NHS
Leicestershire Partnership
NHS Trust

Welcome to MHST

Information for young people



Mental Health Support Teams in Schools

Contents Page

Any text in **blue font** is a link you can click. If you prefer, the website address will also be written underneath.

Page	Description
3	Welcome
4	What is mental health?
5	Who is in a Mental Health Support Team in Schools?
6	How to use this booklet
7	My experiences
8	Stress Bucket
9	The Iceberg
10-11	What is mindfulness? / Mindfulness - Grounding
12	Self-care
13	Fact vs Opinion
14	Thinking traps
15	Behavioural Activation
16	Problem Solving
17-18	Who can help me in school / Information for carers
19-22	Additional support

Welcome to the Mental Health Support Teams in Schools

Dear parents and carers,

We are the Mental Health Support Teams in Schools or MHST for short. We work with children and young people aged 5 to 18 who are in education across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland

You've been sent this booklet to welcome your child to our service.

Our team have created this booklet for you to use together with your child. It may be helpful while you are waiting for your first appointment. It can also be useful at any time in the future if your child is struggling with their mental health.

The ideas in this booklet are techniques that your child can practise. The ideas are based on evidence and they are appropriate for children and teenagers.

At the end of the booklet, you will find links for trusted websites for further information. You will also find ideas for who can help in school and what to do if there is a mental health crisis.

We hope you and your family find this booklet helpful.

Mental Health Support Team in Schools (MHST)



What is mental health?

Looking after our own mental health is an important part of growing up and staying well. Mental health is about how we think, feel and act.

Just like we take care of our bodies by eating well, sleeping and doing things we enjoy, it's important to take care of our minds too.

We've put together some ideas to help you to understand your own mental health and find ways to look after it.

What does good mental health look like?

Our feelings

Feeling happy, content, and being able to manage and express emotions in healthy ways.



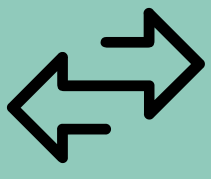
Our thinking

Thinking clearly, problem-solving, and learning effectively.



Resilience and coping with changes

Being able to cope with challenges and bounce back from difficult situations.



Our family and friendships

Building and keeping positive relationships, and feeling a sense of belonging.



Who is in a Mental Health Support Team in Schools ?

Mental Health Support Team in Schools are made up of people with different roles who work together to support children and young people, sometimes called a multi-disciplinary team.

In the team, you may meet,
-Educational Mental Health Practitioners (EMHPs)
-Child Wellbeing Practitioners (CWPs)
-clinicians
-Clinical Team Leaders (CTLs)

Read on to find out what their roles are all about:

Children's Wellbeing Practitioners (CWPs) and Education Mental Health Practitioners (EMHPs) are trained healthcare workers who work in schools and colleges. They support for children and young people with their mental health.

They are trained to help with common mental health problems, such as anxiety, low mood or depression, sleep problems and other mild mental health difficulties. They will either work with you one-to-one or in a group.

EMHP's might also lead assemblies and run workshops in school.

You may also work with **clinicians** or **Clinical Team Leaders**. These are clinically professionals who support the team and make sure you receive the right care.



To find out more about the Mental Health Support Team in Schools please visit
https://bit.ly/MHSTH4T

How to use this booklet

This booklet is what we call a toolkit.

It offers practical ideas that you can try with your child to support them with their mental health.



You might find it helpful to try some of the ideas yourself first, to see how they work. These strategies can be useful for both young people and adults, so you may find something that helps you feel good too!

Once you've found a couple of ideas that feel helpful, you can try them out with your child. They may not work immediately so it can be helpful to try each idea a few times to see if they make a difference.

