promoting good mental health at work is a key part of being a responsible employer who values the contribution of employees. Almost 1 in 7 people experience mental health problems in the workplace (The Mental Health Foundation).

Mental Health week presents a great opportunity to support employees mental health.

Resources to improve mental health & wellbeing in the workplace can be found here:

- Mental Health in the Workplace is a toolkit designed to help employers take actions to build a culture that champions good mental health.
- Understanding what works for workplace mental health is a report outlining the findings of research into workplace health interventions and what businesses can do with this evidence.

Mental Health UK are hosting a webinar on How to manage anxiety in the workplace for MHAW.

Follow this link to book on: Webinars - Mental Health UK ([mentalhealth-uk.org](https://www.mentalhealth-uk.org)).



Children, young people and anxiety

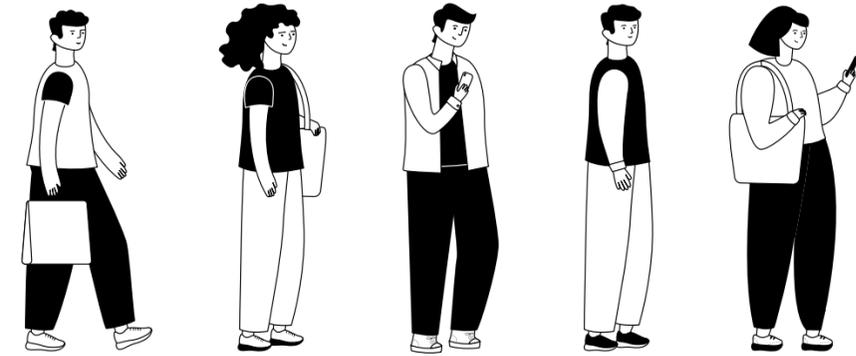
All children and young people will feel worried at some point this is part of growing up. Anxiety becomes a problem when it becomes overwhelming and unmanageable. This can leave a young person feeling worn out and isolated.

Visit Young Minds for tips on how to support young people with anxiety.

Every Mind Matters also provides information on supporting young people with their mental health including tips for parents and carers.

How you feel matters: Getting help in Milton Keynes
(mksendlocaloffer.co.uk)

Shout text line - free, confidential and 24/7 text support service for young people (aged 11-25). Text **REFLECT to 85258** to start a free, confidential text conversation with a trained volunteer.



**Free webinar - Anna Freud
Anxiety in schools and colleges
22 May 4:30pm – 6pm
Details here**

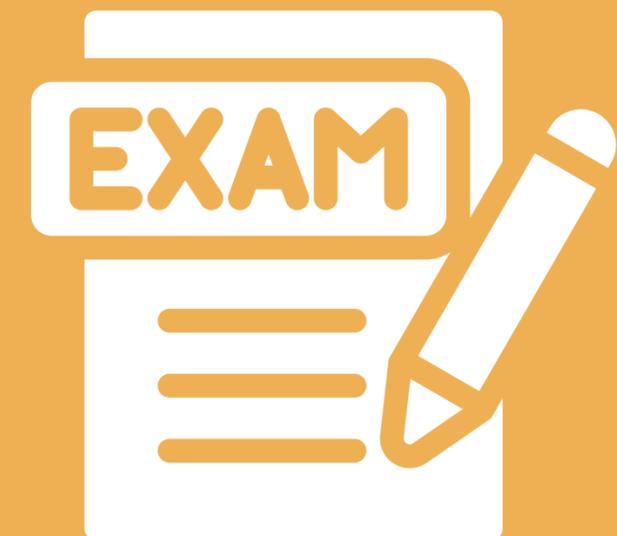
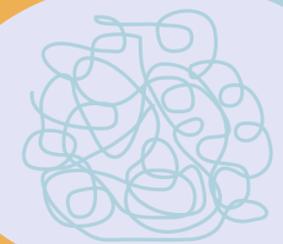
Tips for exam time and anxiety

Certain points in a young persons life may generate heightened feelings of anxiety such as exam time. Things that can help your child in the lead up to exams:

