

## Mental Wellbeing & Mental Ill Health

When we talk about Mental Health, most often we are actually talking about Mental Wellbeing and there are many factors that can affect this. A young person can be living with a diagnosable mental illness, that requires medication and/or therapy but still maintain a positive sense of mental wellbeing.

Similarly, a young person may not have a medical diagnosis or condition but could still be experiencing an episode of seriously poor mental wellbeing, normally due to stress from risk factors in their life. Ultimately what we have to remember with young people of any age is, this will often be displayed in some form of changed behaviour, when any of the basic needs are not being met.

When we look at neuroscience of the brain development through childhood and adolescence, it is easy to understand the relationship between young peoples mental wellbeing and developing illness in later life.

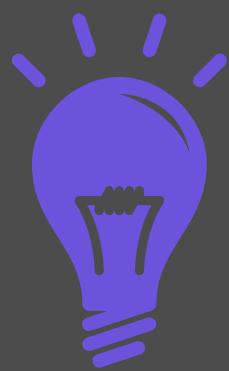
If we can spot signs early, increase understanding to continue to tackle the stigma around mental health, teach young people effective self care strategies, communication skills and how to meet their own needs, offering support, then we can make a real difference.

Most influencing factors of our mental health and wellbeing can be loosely categorised into three groups:



### Communication

- Recognise and reflect on thoughts and feelings
- Listen non judgmentally and be self aware
- Talk to someone trusted or a specialist if you can
- If you can't talk to someone find alternative means - journals, arts and play therapies, creative outlets



### Understanding

- Be pro active in learning about how the brain and the body works and the connection between the two - after all its in your interest to look after them as you only get one!
- Recognise behaviours, triggers and warning signs in yourself and those around you and know what appropriate support is available
- Practice self acceptance



### Self Care

- Accumulate more positive emotions than negative ones
- Practice healthy coping strategies to combat your own stress - find your flow activity
- Listen to your body and mind and take time to rest and recuperate
- Be mindful of the company you keep and the situations you expose yourself too - energy transfers between people



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