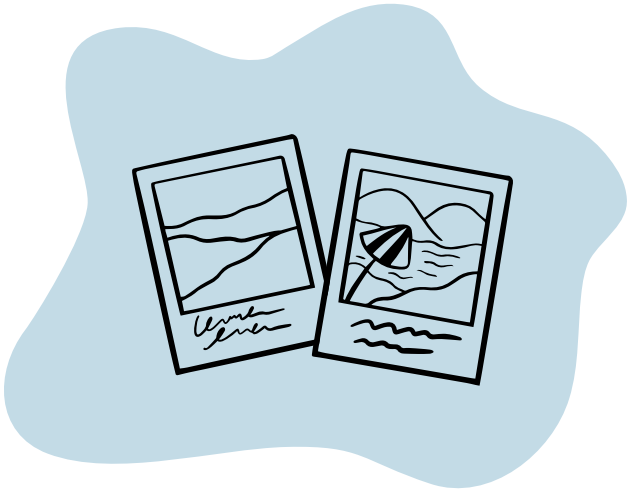
This booklet isn't meant to be worked through from start to finish, like homework. Instead, it provides a range of options to try out. Don't worry if something you try doesn't work. We are all different so what helps one person, may not help someone else.



My experiences

Experiences are things that have happened to you, or things you have done and remember. These experiences can lead to lots of different feelings.

It can sometimes be tricky to talk about uncomfortable feelings but naming and talking about these emotions can help you begin to understand them and work through them.



What triggers uncomfortable feelings?

Memories of people, places or events can all bring up big feelings. How does this feel for you? This can be physical and emotional feelings.



Ways to cope

What helps you feel better? It might be chatting to friends or family, listening to music or getting outside in the fresh air.



What can others do to help?

You might need other people to just listen, leave you alone or suggest helpful things that you could try.



What would you say?

If a close friend told you they were feeling the way you are now, what advice would you give to them?

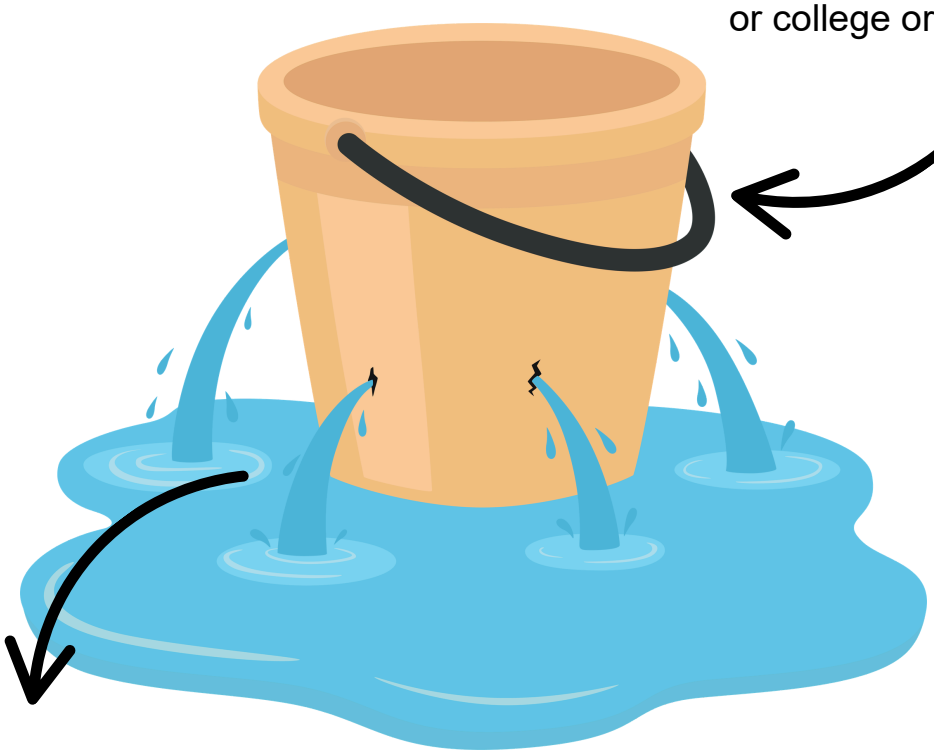
The stress bucket

This is an activity you can try to think about what is adding stress or worry to your mind and what you can do to relieve this.

Imagine your mind as a bucket.
Things that make you feel worried or uncomfortable fill the bucket up.

What fills the bucket?

This could be things like having arguments, worrying about school or college or being a young carer.



What drains the bucket?

Anything that makes you feel better?

This could include self-care, meditation, journaling, doodling, exercise, sport, dancing to music, getting outdoors, cooking, talking to family or friends, using a calming app, kicking a football about, joining a club or group, being creative, reading. The list is endless!

What works for you? Could you add anything new?

The iceberg

We can imagine our feelings as an iceberg. We only see the tip of the iceberg and maybe one emotion but under the surface, many other feelings can be felt too.