- Work with your child to find what revision style works for them.
- Encourage your child to take revision breaks and find a balance between studying and doing things they find enjoyable and relaxing.
- Make sure they are eating and drinking at regular intervals.
- Reassure them – reinforce that you are and will be proud of them no matter what happens.
- Plan a treat or an activity together to mark the end of the exams.
- Set aside one to one time so that they can talk to you about any worries.
- Let them know their feelings are valid and normal, but also offer support and solutions where possible.
- Anxiety is often worst at night and this means it is useful to encourage a good bedtime routine.
- Work with them to develop relaxation techniques.
- Remain positive and hopeful!
- **If anxiety and stress start impacting their day-to-day life, seek help from your GP.**



www.youngminds.org.uk



Support for Young People - Mind BLMK

Mind BLMK Young Person's Sanctuary's -

Luton Venue - ResoLUTiONs, 89 Castle Street, Luton LU1 3A

Bedford Venue - Scheduled to launch on Monday 15th May at

Rushcourt address - CAMHS, 5-7 Rush Ct, Bedford MK40 3JT

Central Beds - (venue still to be confirmed)

Mind BLMK Young Person's Wellbeing Navigator Service -

This new service launching on May 2nd will be supporting some of the most vulnerable young people in Central Bedfordshire. Promoting independence and resilience, the Young Person's Wellbeing Navigators will provide 1:1, 8 x 1-hour sessions to support and equip young people with the tools to navigate life's challenges and positively manage their mental health and well-being.

Drop-in sessions: every Thursday 4 pm – 6 pm at Flitwick Hub in Dunstable Street.

Young Person's Sanctuary
Supporting young people's mental health across Luton

there is always someone there who will listen

14-17yrs

4-10pm

A safe, non-judgemental, and relaxed space

Where?
Luton

Location:
Young Persons Hub, ResoLUTION
89 Castle Street, Luton LU1 3A

Open 4pm - 10pm
(Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday)

To find out more:
0300 330 0648
YPS@mind-blmk.org.uk

Charity No. 1068724 www.mind-blmk.org.uk

For further information or copies of posters, please call: 0300 330 0648

Young Person's Wellbeing Navigator Service

16-25yrs

Available in Central Beds 1-2-1 support

Wellbeing and mental health support

www.mind-blmk.org.uk

To find out more:
0300 330 0648
ypwns@mind-blmk.org.uk

Charity No. 1068724

Central Bedfordshire Council
Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes

Ways to support Mental Health Awareness Week:



Share the example messages on social media and re-share messages from key organisations during the week using the hashtag #BLMKMHAW



Put information on local services, campaigns and support in newsletters and email briefs or web pages.



Signpost to local support and campaigns on your website

Do one thing - 10 ideas to support mental health awareness week



1. Check in on your mental health and the wellbeing of those around you. Reach out to friend to go for a walk or have a cuppa.

2. Learn more on how to support your wellbeing. Visit Every Mind Matters and complete a Mind plan

3. Support your local mental health charity by raising funds or volunteering

4. Help the conversation on mental health in your local community by sharing mental health awareness week resources and local service information.

5. At work- If you are holding a team meeting consider starting with a wellbeing check-in or a Tea and Talk session. Ban the descriptor, 'I'm fine'.

6. Learn more about suicide prevention book on a free See the Signs course and undertake the 20 minutes Zero Suicide alliance online training-search ZSA training

7. Aim to be more active to support your mental health. Add a little extra physical activity to your routine. Exercise is a good way to deal with anxiety.

8. Learn more about coping with anxiety. Read and share this guide from the Mental Health Foundation

9. Spend time in nature. It can help us feel calmer and less stressed. This can be as simple as tending some flowers in a window box or going for a walk in the woods.

10. Try a relaxing activity such as mindfulness, meditation or yoga. Give some dedicated time to one of these activities.





#BLMKMHAW

Example Social Media Posts



"The theme of this year's #MentalHealthAwarenessWeek is anxiety. Understand more about anxiety and the things you can do to help here. #ToHelpMyAnxiety"

"There are lots of things you can do to help with the feeling of anxiety. Click here for some useful tips this #MentalHealthAwarenessWeek #BLMKMHAW

Many people struggle with feelings of anxiety. Support #MentalHealthAwarenessWeek to help raise awareness of anxiety and ways we can all help. #ToHelpMyAnxiety

It can be difficult when someone you know is experiencing anxiety. This #MentalHealthAwarenessWeek click here for tips to support a friend or family member. #BLMKMHAW

Be sure to use our local hashtag on your posts: #BLMKMHAW



#BLMKMHAW

Example Social Media Posts



*"This mental health awareness week move more and feel better, Doing little things every day can really lift your mood. Search Every Mind Matter
[#MentalHealthAwarenessWeek#everymindmatters](#)*

