



This handbook has been put together by
NHS St Helens Clinical Commissioning Group and St Helens Council

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A young person's guide to health & well-being




St Helens Clinical Commissioning Group

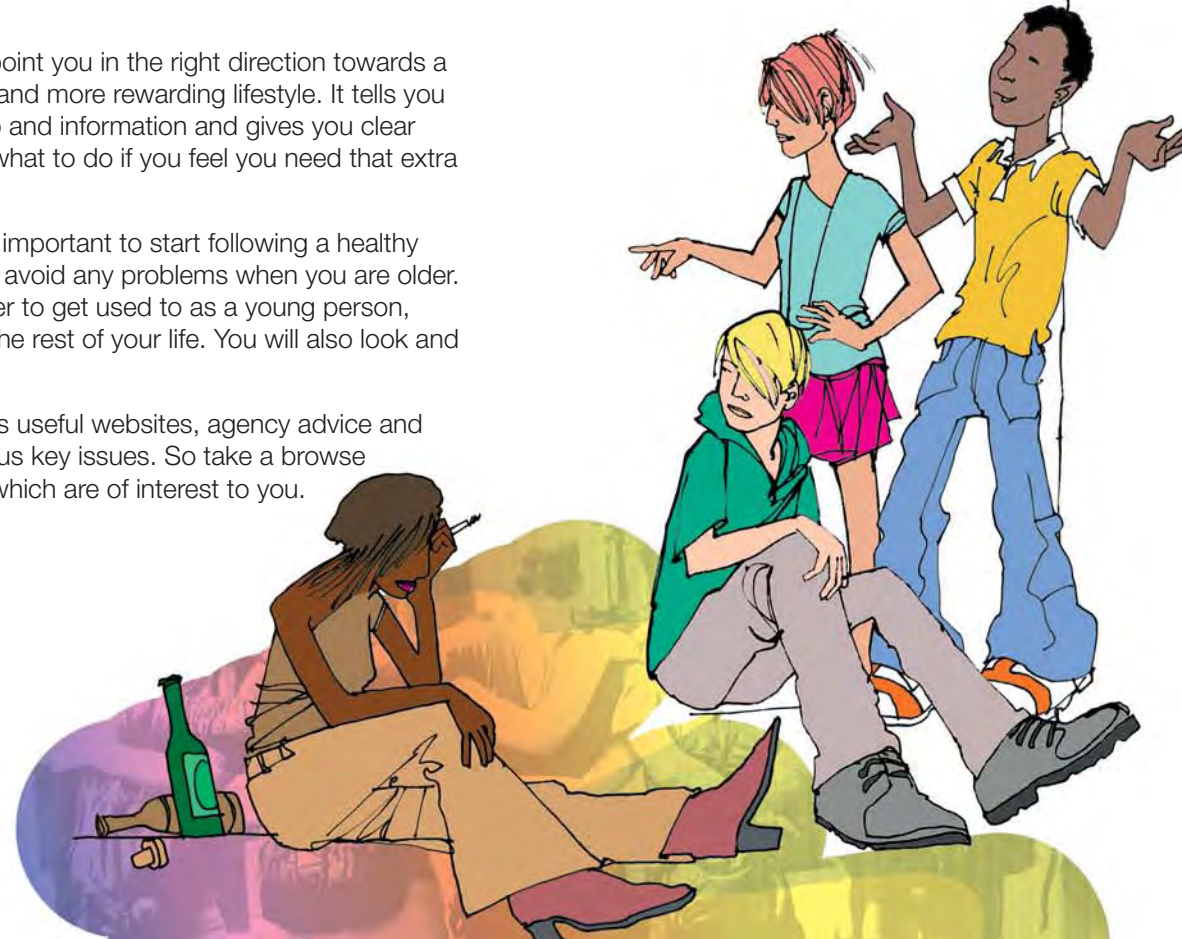

St. Helens Council

Welcome

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.



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A guide to services

We have a wide range of professionals who are there to help and support you.



GP

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. Your GP can advise, give medicines and information on other services. 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.



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 where you can find the service locator that will help you find the pharmacy nearest to you.