The anger iceberg

The feeling we see is anger but underneath this are lots of other emotions.



What would your iceberg show?

Add the emotion that you show. How are you feeling under the surface?



What is mindfulness?



Mindfulness is about noticing what's happening right now, in the moment. It's not thinking about what has happened or might happen next.

The idea is that you clear your head of all other thoughts and feelings and just focus on one thing.

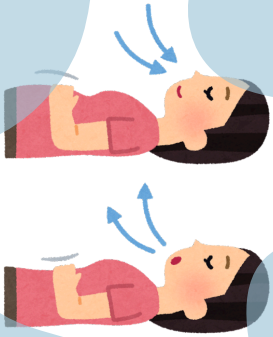
Mindfulness help you feel calmer, reduces stress and anxiety, improves sleep and helps you cope better with difficult situations.

Mindfulness ideas to try

Balloon breathing
Lie down in a comfy spot and imagine there is a balloon in your tummy.
As you breathe in, imagine the balloon slowly inflating and as you breathe out, imagine the balloon softly deflating.

Favourite place
Sit quietly and imagine you are in a safe, comfortable place.

You can remember a place you've visited or create a new location in your mind like a beach, a forest or a cloud.



Notice something new
Hold an object in your hands and really notice all the details about it, how it feels and looks.

turn it slowly and look at it from different angles, like you are really looking at it for the first time.

Body scan
Lie down and relax. Pay attention to different sensations in your body. Notice thoughts and let them go.

Mindfulness - grounding

Mindfulness can be used when you feel out of control to help make you feel calmer.

Grounding is a mindfulness technique you can use to shift your focus from whatever is on your mind to what is happening around you in the present moment.

Grounding ideas to try



5, 4, 3, 2, 1

Look around you and notice five things you can see, four things you can feel, three things you can hear, two things you can smell, and one thing you can taste.



Repeated actions

Do an activity that involves repeated movements like colouring, drawing or knitting. Pay attention to how your body moves as you do this.



Spend time with nature

Spend some time outdoors if you can. Notice what you can see, hear and smell around you.

You might like to try this at different times of the day and evening to notice what changes.

You can find more on mindfulness here or by visiting www.healthforteens.co.uk/feelings/anxiety/how-to-practice-mindfulness/

Self-care

Self-care is taking some time out to look after yourself. This can support both your physical or mental health. It helps you recharge your battery so you feel more ready to manage everyday life.

There's no right or wrong way to practise self-care. It should be whatever works best for you and helps you to feel calm, refreshed and recharged.

Here's some ideas you might like to try...

- Have a shower.
- Listen to music.
- Do some doodling.
- Have an early night.
- Tidy your room/space.
- Drink some water.
- Meet up with a friend.
- Make a list of things you are grateful for.

You can find more on self care here or by visiting www.healthforteens.co.uk/feelings/self-care/

Walking the dog counts too!



Fact vs opinion

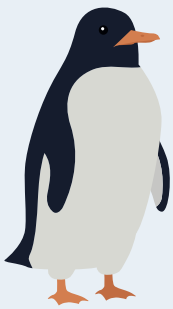
What are facts?

Facts are things which are known or can be proven to be true.

What are opinions?

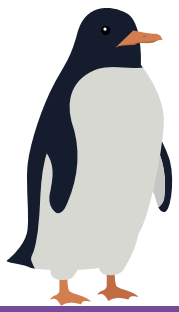
Opinions are thoughts, views or judgements about something. They aren't necessarily based on facts.

Penguin facts	Penguin opinions
Penguins are birds.	Penguins are cute birds.
Penguins can swim.	Penguins aren't good at swimming.
Some penguins live in zoos.	Penguins shouldn't live in zoos.



Opinions can sometimes sound quite like facts, so it can be easy to mix them up. The next time you are thinking about yourself, remember to think carefully about whether the judgement is a fact or an opinion.

Thoughts	Fact	Opinion
I always mess it up.	✗	✓



If you wouldn't say it to a friend because it's mean, don't say it to yourself!

Thinking traps

It is natural to have some negative thoughts when things go wrong. However, when we have a regular pattern of negative thinking, often without a clear reason for it, we've fallen into a thinking trap.

