




MINISTRY OF HEALTH
SINGAPORE

Supporting your child's
mental well-being
starts with small conversations,



and you.

What is mental health?

- The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines mental health as “a state of well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realise their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community”.
- **There is no health without mental health.** Mental health is an integral part of overall health and is as important as physical health. 
- Mental health **exists on a continuum**. Depending on one’s lifestyle habits and ability to cope, one can move along this spectrum over time and at any time.



Source:

World Health Organisation. (n.d). *Mental health*. <https://www.who.int/health-topics/mental-health>

Mental health challenges arising from life transitions

Transitions can be exciting times to gain new experiences, yet it can bring some sense of uneasiness and uncertainty. Changes caused by transitions could disrupt your child's routine and feelings of familiarity, comfort and security.

Common transitions include:

- Undergoing puberty
- Adjusting to a new school/ work environment
- Enlisting into National Service (NS)
- Stepping into the workforce
- Entering a new relationship



When faced with such transitions, it is important for your child to stay calm, step out of their comfort zone and relearn skills.

Here are some ways you can help your child keep the stress at bay:

- Check in with your child regularly
- Remind your child to be kind to themselves
- Encourage your child to keep an open mind
- Take breaks to do what they love
- Look out for signs of mental distress

Tips for meaningful conversations with your child

- Listen actively without judgement
- Acknowledge their feelings
- Stay calm during difficult conversations
- Seek support early if necessary



Balancing your child's screen use

In this highly digitalised environment today, the ready availability of devices and screens can bring potential benefits and harm to children. It is important for families to adopt healthy screen use habits to reduce the potential harm to children.

Excessive screen use may affect your child:

- Increase in sedentary lifestyle, with a heightened risk of obesity
- Difficulty sleeping or disruptions to sleep
- Impact on school performance, including late homework and lower scores
- Poorer mental health and well-being, especially if your child is introduced to social media at a young age and without guidance



Here are some tips to limit excessive screen use and cultivate healthy screen use habits in your child:

- Set clear limits and expectations using [MOH's Guidance on Screen Use in Children](#)
- Encourage your child to adopt a healthy and balanced lifestyle by promoting physical activity and healthy eating habits
- Lead by example in using screen devices responsibly. This will also promote self-control in your child
- Monitor and limit screen use by using parental controls
- Share screen-free moments with your family. Put away devices during meal times and bond with your child through offline activities



Early warning signs to look out for

If you observe that your child has been...

- Feeling overwhelmed, stressed or exhausted, or experiencing frequent mood swings
- Having negative thoughts
- Avoiding social interactions, not enjoying interests they used to enjoy
- Experiencing an increase in physical health issues

...talking to a care professional can help.

Not sure where to begin? Start with the

First Stop for Mental Health

Friendly care professionals will talk to you/ your child, figure out what kind of support suits you/ your child best and guide you/ your child to the right services.



For all age groups



Confidential



No charge



CALL: national mindline 1771 or WhatsApp 6669 1771



CLICK: [mindline.sg](https://www.mindline.sg) for self-help resources



VISIT: community mental health teams such as CREST-Youth or connect with CHAT



Benefits of early help-seeking

- Research has shown that seeking help early allows us to address issues early, before symptoms escalate and worsen. Early intervention also often leads to better long-term outcomes.
- Reaching out and talking to trusted adults can help your child feel better. Parents, family members and friends can play these important roles in supporting your child's mental well-being.
- While family and friends are important social support, seeking help from care professionals who have the expertise and skills ensures that your child receives appropriate professional care.
- If you are unsure about supporting your child, or if your child's distress has persisted for weeks, seek professional help. Care professionals would be able to provide guidance and journey alongside both you and your child towards better mental well-being.
- The support from care professionals and informal social networks are not exclusive. Rather, they complement each other.



Common misconceptions about mental health & accessing mental health services

Myth	Fact
<p>My child is only going through a phase. He/she will grow out of it and stop having such mental health issues.</p>	<p>Emotional ups and downs are part of growing up, but persistent distress, significant changes in behaviour or difficulties coping should be taken seriously and supported early.</p>
<p>Experiencing mental health issues is a sign of personal weakness.</p>	<p>Experiencing mental health issues does not mean that your child is weak. Instead, these issues arise as a result of a combination of biological and environmental factors. This combination affects how the brain works, which in turn affects how one processes their thoughts and feelings, and react to their environment.</p>
<p>Seeking help will cause me and my child to be viewed negatively by others.</p>	<p>Seeking help is a sign of courage and personal strength. Acknowledging your child's struggles will help them feel less alone, and receiving professional help is important in supporting your child's recovery.</p>
<p>Treatment of mental health issues can only be provided by a doctor/psychiatrist and requires life-long medication.</p>	<p>Mental health issues do not necessarily need to be treated by a doctor or psychiatrist. Depending on the types and severity of your needs, treatments may be provided by various care professionals, including psychologists and counsellors in the community.</p> <p>Treatment for mental health issues is tailored to each individual's needs. While medication can be effective for some, it is not the only option. Care professionals will assess the condition and administer treatments that would work best for your child.</p>

Types of mental health professionals

Counsellors

Trained professionals who provide counselling, guide clients in developing coping skills and direct them to appropriate resources.



Social Workers

Trained professionals who assess and assist clients in their social and psychological needs, and support them through therapies. They work with different agencies across sectors to render holistic assistance.

General Practitioners (GPs)

GPs on the Mental Health General Practitioner Partnership (MHGPP) Programme are trained to identify, diagnose and support persons with mental health conditions in the community. They may also make referrals to other mental health and allied health services if required.



Psychologists

Mental health professionals who provide psychological assessments, psychotherapy and counselling for mental health conditions. They provide psychological interventions such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and Motivational Interviewing. They may make referrals to psychiatrists if they deem that medical treatment is required.



Psychiatrists

Medical doctors who diagnose mental health conditions and manage treatment. They can also prescribe medication.



Useful resources

[Community Mental Health Wayfinding Tool](#)

Locate your nearby community mental health teams with just 3 clicks, based on you or your child's needs, age and location.

[MindSG](#)

Get tips and tools curated by the Health Promotion Board (HPB) to care for you or your child's well-being.

[Parenting for Wellness](#)

A series of bite-sized parenting resources developed by the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Social and Family Development, and HPB to empower you with key knowledge and skills to support your child's well-being and navigate parenting in this digital age.

[Mental health e-learning](#)

Understand signs and symptoms of common mental health conditions.

Parts of this resource were adapted from MindSG, the Parenting for Wellness (PFW) initiative and the Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA)'s [Digital for Life \(DfL\)](#) portal.

Information presented in this resource is accurate as of May 2026.