The local NHS operates a minor ailments scheme (Care at the Chemist) that you can access via your local pharmacy. Most pharmacies provide this service but if they don't they can direct you to one that does. 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

Our 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. See useful contacts.



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.



Healthy Living Team

The Team can provide information/advice and support to young people on diet, healthy eating, exercise, weight, smoking, alcohol, drugs and sexual health. See useful contacts.



Catch22

Young people who go missing from their home, including Children's Homes and Foster Care placements, place themselves at high risk.

Catch22 works directly with young people and their families or carers to diminish that risk and to reduce the amount of children and young people reported missing each year.

Young people or parents can call the Catch22 Helpline on 0808 168 9698 and speak to a local person for support about any issues that may be causing missing incidents.

St Helens Young Carers Centre

St Helen's Young Carers Centre supports children and young people from 6-18 years who are affected by the illness or disability of a family member and provide care (physical and/or emotional) to that family member.

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

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 they get plenty of rest www.nhs.uk
If you are: Unsure Confused Need help	NHS Choices For 24 hour health advice and information.	www.nhs.uk
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: www.nhs.uk/chemist for your nearest pharmacist's details.
High temperature Head injuries not involving loss of consciousness Persistent cough Worsening health conditions (inside GP hours)	GP For the treatment of illnesses and injuries that will not go away.	Write your GP's (family Doctor) telephone number here: <div></div>
Minor bumps, cuts and possible fractures Dehydrated Headache Tummy pain	Walk-in Centre For treatment of minor illnesses and injuries without an appointment.	Walk-in Centre St Helens Walk-in Centre, Millenium Centre, Corporation Street, St Helens WA10 1HJ. Open Monday-Saturday 7am-10pm Sunday 9am-10pm
Choking Loss of consciousness Fitting Broken bones	Accident & Emergency or 999 For very severe or life threatening conditions.	Accident & Emergency 

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.

Know the basics

It's your life

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.

1 in 10 children have mental health problems which can include depression, anxiety and conduct disorder. 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.

Contact

- For support and advice speak to your GP or School Nurse
- www.nhs.uk



School Nurse says:

- 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.

Headaches and 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. Most headaches can be treated at home with paracetamol or ibuprofen (always check the label for the correct dosage) and they can be avoided by making sure you get enough food, drink and sleep.

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 and 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.

Common ailments

Coughs and 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 and 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.

Who can help?



