



**Special Educational  
Needs & Disability (SEND)**

Information, Advice  
and Support Service  
for children, young people and parents

Hello,

A belated Happy New Year to you all (we are only just in February)  
We all appreciate these have been sometimes the most anxious and  
sometimes the most giving of times; with that in mind we have  
collated some wellbeing resources you may find useful or wish to  
share with others.

Just a reminder we are open and you can always get in touch with  
us via [ias@rbwm.gov.uk](mailto:ias@rbwm.gov.uk) . We are picking up messages on 01628  
683182 once a day so you can leave a message and we will get  
back to you.

With best wishes,  
*Jean, Chris, Lisa & Millie*

**TIME TO TALK**  
Are you aged 11-25?  
Do you live, work or study in East Berkshire\*?

**POEM TO A PARENT/CARER**  
It's time to talk. Write a poem to your parent/carer.  
The winning poem will be turned into a film for a  
local NHS campaign and you will get a £50 Nando's  
voucher! Get creative, have your say and help us to  
raise mental health awareness by submitting your  
poem.

**#TIMETOTALK**  
Join us for workshops exploring mental  
health and wellbeing through poetry and  
spoken word. Writers with all levels of  
experience welcome.  
Dates: 21st Jan, 28th Jan, 4th Feb, 11th Feb  
7pm-8pm via Zoom

**SIGN UP AND  
ENTER AT:**  
[www.yesslough.org.uk/  
timetotalk](http://www.yesslough.org.uk/timetotalk)

\*Slough, Bracknell Forest or the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.

## #TimeToTalk Poem To A Parent/Carer Film Competition

Spoken word poetry has been used for  
centuries to convey meaning and messages  
that are important to us.

Film is unrivalled when it comes to sharing  
ideas and information.

Put them together and what have you got? A  
short film based on spoken word poetry!

YES want to encourage you to express your  
feelings through poetry so they're running a  
'Poem to a Parent/Carer' competition and  
inviting young people to send in poems.  
Parents/carers play an important role in  
children & young people's mental health, and  
we hope that your poem can inspire children,  
young people and their parents/carers to speak  
more openly about their mental health and to  
ask for help when they need it.

Time to Talk Competition entry form  
Sign up to Poetry Workshops

YES are running multiple online creative  
workshops to help give you some ideas on  
what to write and the dates for them are:



Get creative, have your say and help us to raise mental health awareness by submitting your poem. The winning poem will be turned into a film and you will get a £50 Nando's voucher!

The closing date for entries is Sunday 14th February 2021.

[Enter here](#)

[T&Cs can be found here](#)

- 28th January 2021
- 04th February 2021
- 11th February 2021

All workshops will take place via zoom and will run from 7pm to 8pm.

[To book, please click here](#)

## Place 2Be's Children's Mental Health Week

From 1-7 February 2021, we're taking part in Place2Be's Children's Mental Health Week. This year's theme is Express Yourself. Place2Be has created activities and resources to help children (and adults) to explore the different ways that they can share their thoughts, feelings and ideas.

There are lots of resources on the Children's Mental Health Week website that you can use with your child at home; including activity ideas, tips for parents and carers, and an online assembly which will be available from Monday 1 February.

[Website](#)





You can download a copy here on the [Berkshire West](#) and [East Berkshire CCG](#) websites. It is also now available in [Apple Books](#) and [Google Play Books](#).

## Little Book of Sunshine

Berkshire health officials have relaunched the 'Little Blue Book of Sunshine', a mental health booklet for children and young people in the area, and it is now available online.

The book, which has been co-produced by Berkshire West and East Berkshire Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and young people, aims to help teenagers by sharing lots of tips on how to deal with many problems, such as anxiety, body image, relationships and anger. It also includes information about where to get help when they need it.

In recent months, more than ever, anyone can sometimes feel down, worried or anxious because of a variety of situations like lockdown, school, family or friends. The #littlebluebookofsunshine explains some of the things teenagers can do right now to feel better, and who to turn to if things feel too much.



### How are we are doing?

It is always really important to get feedback from our families on how we are doing. We would be very grateful if you could please take a few minutes to provide feedback on your experiences with the service by filling in this short survey.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/iasrbwm>

Thank you!