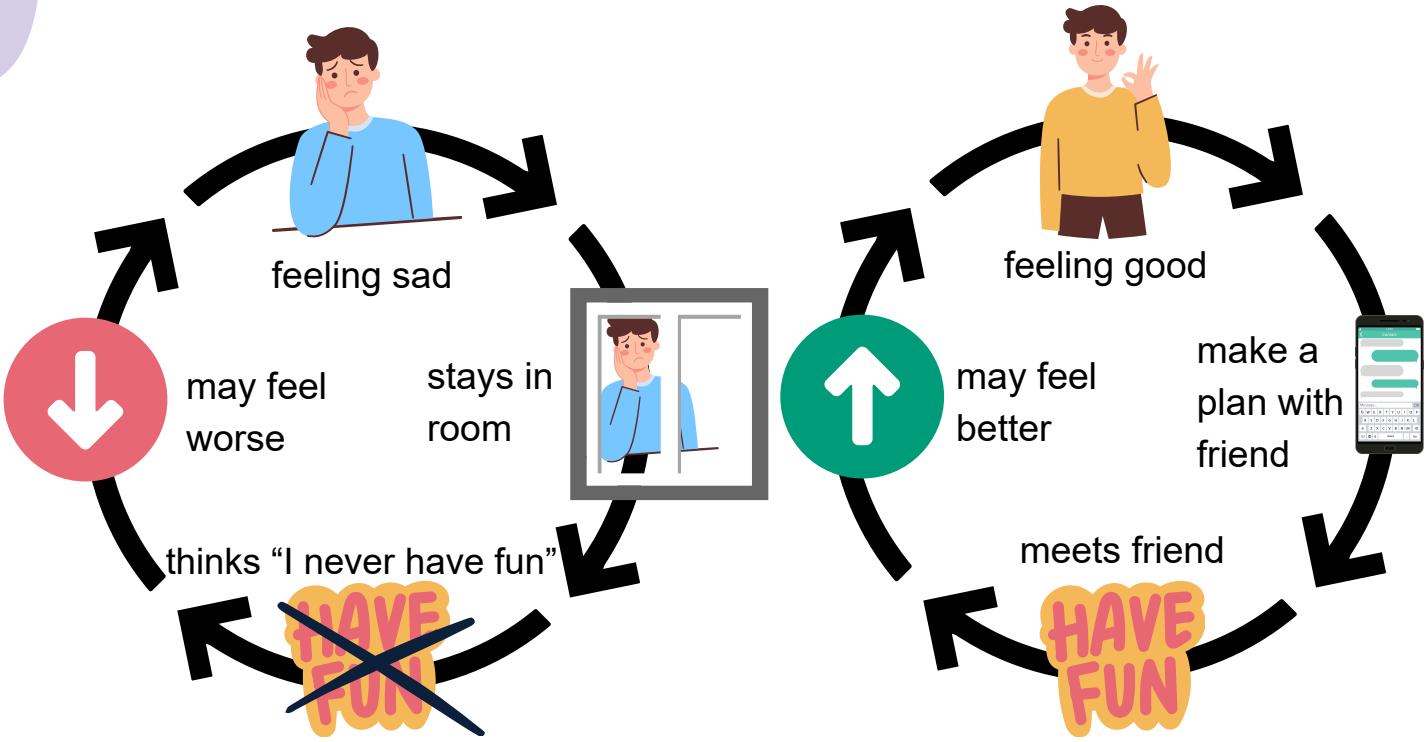
Thinking traps or errors are known as 'cognitive distortions'. This is mistaken thinking based on opinions rather than facts. If we learn challenge negative thinking patterns, it can improve how we feel and support our mental health.

Do you recognise these thoughts?

Minimising the good	Reset your frame
I can't believe I got 3 wrong on that test! I'm so dumb.	I got 17 out of 20. I'm proud of how many I got right.
Blowing things up	
I'm not allowed to see my friends later. My life is terrible.	I get to hang out with them on Saturday - I'm looking forward to it.
Fortune telling	
I bet no-one comes to my birthday party.	I will remind them to check with their parents.
Self blaming	
Jay looks sad. I bet I've upset them.	Jay looks sad. I'll see if I can help cheer them up.
Mind reading	
They are staring. I bet they hate my shirt.	They are looking at my top. I bet they are thinking it's cool.
Negative labeling	
I'm so stupid. My art work is pathetic.	I'm improving in art. Mrs Jones gave me positive feedback.