Pharmacist



GP

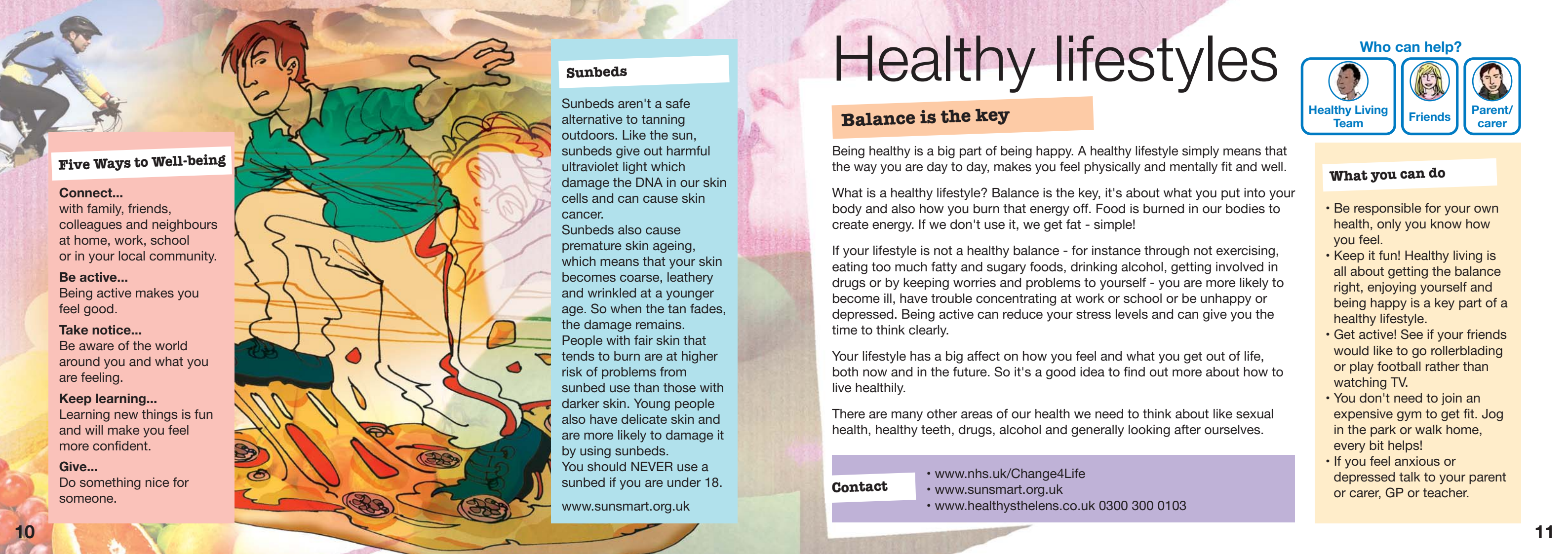


School Nurse



Pharmacist says

You can also be treated using over the counter painkillers to help to bring down a raised temperature. Check with the pharmacist and tell them how old you are. Always check with your Pharmacist if you aren't sure which treatments you can take.



Five Ways to Well-being

Connect...

with family, friends, colleagues and neighbours at home, work, school 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.

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

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 work or school 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 affect 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.

Contact

- www.nhs.uk/Change4Life
- www.sunsmart.org.uk
- www.healthysthelens.co.uk 0300 300 0103

Who can help?



Healthy Living Team



Friends



Parent/ carer

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.

The Law

- You must be 18 years old to legally buy cigarettes.
- It is against the law to smoke in enclosed public places.

Quitting

There are lots of ways to quit some people just stop by themselves.

If you try to give up but start smoking again, keep trying. Many people quit several times before they give up for good. Just 20 minutes after your last cigarette your body will start getting healthier. After 72 hours you'll find it easier to breathe. It takes 15 years for your risk of serious illness to fall back to normal.

E-cigarettes

These produce nicotine vapour in different flavours. They are not as harmful to health as cigarettes but they are addictive and the chargers have caused fires. Shisha produces tobacco smoke and is as harmful as smoking.

Smoking

Can kill you

Most people know that smoking causes cancer, heart disease, lung disease and that it can shorten your life, too.

But people who smoke also get bad breath, yellow fingers, rotting teeth, smelly clothes and hair, and they develop wrinkles earlier. They get a 'smoker's cough' and aren't as fit as non-smokers.

Another reason to avoid cigarettes is the amount they cost. Just think what you could buy with that money instead. If you smoke 20 cigarettes a day for one year it will cost you over £2,500.00.

Smoking can harm other people who breathe in your smoke. It also hurts your unborn baby if you are pregnant.

If you smoke you are likely to use other drugs as well. The nicotine in tobacco is addictive which means it's hard to give up most young people who smoke carry on throughout adulthood.

The earlier that you decide to quit the better for your health it will be.

Contact

- St Helens Smokefree Service 01744 586247 or text Quit to 61825
- www.readytostopsmoking.co.uk
- www.smokefree.nhs.uk

Who can help?



Health effects

- The short term effects include reduced lung capacity and addiction to nicotine. Smoking increases the risk of developing lung cancer.
- Long-term health consequences of youth smoking are reinforced by the fact that most young people who smoke regularly continue to smoke throughout adulthood.
- Smoking hurts young people's physical fitness in terms of both performance and endurance - even among young people trained in competitive running.



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, you could talk to: Grandparents, other relative, friend, School Nurse, Youth Worker, Teacher or if you don't feel like you can confide in anyone, then go and talk to your GP.

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.

Visit www.live-lifewell.net for a list of local services and look at the sections for young people and self-harm.

Contact

- www.sthelensgateway.info
- Barnardos www.boss-sthelens.co.uk
- www.youngminds.org.uk

Who can help?



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.

Stress and anxiety

Who can help?



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?



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.

Contact

- www.youngminds.org.uk 0808 802 5544
- Barnardos www.boss-sthelens.co.uk
- www.live-lifewell.net

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.

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.



