

## Information for Parents/Carers

It can be scary to hear that your child is struggling, and it can also be difficult to know what to do. It is really important to not only look after your child, but also yourself. Remember, there are lots of people you can reach out to for help.

We appreciate that looking after a child who is emotionally overwhelmed can be upsetting and stressful for parents and carers, but there are things you can do. You might want to rush in, but don't forget to look after yourself too. If you can, try to continue to do things you enjoy, such as going out with friends, exercise and hobbies. Learn to identify and accept your own feelings. It may help to write them down. Don't forget that you can reach out to others, such as talking to a friend, relative or therapist.

When you notice your child is distressed, for example, their sleeping, eating and/or personal hygiene habits have changed, you should:

- Encourage them to check in with you
- Read their safety plan – if they don't have one, you could build one together
- Validate how they feel, and remind them that you are always there
- Create opportunities to connect and be with your child, even if they don't want to talk e.g. a family movie or game night, or a family dinner night
- Talk to you, a relative, a friend, or a support line e.g. **ChildLine (0800 1111) or Samaritans (116 123)**

Consider creative ways to communicate, such as:

- Post-it notes under the bedroom door e.g. *"I'm here for you if you want to talk", "I'm thinking of you", "I've noticed that today seems like a difficult day for you"*
- Use of objects around the house e.g. fridge magnets – decide which magnet signifies *"I am struggling today"* so the young person can place it in a pre-agreed position to notify you of their mood, without having to say it out loud.
- Using texts and/or emoji's to express thoughts and feelings – this can work similarly to the fridge magnets.

It may be helpful to share any concerns you have regarding the young person's mood with an adult in school or college that knows them well. Ideally, discuss this with your child first. If your child also has a medical condition, we recommend that you let their medical team know, as it may affect their healthcare management.

If you are concerned about your child hurting themselves, it is important to reduce accessibility to all household medications, including painkillers and vitamins, and sharp objects are locked away. This needs to be in all houses where your child stays.

If hospital treatment is not required but you are concerned about risk of suicide, please arrange an emergency appointment with your GP. Out of these hours please call the new 111 Wales Service on telephone number 111, where you will be directed to the most appropriate service.

You can also contact the CAMHS Parent Advice Line, 9-5pm Monday-Friday, on 07917 244 125.

**In cases of an emergency where medical treatment is needed and/or risk is imminent, go to A&E or call 999 if required.**

Use your phone camera to scan these QR codes to access the websites.

<p><b>Calm harm</b></p>  	<p><b>For Me – the Childline app</b></p>  
<p><b>Young Minds website</b></p>  	<p><b>Melo website</b></p>  
<p><b>Stay Alive app</b></p>  	<p><b>BlueIce app</b></p>  
<p> <b>GIG Cymru NHS Wales</b> Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Aneurin Bevan University Health Board</p> <p>Paediatric Clinical Psychology Service</p>  	