

PSA Bulletin

This week let's talk about 'Loneliness and Mental Health'

Why is this important?

The theme this year for Mental Health Awareness week is loneliness, giving us the opportunity to think about how we build meaningful connections with others.



The pandemic has forced many people to change their social habits. People who have previously never experienced isolation or perhaps low confidence are now finding that it's quite hard to 'get back out there'. If you worked from home (and perhaps continue to do so) you're probably finding you see far fewer people on a day to day basis. If you need a health appointment or perhaps a professional meeting, so many of these now happen online, meaning again that we spend much of our time more isolated than we ever have before.

We must remember that anyone can feel lonely...even when in the company of others.

What can we do?

Let's work on 'CONNECTING'. Take action to meaningfully make contact with others and to spend time in the company of those who boost your wellbeing. Find time to reach out to someone; friends, family, colleagues. Checking in on those who seem to be finding it harder, meeting them with compassion and stepping into their world where they perhaps feel more comfortable. We can even connect safely with those we don't know; a warm smile and a friendly "hello" go such a long way, particularly after such a long period of keeping ourselves intentionally apart!

Maybe you're not yet feeling able to reach out and connect in person just yet? View this short video if you haven't heard about [CLIC](#) (a free online community to support everyone with their mental health).

Maybe you are worried about someone else's mental health?

This can be daunting and somewhat tricky if the individuals themselves do not identify as having an issue with their mental health at this time? This could be because they lack awareness and understanding of the types of things that impact mental health as well as not fully recognising the symptoms of ill mental health. Some people are simply not ready to acknowledge that this is where they are at and find it hard to engage with support. You can access some really helpful advice about [how to begin conversations about mental health](#) and also download information about how to [help yourself or someone else to work through loneliness](#).



Loneliness is something that we all feel at times but when it is chronic or long-term it can have serious effects



MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS WEEK

TIPS ON HOW TO COPE WITH LONELINESS

9 - 15TH MAY 2022

Do things that stimulate the mind
Other activities can occupy your mind, such as a training course, word search, or listening to an interesting podcast. Physical activity is very stimulating for your mind, and can make you feel less alone. Take a simple stroll through the park, or go to the gym.

Do the things you love
Keeping busy by doing the things you enjoy is a great way to combat feeling lonely. Like gardening, going to the gym or a fitness class, jigsaws, puzzles or knitting. These will give you energy and feelings of happiness.

Engage with other people daily
Trying to connect with people around you will help you feel positive, happy and less alone. You might find you lift someone else's spirits too.

Using social media
Social media platforms can be positive for your mental health, but also quite damaging. Use it to learn and develop your knowledge, engaging with others online to share your interests and passions.

How can we help children to think about loneliness?

Families can explore this theme in a number of ways – getting children thinking about their friendships and support systems, about the importance of treating others with kindness, and what they can do if they ever feel lonely.

Help them to think about the people around them who they might talk to if they were feeling stressed/anxious/scared/isolated (use this [‘helping hand’](#) diagram facilitate this conversation)

Promote self-kindness and practicing activities that boost wellbeing and self-esteem

Encourage empathy and acts of kindness towards others

Check on how their ‘media’ use impacts on their mood

Support children to ‘join in’ (join clubs, try sports, spend less time in their room alone)

Prioritise ‘family time’ to reinforce the sense of belonging



Download this image onto your phone for when you might need help

CORNWALL'S 24/7 NHS MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Call for free, any time day or night if you are worried about your own or someone else's mental health. The team behind the 24/7 open access telephone service will listen to you and determine how best to help

SAMARITANS: 24h
Emotional support to anyone in distress, struggling to cope, or at risk of suicide.
☎ 116 123

SHOUT: 24h
Text service, free on all major networks, for anyone in crisis anytime, anywhere.
• If you're over 18, text the word SHOUT
• Under 18s, text YM
☎ Text: 85258

VALUED LIVES:
Supports people who are experiencing mental or emotional distress in Cornwall. Every day, 5.30pm - midnight.
☎ 01209 901438

If you, or someone else, is in immediate danger call 999

Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Health and Care Partnership

on our mental health. We all have a part to play in reducing loneliness.

Support for children and young people

The Mix - a UK-based charity that provides free, confidential support for young people under 25. Young people can get support from the trained team, either by [phone, webchat, or email](#)

Shout 85258 - a free, confidential, 24/7 text-messaging support service.

Samaritans - a UK-based charity that provides support at any time, from any phone for free. Call free on 116 123 or email jo@samaritans.org.

How to contact me: It's never too soon to make contact if you have any concerns. You can reach me via text on the PSA mobile 07903 613074 or via email, terri-anne.old@celticcross.education Normal working days are Tuesday and Wednesday 8.00-16.00 and Thursday 8.00-13:00