*"There are lots of things you can do to help with the feeling of anxiety. Good for your body,good for your mind. Search Every Mind Matters
[#MentalHealthAwarenessWeek#everymindmatters](#)*

*Small steps can lift your mood. A brisk walk can boost energy and help clear your mind. Search Every Mind Matters for more tips on helping with anxiety.
[#MentalHealthAwarenessWeek#everymindmatters](#)*

*Difficulty relaxing? Physical activity is a great way to burn off nervous energy. Search Every Mind Matters for more tips
[#MentalHealthAwarenessWeek](#)
[#BLMKMHAW#everymindmatters](#)*

Be sure to use our local hashtag on your posts: #BLMKMHAW

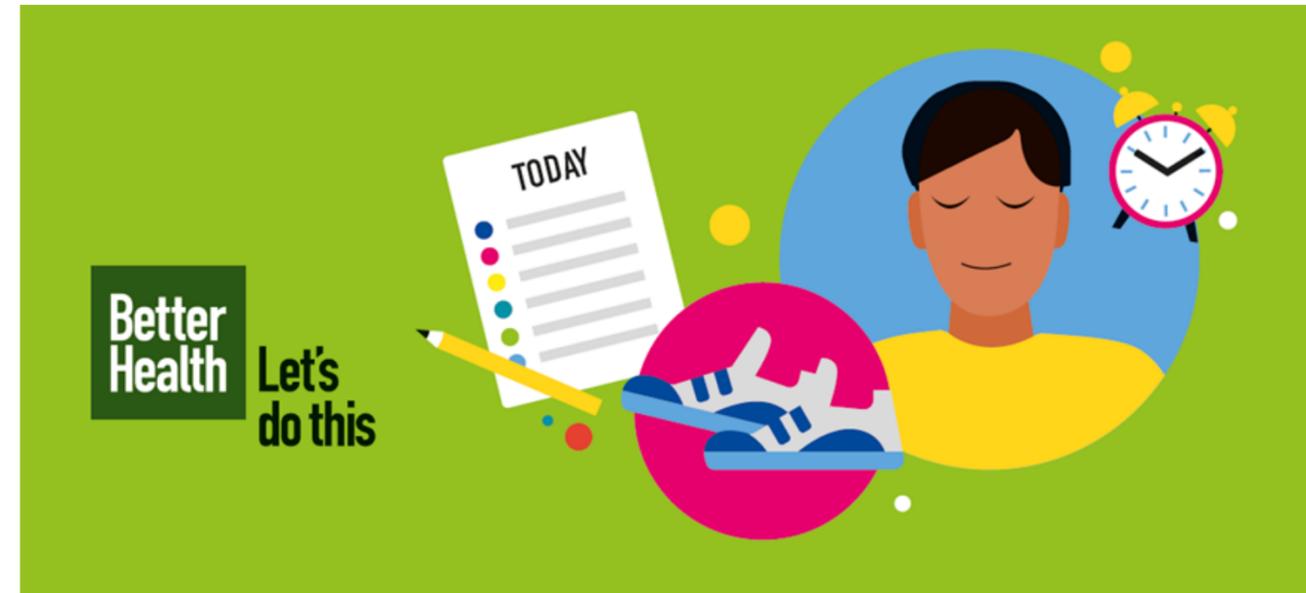
Copy Template (copy and paste into newsletters)

Good for your body = Good for your mind

Move more and feel better.

Getting active doesn't have to be a hassle. Doing little things every day to be more active can really lift your mood and put a smile on your face. And every step you take is a step towards feeling great. A daily brisk walk can boost your energy, lift your mood, clear your mind and stop your worries going into overdrive. Physical activity releases feel-good hormones called endorphins, which help us sleep better. The better we sleep, the better our energy levels, mood and concentration. Doing something active with a friend gives you a good opportunity to chat and connecting with others can help you feel less stressed.

Search **Every Mind Matters** to create a mental wellbeing action plan just for you. Answer 5 quick questions to get your free plan with tips to help you deal with stress and anxiety, improve your sleep, boost your mood and feel more in control. Search Every Mind Matters today for more tips and help to get started.



Further help and support

Free NHS talking therapies – If you think you might be stressed, anxious or depressed, you can refer yourself for free non-urgent talking therapies which provide evidence-based treatment for anxiety and depression. Talking therapies also offer a range of free wellbeing webinars on demand that include helpful wellbeing tips and techniques to help you feel better. Visit Wellbeing Webinars :: MK Talking Therapies for information on how to access.