# LONELINESS & RE-CONNECTION

Information for Adults who Support Young People



Young people may particularly struggle to make sense of feelings of loneliness & how to overcome them

## WHAT IS LONELINESS?<sup>1</sup>

Loneliness is **normal**. Almost everyone will be affected by loneliness at some point in their life. We all have to learn how to manage it. Loneliness is:

- a whole mixture of painful feelings – in response to wanting more friends and/or closer friendships
- not just sadness. It can include all sorts of difficult emotions (anger, pain, frustration)
- not always about being on our own – we can be 'Lonely in a crowd'. This means we can sometimes feel lonely when we are surrounded by people and those we care about.

There may be no obvious signs that a child is lonely

## LOCKDOWN AND LONELINESS

Young people have reported substantial increases in feelings of loneliness during the COVID-19 lockdown.<sup>2,3</sup>

"Sometimes I have felt lonely due to not seeing my friends and being able to have normal conversations about day-to-day life."<sup>4,5</sup>

"I have felt incredibly lonely despite having what is honestly a great support system and being in the same household as one of my best friends."<sup>4,5</sup>

They worried:

- 1) About returning to "normal" social interactions.
- 2) That they would be less socially adept both in existing relationships and in creating new connections.<sup>4,5</sup>



Not all young people found it easy to use phones and technology to maintain their relationships during lockdown:

- It just wasn't the same as being face-to-face;
- They missed being with people physically.<sup>4,6</sup>
- The lack of touch and proximity made some young people feel disconnected.

## GETTING 'STUCK' IN LONELINESS

Getting 'stuck' in loneliness is linked to mental health problems like anxiety and depression in young people.<sup>6</sup>

» Some will need extra support to make sure that they do not get stuck in lockdown loneliness.



## THINGS THAT MIGHT HELP



**Foster a climate of trust and connection**  
(school isn't just about academic learning)

Make space and time to communicate and connect:

- ❑ Be honest – we've all been through challenging things recently.
- ❑ Celebrate that we've managed to pull through.
- ❑ Have regular check-ins with ourselves, each other and young people about how we feel and how we recognise how others feel.
- ❑ Help each other to feel included: "Every time they see a lonely person, they could greet him, and therefore he would feel a little better because he would see that others care about him and that others notice him, and I guess he won't feel alone anymore."<sup>7</sup>

**Talk about loneliness**



- ✓ Open up the space so it is ok for young people to say they are lonely – don't dismiss or minimise loneliness.
- ✓ Explore what loneliness means and the forms it can take.



**Young people need space and time to (re-)build social skills<sup>8,9</sup>**

- ♦ (re-)learn to be together in each other's presence.
- ♦ (re-)build dynamics with friends.



Some young people who are struggling with loneliness may find it helpful to:<sup>10</sup>

- Write their thoughts or concerns in a diary: "Sometimes I also write in a diary. My sister also has a diary and she writes her secrets in there and nobody is allowed to read that."
- Reframing their mindset to think more positively; put things into perspective and help them to recognise the social connections they do have: "Try to change the world in your mind, just the whole picture in your mind of the world as everything is and maybe try to understand that you are not as lonely as you imagine."

<sup>1</sup> Castro P, Tardiff A, Harris R, et al. Loneliness across the life span. *Personality Soc Sci*. 2015;1(2):201-204.  
<sup>2</sup> Banzhaf C, Kelly C, Anwar LC, Santos A, Clapper de Mezo M. They are also born screaming to stay": A qualitative study of Portuguese adolescents and young people's experiences under COVID-19. *Journal of Community Psychology*. 2020;48(2):214-229.  
<sup>3</sup> Wu WF, Eisman TR, Forbes JM. Physically isolated but socially connected? Psychological adjustment and stress among adolescents during the initial COVID-19 onset. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science/Revue canadienne des sciences du comportement*. 05/20/2020.  
<sup>4</sup> Chikara O, et al. Teenage's Experience of Life in Lockdown (TELL) study. <https://www.researcher.life/public/teenage-experience-of-life-in-lockdown>  
<sup>5</sup> Demerouti C, Anagnostis E, Chali A, Hady S, Park K. Teenager's Experiences of Life in Lockdown: The TELL Study Briefing. 2020.  
<sup>6</sup> Ladd M, Chaffin E, Riggs-Smead N, et al. Rapid Systematic Review: The Impact of Social Isolation and Loneliness on the Mental Health of Children and Adolescents in the Context of COVID-19. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*.  
<sup>7</sup> <https://www.researcher.life/public/teenage-experience-of-life-in-lockdown>  
<sup>8</sup> Foster MR, Gidycz P. Review: Alleviating loneliness in young people – a meta-analysis of interventions. *Child and adolescent mental health reviews*.  
<sup>9</sup> Wolf A, Shalun H, Lindquist J, et al. A common elements approach to the development of a modular cognitive-behavioral theory for chronic loneliness. *Journal of consulting and clinical psychology*. 2020;88(2):205-202.  
<sup>10</sup> <https://www.researcher.life/public/teenage-experience-of-life-in-lockdown>