Growing up

All change

Becoming a young person can be a challenging time, full of change and excitement. There are many pressures and choices you will have to make about drugs and alcohol or becoming sexually active, about your education and just about everything else. With your increasing independence, you will also need to become more responsible for your own safety and well-being.

So many changes happen in these short years that it is easy to feel confused, frightened and lacking in confidence at times. Physically, your body will grow and change in ways that may make you feel awkward and self-conscious at first. Emotionally you can sometimes have mood swings and feel a bit out of control. Young people can experience emotional turmoil as their minds and bodies develop. An important part of growing up is working out and accepting who you are. Everyone goes through it, you are not alone.

Some young people find it hard to make this change to adulthood and may experiment with alcohol, drugs or other substances that can affect mental health.

Now is the time when you are forming your opinions about things and ideas about life. This is a time of great opportunity, you don't need your parents in the same way you used to, so they may feel a bit left out - talk to them, tell them about your life, use their experiences, they were teenagers once.

Contact

- www.nhs.uk
- www.live-lifewell.net/services/think-well

Who can help?



School
Nurse



Friend/
Relative



Parent/
carer

Puberty

Boys

Boys bodies can start to change from around the age of ten with sexual development soon after. You will be developing into a young man. Your body starts to produce hormones which will also affect your emotions.

Girls

Puberty in girls can begin from around the age of nine. You will probably have gone through puberty and have developed into a young woman. Your body starts to produce hormones which will also affect your emotions.

My name is Tracy and I'm 14 years old...

My name is Julie and I'm also 14 years old...

How to stay safe using technology:

We all want to use technology and have fun online, but we all need to keep safe and act responsibly towards each other. The following tips will help keep you and your friends safe:

- Regularly check your privacy settings so only people you know can see your profile.
- Think about who could be watching. If you are about to post something online, pause and imagine someone at school/college, or someone you respect seeing that post or photo. If it feels wrong, don't post it.
- Don't use your real name in chatrooms or forums, use a nickname instead.
- Don't tell strangers where you live, your phone number, email address or where you go to school. Only your friends and family need to know that.
- If you do decide to use a chatroom, use a public one, not private, where there are only two people.
- Stop and think about the kind of photos you post online. Once it is on social media you have no control of who sees it.
- Delete old accounts. If you have stopped using a social media site or forum, then close it down. It avoids leaving personal information out there which could be used for identity fraud.
- Don't agree to meet up with people you have only spoken to online.
- If you receive any messages or pictures that worry or upset you talk to an adult you trust. You may also report it online, via the thinkuknow website.



If you are worried about yourself or a friend remember to speak to a trusted adult or contact:

- www.ceop.police.uk 0870 000 3344
- www.thinkuknow.com
- www.childline.org.uk

Digital safety

Aim to have a positive digital footprint!

You may not realise it BUT every time you go online you leave a trail!! However, the internet can be used safely to post lots of positive information about you, such as creative activities you are involved in, blogs, fundraising activities or clubs in the area.

So aim to keep yourself safe and don't put too much personal information about yourself online and focus on doing positive things. It would be rubbish if you missed out on a job or university opportunity because of bad content you posted online about yourself or somebody else. If you are unsure about how to create a positive digital footprint, ask a trusted adult to help you.

Important things to consider

You will also need to think about some of the big risks of being online. These include sexting and online grooming.

What is sexting?

Sexting usually refers to sending and receiving:

- Naked pictures or 'nudes'.
- 'Underwear shots'
- Sexual or 'dirty pics'.
- Rude text messages or videos.

They can be sent from a friend, boyfriend, girlfriend or someone you've met online. You might have also sent a sexual photo, video or text to someone else. Sexting can easily happen and things can go badly wrong, such as the content shared with a large number of people or being bribed to post more images. However, you have the right to say no and not be pressured into doing anything you don't want to do. Ask them to stop, but if they're still bothering you or making you feel upset it's okay to block them.

Who can help?



School Nurse



Teacher



Friend/Relative



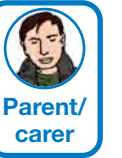
Parent/carer

What is online grooming?

Grooming is when someone builds a relationship with a young person and tricks them or forces them to do something sexual. It might include trying to meet up with the young person. People who do this often lie about who they really are and this can happen online as well as face to face. Even though you might think it is your fault and at any point which you are worried, remember it is NEVER too late to tell a trusted adult or report it to CEOP.