Behavioural Activation

It can feel hard to get started with something, especially if you feel unmotivated; that can't be bothered feeling. This can leave you feeling stuck in your ways or thoughts.



The good news is that we can trick our brains into getting motivated. You just have to start.

1. Start with things you enjoy or find rewarding so it's easier to get started.
2. Create a small goal that you can achieve.
3. Celebrate small wins and build your next goal.



Problem solving

There will be times when things go wrong and we need to try to figure out how to deal with the problem. Learning problem solving allows us to become more independent and resilient.

Smaller problems can be easy to solve. It's when a problem seems too big that we can struggle to know where to start. The trick is to break the problem into smaller, easier to manage steps.

Step by step problem solving

Steps	Example problem	My problem
Understand what the problem is.	I'm always tired.	
How big is the problem?	I can't concentrate in lessons.	
What are the solutions?	Go to bed earlier. Leave my phone downstairs. Have a sleep routine.	
Try a solution to choose.	I've found a sleep routine online.	
Did that work? If not, why not? Try a different solution.	It helped but I kept looking at my phone so I might need to switch it off or at least to silent.	



We hope you found some of the ideas in this toolkit helpful. On the following pages, there are more ways of finding support with your mental health.

Who can help me in school?

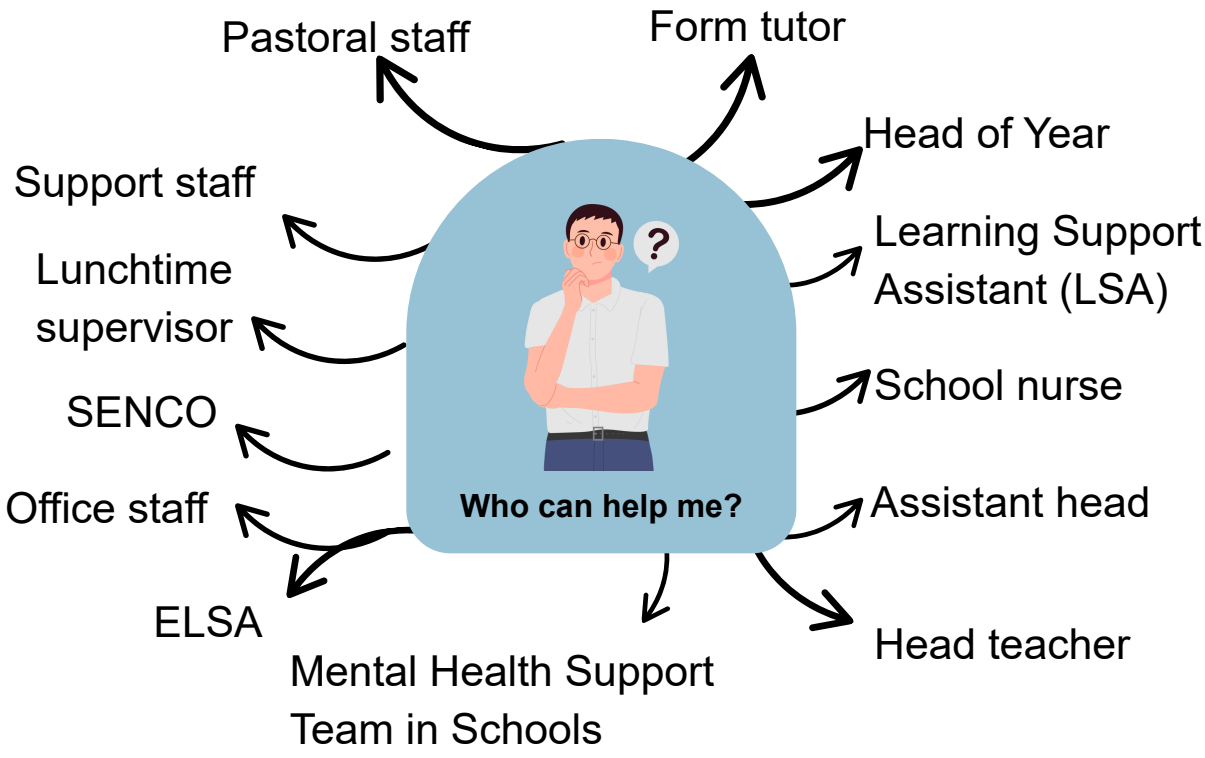
Sometimes our feelings can feel too big to handle on our own. When that happens, it's okay to ask for help.

