

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As we reach the end of term, we wanted to highlight to our whole school community the help that is available for our students and parents/carers.

There are a range of support services available online, by text and over the phone to help children, young people and their families. If you are worried about someone else, there is also guidance to help you ask how they are and offer guidance on how to support them.

Local & national support services:

The local '**How You Feel Matters**' document outlines the range of help and support that can be accessed by children and young people in Bedford Borough. This can be found www.bedford.gov.uk/files/how-you-feel-matters-pdf-april-25-pdf.pdf

There are also some national services that can be very helpful:

- www.youngminds.org.uk or Text: **YM** to **85258**: A wide range of support available for young people including 24/7 mental health crisis support
- Call **0808 802 5544** or visit www.youngminds.org.uk/find-help/for-parents/ for 24 hour Young Minds support Parents helpline
- www.themix.org.uk or Tel: **0808 808 4994**: The Mix for any issue affecting young people under 25.
- www.samaritans.org or Tel: **116 123**: the Samaritans provides 24/7 information and support
- www.childline.org.uk or Tel: **08001111**: Childline, providing a wide range of support including 1-2-1 counsellor chat
- www.talkgrief.org: Winston's Wish Talk Grief, if you have lost someone and need to chat an online platform for teens and young adults.
- **Call 111 Option 2 - 24/7** A free helpline for people of all ages who need **urgent** mental health support. Young people can talk to a CAMHS professional directly who can arrange additional support.

IN ANY EMERGENCY, PLEASE DIAL 999

What to do if you are concerned about a child, young person or someone you know?

- Encourage the person or your child to ask for support if needed.
- If you are concerned about the emotional and mental health of a child or adult, contact a professional; your GP, phone NHS 111 or take them to an A&E department. In an emergency call 999. Also, many online or phone resources now provide anonymous counselling and text services for young people to use directly. Please see the sources of support above.
- If they, or you, are worried about them harming themselves, ask them direct questions, such as "sometimes when people feel like you do, they think about suicide and harming themselves, is that what you are thinking about?"
- Empathic listening is key here – ask open and honest questions and show that you're listening by reflecting on what they say and clarifying what they mean, try not to jump in with solutions – allow them to express their problems first.
- Don't minimize their feelings by saying it's 'just a phase', 'you'll grow out of it' or 'why is that even bothering you?' Take time to imagine what it's like for that person, focus on their feelings and their experiences – not your own
- Firstly, it is important that you try to stay calm and listen to the young person or adult – hear them out, try to avoid judgement, regardless of what is going on

We hope you found this information useful, and you have a peaceful break.