Child sexual exploitation

Who can help?



Reduce the risks

Sexual exploitation can be hard to recognise because you often believe you're in a relationship with the person. It could be a friend, or group of friends. It could be someone you think of as a boyfriend or girlfriend. It could be a person or a new group of people you've only just got to know. It could be someone you've talked to online. But whoever it is, they could use clever ways to take advantage of your relationship - and that means you can be harmed almost before you know what's going on.

What does Sexual Exploitation look and feel like to begin with:

- New friends and exciting.
- A new loving relationship, feeling loved.
- Gifts like phones or money.
- Invites to parties or rides in cars.
- Free drinks, drugs or parties.
- It can happen in person or through social media.

What can happen:

- Being asked or forced to have sex with other people.
- Being blackmailed into sharing sexual images.
- Having to have sexual activity when you don't want to.
- You may feel scared that you are in an unhealthy relationship.

If you are a young person who needs support and advice, please talk to an adult you trust. If you would like to talk to someone in confidence you can contact Childline, who are available 24 hours a day; you can call them free on 0800 1111 and this number will not appear on a telephone bill. Remember, if you are in any danger or feel unsafe ring 999 immediately, or talk to an adult you trust.

The dangers of being missing

You may feel that getting away is your only option because you're not getting on with the people you live with. In reality, young people can face new problems like not having any money, any food to eat, a safe place to sleep.

Young people who are missing may be in more risky situations, do things they wouldn't normally do and become vulnerable to drug and alcohol use and sexual exploitation.

If you feel you cannot stay at home for any reason talk to someone first. Call the Catch22 Helpline on 0808 168 9698 to speak to a local person for support.

