# Mental Health Apps for Children and Young People

## 1. Calm Harm

**What:** Calm Harm provides tasks to help children to resist or manage the urge to self-harm. They can make it private by setting a password, and personalise the app. They will be able to track your progress and notice change.

**Awards:** This Sector Awards Winner 2019; Gold DBA Design Effectiveness Awards 2019; Northern Digital Awards Winner 2018; DXA UK Digital Experience Awards GOLD AWARD WINNER 2018; UXUK Awards Celebrating Excellence in User Experience Winner 2018; Positive Practice, Mental Health Collaborative, AXAPPP Health Teach & You Awards 2017.

**Recommended by the NHS**

**Age:** 12+, although under 12s can use with parental guidance

**Underpinning:** Calm Harm is an award-winning app developed for teenage mental health charity stem4 by Dr Nihara Krause, Consultant Clinical Psychologist, using the basic principles of an evidence-based therapy called Dialectical Behavioural Therapy (DBT).

**Content:** Calm Harm views the urge to self-harm as a wave. It aims to help children and young people 'ride the wave'. It uses activities named: Comfort, Distract, Express Yourself, Release, Random and Breathe, giving children 5 or 15 minutes of tasks and strategies to help them to ride the 'wave' until it has gone. Once the urge is over, children fill out a diary entry to log and track their urges.
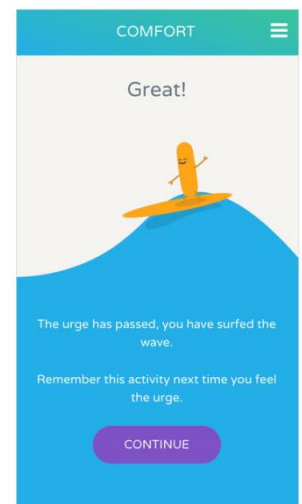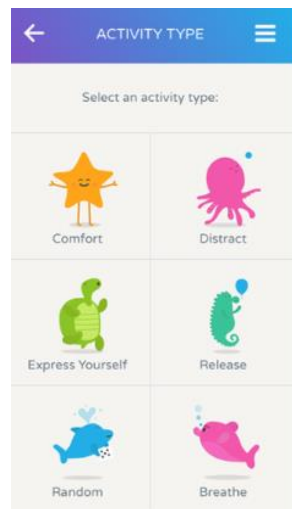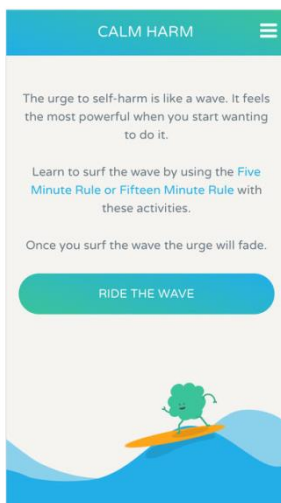
## 2. Catch It

**What:** Learn how to manage feelings like anxiety and depression with Catch It. The app will teach young people how to look at problems in a different way, turn negative thoughts into positive ones and claims to improve their mental wellbeing.

**Age:** 12+

**Recommended by the NHS**

**Underpinning:** Catch It is a joint project between the Universities of Liverpool and Manchester, to help users better understand their moods through use of an ongoing diary. The app was designed to illustrate some of the key principles of psychological approaches to mental health and well-being, and specifically Cognitive Behavioural

Therapy (CBT).