If you are really struggling with your mental health and it is disrupting your everyday life, seek professional help and talk to your GP.

RESOURCES TO HELP YOU SUPPORT
MHAW



15 to 21 May 2023

Mental Health Awareness Week



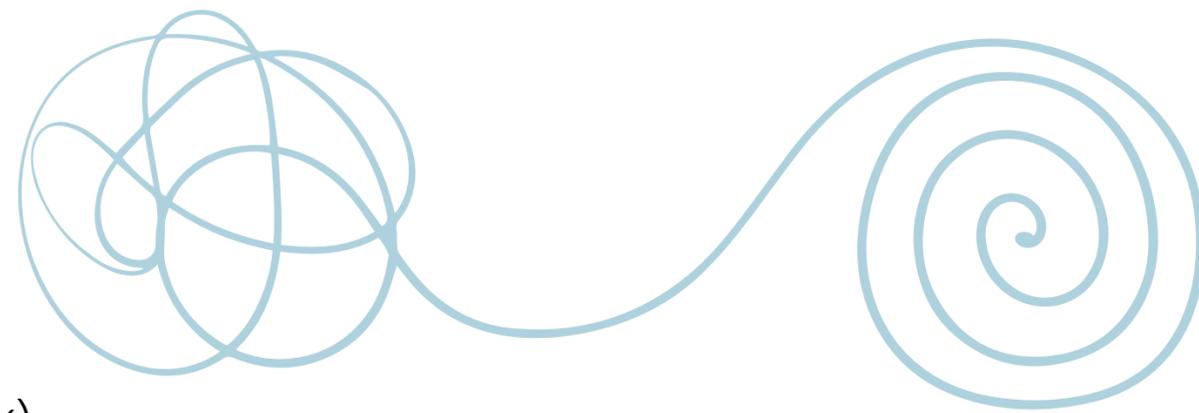
#ToHelpMyAnxiety

Mental Health Foundation Resources

Follow the link [here](#) to posters, logos and background images to use for the week

Share the Tips for dealing with anxiety [guide](#)

Anxiety Support and Information :



- **Every Mind Matters** - Anxiety NHS (www.nhs.uk)
- **Mind** - Anxiety and panic attacks
- **Anxiety UK** - National charity helping people with Anxiety
- **Young Minds** - What is Anxiety? | Symptoms of Anxiety & Getting Help |
- **Heads Up** - Men Mental Health support and information
- **Samaritans** - offers a listening service which is open 24 hours a day, FREE PHONE on 116 123

Local Services

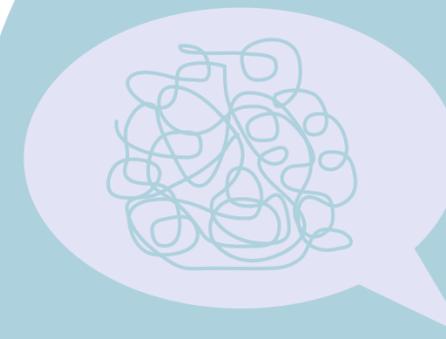
- **NHS Talking Therapies** (www.nhs.uk)
MK Talking Therapies
Bedfordshire Talking Therapies
- **Keeping Well BLMK** is a free and confidential service offering wellbeing and psychological support to key workers in the Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes area. How to contact us: Phone: 01908 724 227 Email: keepingwell.blmk@nhs.net
- **Mind BLMK** -Mental health support across BLMK Phone: 0300 330 0648

Urgent Help and support

If you are experiencing a mental health crisis for the first time you should contact your GP or **NHS 111 option 2** if you live in Luton, Central Bedfordshire or Bedford Borough. If you are in Milton Keynes you can call the CNWL Urgent advice line on **0800 0234 650**.

The Samaritans are there 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to listen. Call them any time on **116 123** if you need somebody to talk to.

Mind BLMK's Crisis Cafés are a free service available 365 days of the year, 5.00pm-11.00pm. To speak to a member of the team, please call **01525 722 225** , or please www.mind-blmk.org.uk/how-we-can-help/crisis-support



In an emergency

If you or somebody else's life is in danger contact the emergency services on 999 or go to A&E

Thank You

*This toolkit has been produced by the BLMK
Suicide Prevention Campaign group and
Public Health .For further information on
the toolkit please email
Sophie.Jordan@milton-keynes.gov.uk*

