



Peer
Education
Project



Mental Health
Foundation



WHY

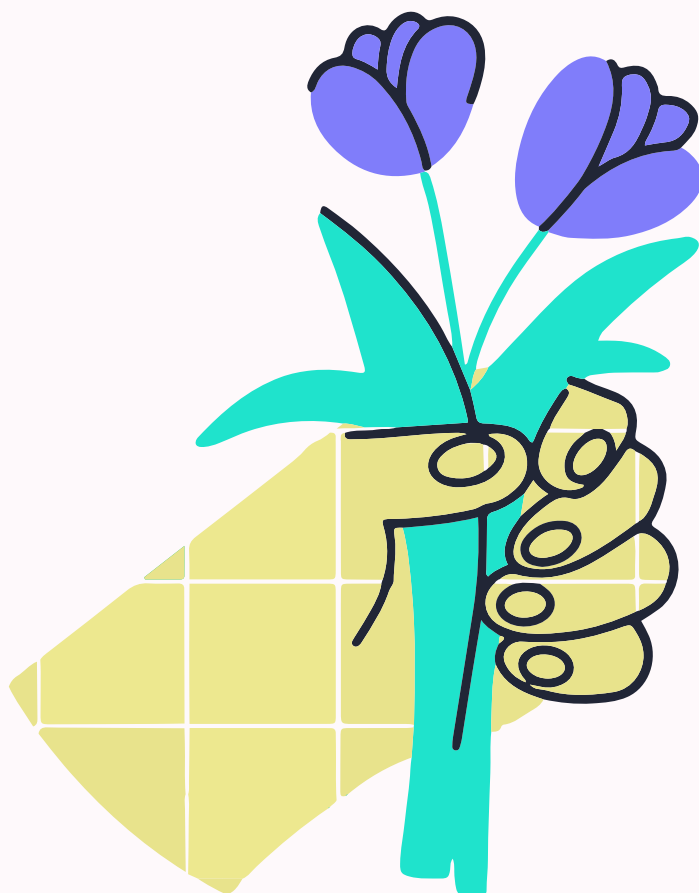
KINDNESS

MATTERS

A guide for caregivers



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There are many definitions of what it means to be kind and kindness is often entwined with related concepts like empathy, compassion, and altruism.

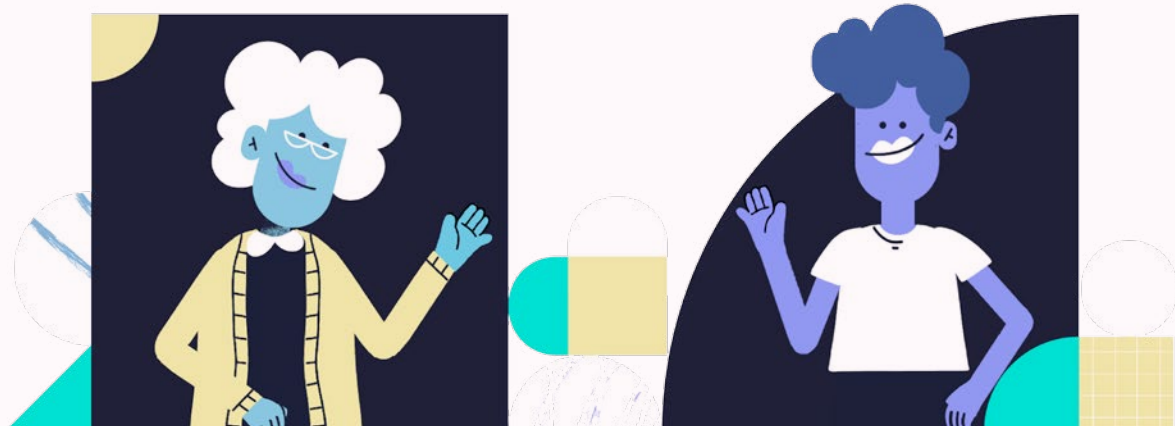
As well as being supportive of others, acts of kindness have many benefits for our mental health and wellbeing. Kindness can:

- Reduce stress.
- Improve our mood.
- Increase self-esteem.
- Create a sense of belonging.
- Reduce loneliness.