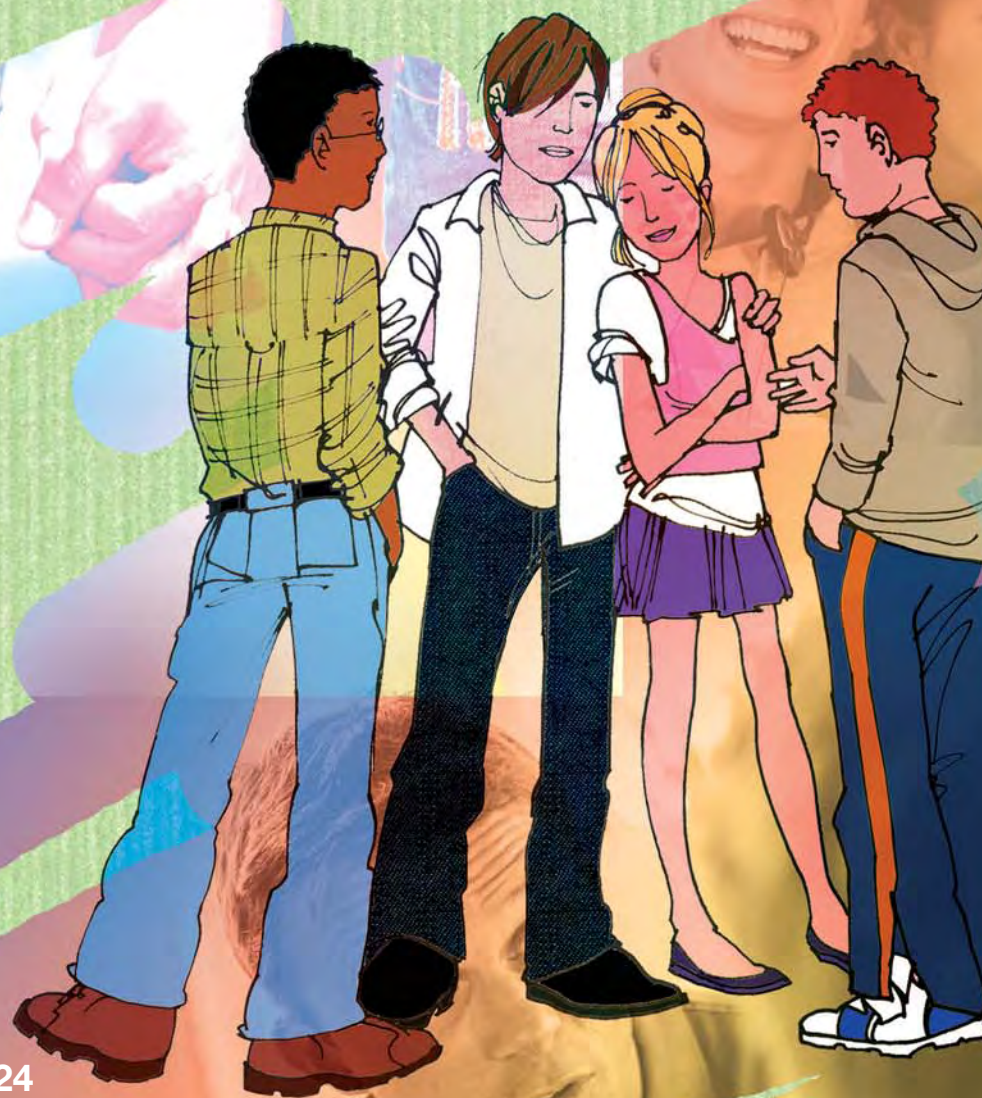


Contact

- www.ceop.police.uk 0870 000 3344
- www.thinkuknow.com
- www.childline.org.uk
- www.listentomystory.co.uk

Sexual exploitation

Adults who benefit from child sexual exploitation use many different methods to target young people. It can begin with an 'exciting' new friendship with a boyfriend or girlfriend. The young person may receive expensive gifts and be given alcohol or drugs. Before long they create a loyal and dependent relationship with the victim. It is against the Law and a form of sexual abuse, which puts the young person at risk from physical, emotional and psychological damage.



Getting help

- Sexual Health Services see local contacts.
- If you've had sex without contraception, or think it's failed, you can take emergency contraception up to 120 hours later.
- If you think you might be pregnant, talk to your parents. Free pregnancy testing is available at all young people's sexual health clinics, GUM clinics and some GPs.
- If you are worried for your safety or in an abusive relationship, leave now. It is important to tell an adult that you can trust.

Relationships

Talk about it

"My boyfriend said he would finish with me if I didn't sleep with him. I realised then he didn't care enough about me to respect my feelings."

If we respect others it helps us remember to respect ourselves. Positive relationships with friends, family as well as people we come across in our everyday lives are so important.

Our friends play an important part in our lives and help shape us as a person. Make sure you value them and let them know you do. The way we treat other people makes a big impression on them, so, try to be positive and helpful - a smile goes a long way!

We all want to be loved and sometimes, it is easy to mistake casual sex for love. By having casual sex, you're putting yourself at risk of STIs as well as getting pregnant. If you've decided you're ready to have sex, protect yourself and practice safe sex by using a combination of condoms and a hormonal contraceptive like the implant.

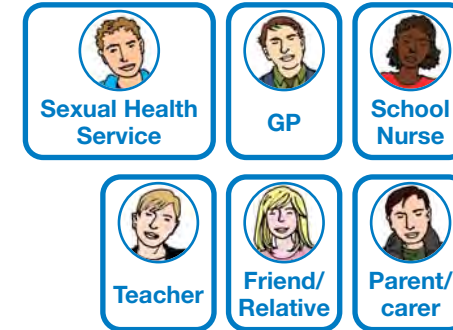
If a relationship doesn't feel right, or if people are not treating you with respect you need to leave. If you think you are in danger it is important to tell someone.

You have to be 16 or older to have homosexual (gay) or heterosexual (straight) sex.

Contact

- www.tazsh.com • www.getiton.org.uk
- www.rapecentre.org.uk 01744 877987
- www.bishuk.com

Who can help?



Are you ready to have sex?

- Nobody is putting pressure on you and most young people wait until they are at least 16 before they have sex, even if they say different!
- You're not doing it because you think all your friends are.
- Make sure you respect yourself.



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.

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.

ask for larc
Long Acting Reversible Contraception

Contraception and STIs

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 and 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.

St Helens has a C-card scheme. You will need to register for a card which you can use to provide you with 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.