This infographic was written by Dr Nicola Lomas (University of Bath), Dr Orla Donohue (University of Manchester), Prof Pamela Oswald (University of Manchester) & Prof Riz Shaban (UCL) with assistance on the graphics from Kira Baker (University of Bath) and Lily Vesty (University of Manchester).



## Free guides and workbooks for professionals, parents, young people and others interested in mental and emotional wellbeing.

Charlie Waller, offer a programme of information and support is underpinned by four principles. As a parent or carer:

- Look after your own wellbeing. This is vital. If you don't, you will be far less able to look after your child's;
- Educate yourself about your child's mental health difficulties – it makes a big difference. It will help you to cope yourself, and it will better enable you to understand and support your child;
- There is hope. Remember this. There are practical tools and treatments that work and our knowledge of children's and young people's mental health is advancing all the time. Holding onto hope yourself, and offering hope to your child, is the most important thing you can do;
- You are not alone, despite how it may sometimes feel. There are many, many families going through similar difficulties, and help is available.

[Please click here for the downloadable guides](#)

# Youth Voice Youth Choice!

# YOUTH VOICE YOUTH CHOICE

Funding scheme 2021



Youth Services



An exciting opportunity for 8 to 19 year olds in the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead to gain funding for their projects

**A CHANCE TO WIN UP TO £1,500  
UP TO £500 FOR INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS**

### Spring 2021 dates:

- Application period: Monday 25 January to 5pm Thursday 25 February
- Judging evening: Thursday 25 February
- Online voting: Monday 1 March to Wednesday 17 March
- Winners announced: Thursday 18 March
- Award event: Tuesday 25 March, 6pm via Zoom

### Available to:

- schools
- youth clubs
- charities
- individuals

**GOOD LUCK TO  
EVERYONE WHO  
ENTERS**

For more information contact Elaine Keating  
T: 07824 865297  
E: [elaine.keating@achievingforchildren.org.uk](mailto:elaine.keating@achievingforchildren.org.uk)



achieving  
for children

[www.rbwm.gov.uk](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk)



[Download the application form here](#)



## UK Disability Survey

The Cabinet Office Disability Unit has launched the UK Disability [Survey](#).

We want to hear from as many people as possible. We are particularly keen to hear from disabled people, their carers, friends and family; but views from the wider public are also very welcome. The survey will remain open until 23 April. All views will be used to shape the delivery of the plans we set out in the forthcoming Strategy, with those that we receive by 13 February informing the development of the Strategy.

We've tried to make sure the survey, which is hosted on Citizen Space, is accessible as possible. It is available in Easy Read and BSL. Written responses can be sent to:

[DUCitizenspace@cabinetoffice.gov.uk](mailto:DUCitizenspace@cabinetoffice.gov.uk).

A braille version is available on request and blind or partially sighted people who are having difficulty filling in the online survey can email RNIB for advice or support at: [campaigns@rnib.org.uk](mailto:campaigns@rnib.org.uk).

## #Coping

### Family Life during the Lockdown

Contains information on high-quality resources to support family life and parenting, with advice on keeping children entertained, looking after everyone's mental health and where to turn for extra help, including confidential helplines. Click [here](#) to download

## #Coping

### Five ways to wellbeing

Offers practical ideas on how to incorporate the NHS's Five Ways to Wellbeing into family life to support children and young people through these challenging times. Includes a version for children of primary school age and one for those at secondary school. Click [here](#) to download the primary school guide

Click [here](#) to download the secondary school guide

## #Coping

### Young persons Guide

Lists lots of useful self-help apps and websites and a range of resources, including helplines, to support young people with their mental health. Click [here](#) to download