

# Ahead Of The Game

## Mental Health Awareness For Clubs



Foundation



## What is mental health?

Good mental health is a state of wellbeing in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.

## What is poor mental health?

Having poor mental health means you are struggling to cope with the everyday pressures of life. Certain situations feel uncontrollable and you're not functioning well.

## What is mental illness?

Mental illness includes diagnosed mental disorders that require treatment, e.g., depression, bipolar disorder and schizophrenia.



Start the conversation

# Signs to look out for – A SPORT

## Mental health awareness signs to look out for

**Awareness:** Over the last two weeks or longer has something seemed slightly off?

**Social Isolation:** Withdrawn from friends, family and the community. Lonely. Lost interest or enjoyment in the sport/activity. Not coming to training or matches.

**Physical Health:** Not eating or sleeping well. Lack of regular exercise. Loss of energy and constantly tired. Unexplained aches and pains. Looking run down and not like their normal self.

**Obvious Changes:** Sad, moody, worrying a lot, teary, restless, on edge or irritable. Weight loss or gain. Increased use of alcohol or substance abuse. Difficulty concentrating or can't make decisions.

**Reacting in the wrong way:** Lashing out verbally and physically. Bursts of anger. Acting out of character

**Tough Times:** Issues with school, work or home life. Drop in performance level. Relationship break up. Major illness, death in family, injury or recent tragic or disturbing personal events.

**If you notice any of these signs in A SPORT you are involved with, then assist people to get help or, if you can relate to any of the points above, seek help yourself. See a doctor, local mental health charity or call Lifeline.**

## Who can help?

It is important to talk to someone you trust and who can help. This may be:

- A close friend
- Parents, a family member or family friend
- A teammate, coach or committee member
- A social worker or youth worker
- Someone you trust and respect in your community
- A support agency. (Details of support agencies can be found on page 4)



# TOP 10 TIPS

## on looking after your mental health and wellbeing

### Mind & body

Look after your body as well as your mind. Eat a well-balanced diet, keep hydrated and get into a regular sleep pattern.

### Exercise

Engage in regular exercise. Find a sport and activity you enjoy. Exercise is great for improving your mental wellbeing.



### Breathing

Learn how to breath effectively. Breathing well helps get oxygen to your brain and breathing effectively can be relaxing.

### Organisation

Manage your time effectively. Stay organised and on top of things. This will help reduce pressure.

### Challenge

Try to challenge your thinking. If you experience an unhelpful thought, try to make it a helpful thought. Replace "I Can't" with "**I can try**".

### Write things down

Write down how you feel or what you are thinking. This is a really simple way to understand what is going on within your mind and body.



### Its ok to talk

Don't be afraid to talk to someone about how you are feeling. A problem shared is a problem halved. Help is always available.



### Check in

Regularly check in with yourself. Monitor your mood and how you are feeling.

### Self-care

Practice self-care. You are number one. Look after yourself. Chill out, go for a walk, catch up with friends and do things you enjoy.



### Problem solve

Learn how to problem-solve effectively. When you experience a problem try to think of a number of solutions and write them down.

# SUPPORT SERVICES

Search: [www.mindingyourhead.info](http://www.mindingyourhead.info)

The site will give you contacts for services within your region around mental health and other social issues.



Should you wish to avail of support, the Public Health Agency have put together a list of directories, helplines and services from across Northern Ireland:

## Belfast Area

[https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/2020-01/Belfast\\_area\\_card\\_2020.pdf](https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/2020-01/Belfast_area_card_2020.pdf)

## Northern Area

[https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/2020-01/Northern\\_area\\_card\\_2020.pdf](https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/2020-01/Northern_area_card_2020.pdf)

## South Eastern Area

[https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/2020-01/SouthEastern\\_area\\_card\\_2020.pdf](https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/2020-01/SouthEastern_area_card_2020.pdf)

## Southern Area

[https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/2020-01/Southern\\_area\\_card\\_2020.pdf](https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/2020-01/Southern_area_card_2020.pdf)

## Western Area

[https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/2020-01/Western\\_area\\_card\\_2020.pdf](https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/2020-01/Western_area_card_2020.pdf)



[www.helplinesnetworkni.com](http://www.helplinesnetworkni.com)

## childline

ONLINE, ON THE PHONE, ANYTIME

[childline.org.uk](http://childline.org.uk) | 0800 111



[www.sportschaplaincy.org.uk](http://www.sportschaplaincy.org.uk)

## Lifeline

0808 808 8000

[www.lifelinehelpline.info](http://www.lifelinehelpline.info)



[www.irishfa.com/aheadofthegame](http://www.irishfa.com/aheadofthegame)