**Content:** The app acts as a diary and allows children to record their negative moods. Once they have done this, the app takes the children through 3 simple steps:

- Catch It' records and rates your mood
- 'Check It' asks you to take a moment to reflect on what you're thinking (i.e. what would you say to your friend if they thought this)
- 'Change It' asks you to think about a better way of dealing with a problem
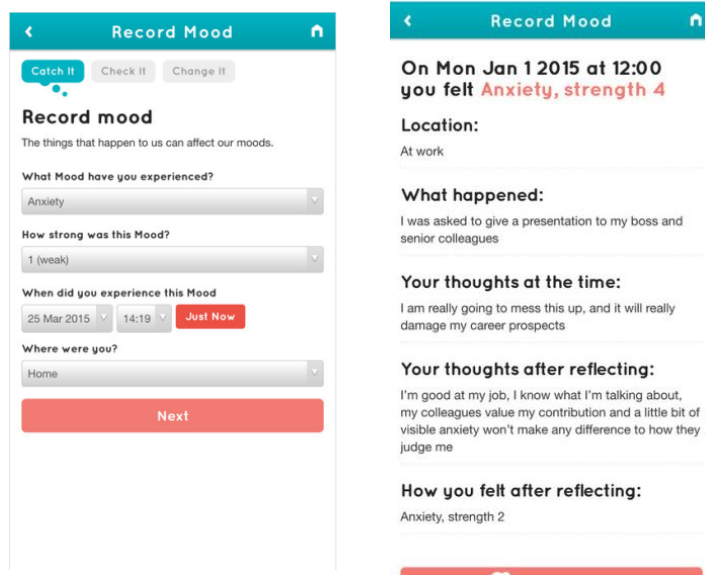


## 3. MeeTwo

**What:** The MeeTwo app provides a safe and secure forum for teenagers wanting to discuss any issue affecting their lives. They can anonymously get advice from experts or other teenagers going through similar experiences in a wide range areas such as mental health, self-harming, bullying, relationships and friendships.

**Age:** 13+

**Awards:** Tech4Good Connected Society Award 2019, Tech4Good People's Choice Award 2019, Global Innovators Summit 2019 Exceptional Achievement Award

**Recommended by the NHS**

**Underpinning:** MeeTwo is curated by qualified psychologists. Within the app, trained 'super peers' who are actually undergraduate psychology students guide advice chains and ensure everyone gets supported. They also provide advice for other users to model their responses on. MeeTwo is based on positive feedback, advice and social support to build confidence, increase wellbeing and promote emotional resilience (Prince-Embury, 2013). MeeTwo builds on empirical success (Cowie and Smith, 2010) of the peer support model – where young people help each other, by creating a free, standardised, and scalable solution that is accessible to the 84% (YouGov, 2014) of UK teenagers who have a smart phone.

**Content:** MeeTwo allows young people access to real world support as well as specialist support charities such as ChildLine, Young Minds and Brook. Young people can create their own posts, anonymously expressing how they are feeling. They then get replies from other young people and undergraduate psychology students. Young people can also search for a variety of issues, showing them posts from other young people going through that issue.
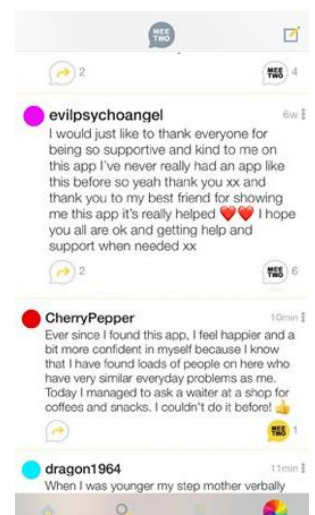
## 4. DistrACT

**What:** Easy and discreet access to information and support about self-harm and suicidal thoughts through the award-winning distrACT app.

**Awards:** Winner, British Medical Association 'Patient Information Award' 2019 (wellbeing); Highly commended for the 2018 National Healthwatch England #NHS70 Award

**Recommended by the NHS**

**Age:** 17+

**Underpinning:** This app has been created for the health and education sectors by health professionals, experts in self-harm and suicide prevention, and people with lived experience of self-harm.

**Content:** The distrACT app aims to help young people get a better understand urges to self-harm, and encourages them to monitor and manage symptoms. It provides articles with information about self-harm, how to self-help, emergency contacts, information around getting general support and where the young people can find local support. Within the chill zone, there are articles leading the young people to resources for various activities: art, books, films, music, poems, quotes, stories and videos.