

Task 1

MENTAL HEALTH



What is mental health?

When we talk about being **healthy**, we mean keeping ourselves in a good condition so that we can do what we want to do and function properly.

There are different ways of being healthy. To keep in good **physical health**, we have to look after our bodies. This includes getting regular exercise and eating the kinds of foods that are good for our bodies. When we are in good physical health, it means our bodies are working well.

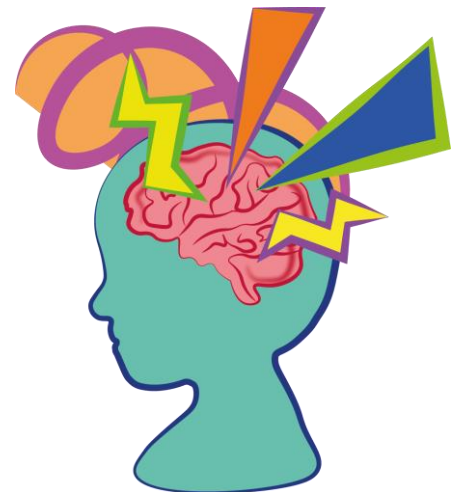
However, physical health isn't the only health we have to think about. We also need to consider our **mental health**. Mental health is all about how we feel in our mind. It can be related to how our brain is functioning. It's about the emotions we experience and how well we feel we can cope with life. When we're in good mental health, we are able to make the most of our potential and have the fulfilling kind of life and relationships that we want to have.

Physical and mental health are important to everybody. Just like some people can have problems that affect their physical health, some people can have problems that affect their mental health.

What are mental health problems and what causes them?

We all feel sad, nervous, down, and anxious at times in our lives. It's completely normal to have these feelings. Often, these feelings or moods last for a short time and then go away. However, sometimes these feelings aren't easy to get rid of and can develop into a more serious problem.

This can happen for lots of different reasons. For example, if somebody goes through a big change or loses somebody close to them, they might have feelings of sadness or anxiety that won't go away. This could become a mental health



problem if it starts negatively affecting their life over a long period of time.

There isn't always a reason for a mental health problem: sometimes it can just happen. Everyone is different and everyone's mental health can change at different stages of their life.

What can I do to keep good mental health?

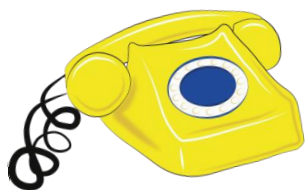
Talking about your feelings is important for good mental health: if you've got a problem, don't keep it to yourself. Tell a friend, a family member, or a trusted adult, and ask for help when you need it. Accept yourself for who you are and be proud of your good personal qualities. Do things that you're good at and that you enjoy. Use your skills to help others. All of these things will help you to feel happier and healthier in the long run.



Many of the things we do to keep good physical health also help us keep good mental health. From ensuring we get a full night's sleep to eating our fruit and vegetables and exercising - all of these help our minds feel more positive.

We're also far more likely to feel happier if we get out into natural sunlight and spend time outside rather than stare at a phone or computer screen all day too. Feeling close to family members and friends and having positive relationships can also help us keep good mental health.

Of course, not all of these things work all the time. When people are feeling sad, nervous, down, and anxious almost all the time, or for a really long period of time, it is vital we tell a trusted adult. They will be able to help us get the help we need.



We can also ring ChildLine and speak to someone about our feelings, for free on 0800 1111.