St Helens C-CARD - For further information visit www.getiton.org.uk

If you are worried you are pregnant contact www.tazsh.com

Contact

- www.chlamydiaSCREENING.nhs.uk • Sexual Health Services
- www.nhs.uk/worhtalkingabout

Who can help?



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 Family Planning Clinic for advice. If you've had unprotected sex and your period is late, take a pregnancy test at your GP, Pharmacist or Family Planning Clinic.

Go to your GP or Sexual Health Clinic to find out about different types of contraception. Talk to your parent about what to do. If you feel you can't there are lots of places to get help and advice.



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 because you have problems try to address this by talking to an adult you trust or a sensible friend.

Alcohol, drugs and substances

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.

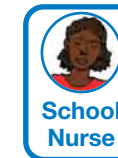
There are lots of reasons why people drink or take drugs, sometimes it is because they think it's going to be fun. Drugs can seriously affect your health and the way you see the world around you - what may seem fun at first can easily start leading to serious problems which you may find difficult to try and solve without additional support. It is easy to get into drug debts, start dropping out of education or training, having arguments at home, being exploited or 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 Chemist 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.

Contact

- Young People's Drug and Alcohol Team 01744 675605 www.sthelens.gov.uk/ypdaat
- Frank 0300 123 6600 www.talktofrank.com
- Childline 0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk

Who can help?



School Nurse



Teacher



Parent/Carer

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



Oral health and 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 oral cancer.

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

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.

Contact

www.dentalhealth.org
www.nhs.uk

Who can help?



School Nurse



GP



Dentist



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 and heavy drinking.



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 dial

Turn down the volume on your TV, radio or hi-fi 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

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.

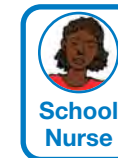
The best way to avoid developing noise-induced hearing loss is to keep away from loud noise as much as possible.

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.

Contact

www.nhs.uk

Who can help?



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.

Young carers

Who can help?



School Nurse



Teacher



Friend/
Relative



Parent/
carer

It's not always easy

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

Sometimes it might be too much to cope with and you may feel alone, angry or worried. 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 too. 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.

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. There are many support groups locally to help you.

Contact

- St Helens Young Carers Centre 01744 677279
- ChildLine 0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk
- www.childrenssociety.org.uk 0845 300 1128
- www.direct.gov.uk

St Helens Young Carers Centre

St Helens Young Carers Centre supports children and young people from 6-18 years old who are affected by the illness or disability of a family member and provide care (physical and/or emotional) to that family member.

The person they care for may have a physical disability, chronic illness, mental health issues, drug or alcohol dependency or HIV/Aids. Caring can be isolating and demanding for children and young people and we aim to ensure that they are supported and that they have occasional breaks from their caring role.

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.
- 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.
- The government has started New Deal for Carers to try to take some pressure off young carers.



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.

Go straight to the Accident and Emergency Department



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.

Source: www.meningitisnow.org

Meningitis and septicaemia

It can happen to anyone

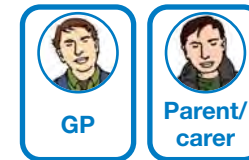
Meningitis and meningococcal septicaemia (blood poisoning) are serious diseases that can affect anyone at any time. Fortunately, most young people in the UK have already had the MenC vaccine, but if you haven't or can't remember, getting vaccinated is a good way to protect yourself. But remember, vaccines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

Who can help?



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.

Contact

www.meningitisnow.org
www.nhs.uk/conditions/meningitis



Do you have your 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 or 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.

Asthma

Coping and managing

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 (see opposite page).

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 uni to see what they can do to support you.

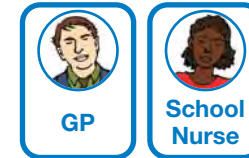
Everybody with asthma is different, and everybody deals with asthma differently. For most people, asthma shouldn't stop you enjoying everything in life, including relationships.

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

Contact

www.asthma.org.uk

Who can help?



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 they should do when you have an asthma attack? You might like to give them an asthma attack card to keep.
- What it feels 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.



Diabetes

Recognising, understanding

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. What it does mean is that you have to carefully manage your condition as part of daily life.

Signs and symptoms of Diabetes

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.