The Mental Health Foundation found that 63% of UK adults agree that when other people are kind it has a positive impact on their mental health, and the same proportion agree that being kind to others has a positive impact on their mental health.

This guide provides tips and resources on how to support yourself as a caregiver, as well as your child or young person, to show kindness to yourselves and others.



Supporting yourself to show kindness

Resources to support yourself

Mental Health Foundation resources

Our vision at the [Mental Health Foundation](#) is for a world with good mental health for all. With prevention at the heart of what we do, we aim to find and address the sources of mental health problems so that people and communities can thrive.

[Tips on looking after your mental health](#)

Read these tips on how to look after your mental health.

[A guide on why kindness matters](#)

Read this guide on the positive effect that helping others can have on your own mental health, including some suggestions that will inspire you.

[Kindness matters to our mental health podcast](#)

Listen to this podcast exploring why kindness matters and how it is linked with mental health.

[An article on the health benefits of altruism](#)

Read about the different health benefits of altruism.

[A personal story on the importance of kindness](#)

Read this personal story on the role kindness has played in their life.

Other resources

[TED talks on the importance of self-care](#)

Listen to these TED talks on looking after your physical, mental and social wellbeing.



Support services for adults

Samaritans

Samaritans are open 24/7 for anyone who needs to talk.

Call: **116 123** (free)

Email: jo@samaritans.org

Post: Freepost SAMARITANS LETTERS

The Samaritans Self-Help app is a tool to track how you're feeling and receive tips on things you can do to look after yourself.

Samaritans also have a Welsh Language Line on **0808 164 0123** (7pm–11pm every day).

Hub of Hope

Hub of Hope is a UK-wide mental health service database, allowing you to search for local, national, peer, community, charity, private and NHS mental health support. You can filter results to find specific kinds of support.

Mind

Mind offers advice, support and information to people experiencing mental health difficulties, and their family and friends.

InfoLine: **0300 123 3393**

Lines are open Monday to Friday 9am to 6pm (except bank holidays).

Email info@mind.org.uk

Side by Side

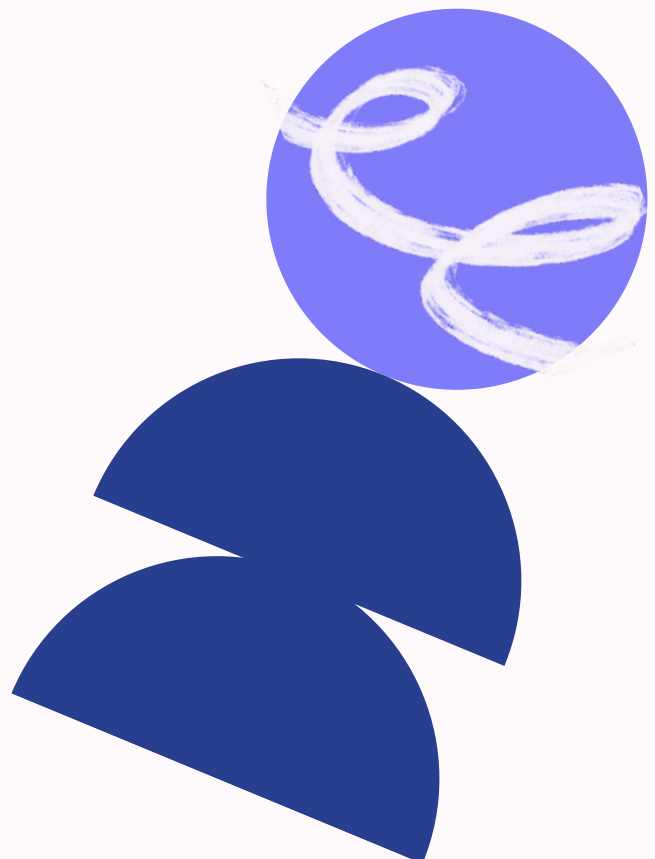
Side by Side, hosted by Mind, is an online community where you can listen, share and be heard. The online community is moderated to keep the community safe and supportive.

