

# IT'S OK NOT TO BE OK

How to support a child feeling low in mood

## Useful Apps:



What's Up?



Stay Alive



MoodTools



Fabulous - Daily Routine Planner



In Hand

Unless stated otherwise, apps are not supplied by the NHS and the NHS is not liable for their use.

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How to support a child feeling low in mood

## WHEN TO BE CONCERNED?

It is typical for everyone to have times of low mood, loss of energy and lose interest in things.

When to be concerned:

- If the degree to which a young person feels low appears out of context or disproportionate to the reason why they might be feeling low
- If episodes are more frequent or prolonged and cause the young person distress
- If it impacts on their ability to cope with everyday life such as going to school, seeing friends or taking part in leisure activities

## WHAT TO DO:

- Normalise that feeling sad or down is a natural emotion particularly in response to a sad, disappointing or difficult event
- Activity helps; encourage a young person to do a range of tasks and activities including one they need to do such as school work to fun things
- Keep a routine and have nice things planned
- Break things down into small steps and do one at a time so tasks do not seem so overwhelming
- Role model and demonstrate that you can do things even when you're feeling sad or down
- Be compassionate by validating how a young person is feeling
- Watch a parent/carer workshop on how to support a young person in crisis: [youtu.be/qBAZQVjSmQU](https://youtu.be/qBAZQVjSmQU)
- Watch a parent/carer workshop on coping and resilience skills: [youtu.be/K4OGOhNwML0](https://youtu.be/K4OGOhNwML0)
- Share concerns with your child's school/college
- Depending on the context and/or the origins of the anxiety being experienced, other services may be helpful e.g. family guidance if there is family breakdown or conflict
- There is a lot of information on the Sussex CAMHS website: [sussexcamhs.nhs.uk](https://sussexcamhs.nhs.uk)

## WHAT MIGHT IT LOOK LIKE?

- Feeling tired or appearing lethargic, unmotivated and disinterested
- Appearing withdrawn and less communicative
- Disrupted sleep (difficulties getting to or staying asleep, waking very early in the morning and not being able to get back to sleep)
- Seeking reassurance or wanting to withdraw from social contact and communication
- Resistance to doing things, appearing unmotivated and disinterested, avoidance of seeing friends or doing activities they ordinarily enjoy
- Poor personal hygiene (not washing or changing clothes regularly)
- Frequent changes of emotion, more sensitive (e.g. irritable, upset, confused)
- Thoughts or urges to harm self or some thoughts to end life; some infrequent or superficial (not requiring medical attention) self-harm may occur

*Please note that not all young people who engage in self-harm behaviour are depressed or suicidal. There are many reasons why a young person may engage in self-harm behaviour.*

#Recipes4wellbeing



[sussexcamhs.nhs.uk](https://sussexcamhs.nhs.uk)