Contact

www.diabetes.org.uk

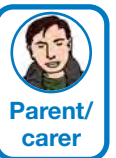
Who can help?



School Nurse



GP



Parent/carer



Diabetes Team

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 clinic's some of which are in an evening, email telephone via a 24 hours helpline. The Specialist Nurses can visit you at home and at school.

Useful contacts

National contacts

Action for Children

Practical information for children, young people, and parents going through a family break-up.
0300 123 2112
www.actionforchildren.org.uk

Anxiety UK

For advice on anxiety.
08444 775 774 www.anxietyuk.org.uk

Beating Eating Disorders

For advice and information on all types of eating disorders.
0845 634 1414 www.b-eat.co.uk

Brook

0808 802 1234 www.brook.org.uk

Change4Life

For advice and information on how to live a healthy life.
0300 123 4567
www.nhs.uk/change4life

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre

0870 000 3344
www.ceop.police.uk

Childline

Free 24-hour counselling service for children and young people. ChildLine deals with any issue which causes distress or concern. Common issues include child abuse, bullying, mental illness, parental separation or divorce, pregnancy and substance misuse.
0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk

Family Planning Association (FPA)

www.fpa.org.uk

Frank

0300 123 6600 www.talktofrank.com

Lesbian, gay and bisexual

For young people seeking advice on lesbian, gay and bisexual issues.
08000 502020 www.stonewall.org.uk
Terence Higgins Trust
0808 802 1221 www.tht.org.uk

National Domestic Violence Freephone Helpline 24-hour

0808 2000 247

NHS

For health advice. www.nhs.uk

Quit because

Advice and information on how to quit smoking. www.quitbecause.org.uk

Race Equality Foundation

0161 220 1016
www.raceequalityfoundation.org.uk

Samaritans

08457 90 90 90

Smokefree

Advice and information on how to quit smoking. www.smokefree.nhs.uk

Sunsmart

Advice and information on keeping safe in the sun. www.sunsmart.org.uk

Thinkuknow

Advice on how to stay safe online for children, parents/carers and teachers.
www.thinkuknow.com

YoungMinds Parents Helpline

0808 802 5544 www.youngminds.org.uk

www.redcross.org.uk

www.thesite.org

Local contacts

Local NHS Services

Find your nearest GP, hospital, Dentist, Pharmacist or Optician at www.nhs.uk

GP Out of Hours

If you are calling out of normal surgery hours - during the evening, at night, during weekends and on Bank Holidays - all GPs operate an Out of Hours emergency service. This service should only be used if you have an urgent medical problem that cannot wait until normal surgery hours. To access this service call your normal GP's surgery.

Stop Smoking Support

For more information about stopping smoking, please contact St Helens Stop Smoking Service.
01744 586247 or text Quit to 61825
www.readytostopsmoking.co.uk
www.smokefree.nhs.uk

Young People's Drug and Alcohol Team

Lord Street Centre, Lord Street, St Helens, Merseyside WA10 2SP.
01744 675 605
www.sthelens.gov.uk/ypdaat

Sexual Health Service - TAZ (Teen Advice Zone)

The Millenium Centre (First Floor), Corporation Street, St Helens Town Centre WA10 1HJ. (near bus station)
www.tazsh.com

Get It On

Sexual health and relationship advice for Halton and St Helens
www.getiton.org.uk

St Helens Integrated Sexual Health Service

Contraception and sexual health.
0845 155 0156

St Helens Healthy Living

0300 300 0103
www.healthysthelens.co.uk

St Helens Young Carers Centre

01744 677279
www.youngcarers.net

No Secrets

Help and advice on Self Harm
www.no-secrets.org.uk

Barnardos

Counselling Service for young people who are a resident/or have a GP in St Helens.
www.boss-sthelens.co.uk

Catch22

St Helens Missing & Child Sexual Exploitation Service
www.catch-22.org.uk

St Helens Gateway

A community hub of information; bringing together all health, social care and well-being information and services into one central place.
www.sthelensgateway.info

Live Life Well

www.live-lifewell.net

St Helens Metropolitan Borough Council

Wesley House, Corporation Street, St Helens, Merseyside WA10 1FY.
01744 676789
www.sthelens.gov.uk