Young Minds

Young Minds provides a parent helpline for parents and caregivers seeking detailed advice, emotional support and signposting about a child or young person up to the age of 25.

Call: **0808 802 5544** (free), available Monday – Friday, 9:30am - 4pm.

Webchat: available Monday – Friday, 9:30am - 4pm.



Supporting your child or young person with showing kindness

Kindness can be shown in many ways, and it can look different to everyone.

Being kind to ourselves can be even harder than being kind to others. It is very easy to hold higher standards for our own behaviour, thoughts, and feelings than others, but over time this can chip away at our confidence and self-esteem. This is especially true for children and young people.

You can play a key role in helping your child or young person to find the ways of practising self-kindness works for them.

[MHF Tips for Young People on kindness](#)

Share these top tip postcards, written by The Mental Health Foundation, to support your child or young person to show kindness towards themselves and others.

Here are ways your child or young person can show self-kindness:

Spend time every day doing something they love.

Doing things we love can help to boost our mood and clear our minds and, with a clear mind, we are more likely to be patient and kind to ourselves, and others.

Praise themselves.

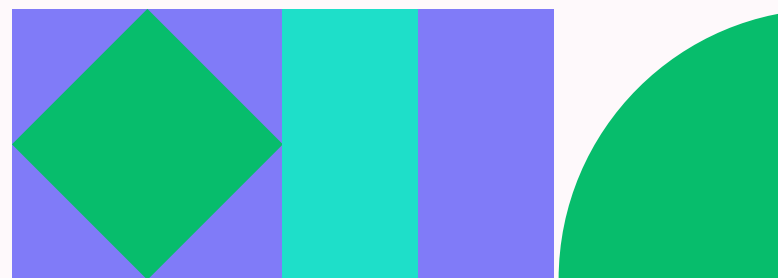
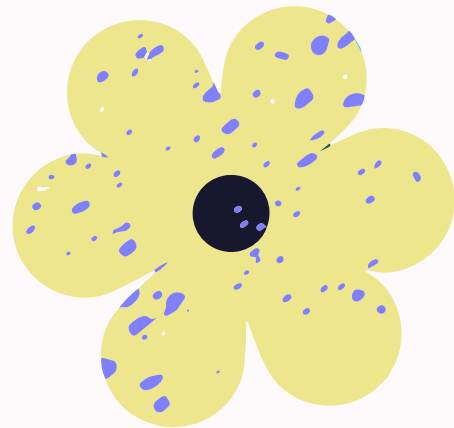
Practising this daily will help kind thoughts about themselves come to mind more freely and often.

[Self-esteem: A guide for parents and carers](#)

Read this guide on how to provide support to your child or young person with developing their self-esteem.

Practise 'thought-swaps'.

Encourage your child or young person to practise training their brain to swap negative thoughts about themselves with more balanced ones.



Be patient.

Support your child or young person to find what helps them to feel calmer and less frustrated – maybe it's listening to soothing music or going outside to get some fresh air. It can take time to find what works for us in different situations.

Kindness Quest

Try this activity with your child or young person. Encourage them to check off each kind act that they notice and record the total at the end to help identify small acts of kindness. Sometimes, kindness is hiding in plain sight!

Be kind to others.

Research shows that being kind to others makes us feel good and has a positive effect on our own mental health and wellbeing, so encourage your child or young person to try some of the following things!

[The Power of Giving: How acts of kindness can benefit you and others blog](#)

Share this blog, written by a young person, with your child or young person to inspire them to show acts of kindness.

Kind notes

Print off and decorate these kindness notes with your child or young person to encourage kindness in your home. Help them hand the notes out to friends and family!

Practise mindfulness.

Mindfulness is about paying attention to what is happening in your mind and body right now, without judgement. Encourage your child or young person to spend some time finding mindfulness activities that work for them.

**Remember – we learn by example!
So, try practising these yourself and talk about what works for you with your child or young person.**



Support services for young people

The Mix

The Mix offers online information as well as helpline support to under-25s about anything that's troubling them.