In school, there are lots of people who can support you.

Big emotions can make it difficult to stay calm, so it can help to think ahead about who you could talk to.

Sometimes, staff might not where you expect them to be so it's a good idea to have more than one person you'd feel comfortable going to see.

Here's some examples of people in your school who could become your trusted person.



Who can help me in school?

Do you know who all the people are that might be able to help you?

What is the Mental Health Support Team in Schools (MHST)?

These are the people who have given you this booklet. They are specially trained to work with your age group to help you with your mental and emotional health.

To find out more about the MHST, scan the QR code or use the link on page 5

What is pastoral support?

These are staff within a school who have additional training and can support you with your emotional, physical and mental health. A pastoral team is normally found in a high school or college.

What's an ELSA?

ELSA stands for Emotional Literacy Support Assistant. They are specially trained staff to help you with your emotional and mental health. These are often found in primary schools.

Help for carers

If you are an adult carer, you can find information about additional support by visiting www.leicspart.nhs.uk/about/our-commitment-to-carers/.

If you are a young person who cares for a grown up or sibling in your family, you can find information on being a young carer by clicking here or visiting www.healthforteens.co.uk/lifestyle/young-carers/what-is-a-young-carer/. We also have a Young Carers pack you can see by clicking here or by visiting https://bit.ly/YoungCarersPack.

Additional support

There are a range of websites that can provide help and support with your mental health.

Health for Teens is an online service provided by the NHS that has information on health and wellbeing. This website also has articles created by professionals who work at CAMHS, providing clinical advice on many topics including mental health conditions, growing up and lifestyle.
www.healthforteens.co.uk

Young Minds is a mental health charity for young people. Their website has guides to mental health conditions, medication and lots of useful resources. You can also text YM to 85258.
www.youngminds.org.uk

Tellmi is an online safe and anonymous space for young people to discuss their feelings, seek support and receive counselling when necessary. It is available 365 days a year and free to use.
www.tellmi.help/what-is-tellmi

Additional support

There are a range of websites that can provide help and support with your mental health.

The Mix offers online counselling and has a crisis messenger for young people under the age of 25. You can access this on their website or text 85258.

www.themix.org.uk

Feeling worried or low? Need to talk? Text **SHOUT** to 85258 for free and confidential support, 24/7. Texting the word 'SHOUT' to 85258 is anonymous and will not show up on your phone bill.

www.giveusashout.org

Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust has partnered with **Togetherness** to offer free access to expertly designed online courses for parents, carers, grandparents and teens living in the region. You will need to create an account and use the password CURVE.

https://togetherness.co.uk/



Additional support

There are a range of websites that can provide help and support with your mental health

NSPCC

[NSPCC](#) specialises in child protection and is dedicated to protecting children to prevent abuse. **www.nspcc.org.uk**

childline
ONLINE, ON THE PHONE, ANYTIME
childline.org.uk | 0800 1111

[Childline](#) is a counselling service. Their website provides a free online service. They also have a free phone support service on 0800 1111 **www.childline.org.uk**.

SAMARITANS

When life is difficult, [Samaritans](#) are here - day or night, 365 days a year. You can call them for free on 116 123 (Free 24 confidential hotline) **www.samaritans.org**



In a mental health crisis?

CALL 111 OPTION 2

If you need urgent mental health support, 24/7 support is available over the phone.
Call [NHS 111](#), selecting mental health crisis option 2. This number is open 24 hours a day and is totally free and confidential.

You can also text 0748 063 5199 and we get back to you. If there is an immediate threat to life, dial 999.



If you are deaf and have urgent mental health needs, you can use the NHS 111 British Sign Language service: **www.signvideo.co.uk/nhs111**
https://111.nhs.uk/

Mental Health Support Teams in Schools

Date implemented: October 2025
Last review: October 2025
Review date: April 2028
Leaflet No. MHST-Sec-B001
feedback@leicspart.nhs.uk
© Leicestershire Partnership Trust October 2025