Email: via their [online contact form](#)

Call: **0808 808 4994** (free)

Telephone services available 4pm – 11pm everyday.

Text: **THEMIX to 85258**

The text service is free, 24/7 crisis support across the UK.

One-to-one chat: Free [1-2-1 webchat service](#)

The webchat is available 4pm – 11pm, Monday to Saturday.

Childline

A support service for anyone under 19 in need of support.

Call: **08001111** (free)

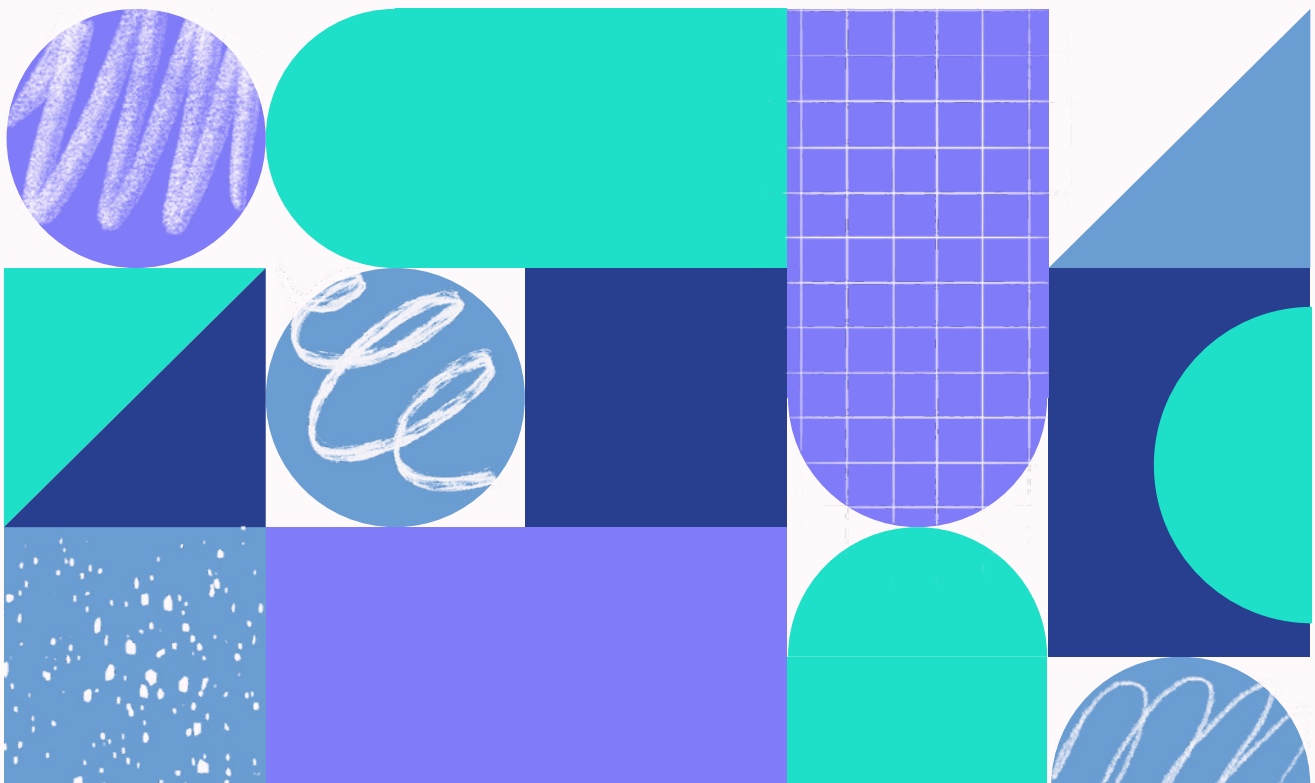
Telephone services available 24-hours a day, every day.

Young people can [sign up](#) for a free Childline locker (real name or email address not needed) to use Childline's free [1-2-1 counsellor chat](#) and email support service.

Shout

A support text service, available 24-hours a day, every day.

Text: **SHOUT to 85258**





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[mentalhealth.org.uk](https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk)

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