A young person’s guide
This guide will help to point you in the right direction towards a healthier, less stressful and more rewarding lifestyle. It tells you where you can get help and information and gives you clear and sensible ideas on what to do if you feel you need that extra bit of help.

As a young person it is important to start following a healthy lifestyle now in order to avoid any problems when you are older. Healthy habits are easier to get used to as a young person, and they can improve the rest of your life. You will also look and feel better, right now!

This guide also contains useful websites, agency advice and information about various key issues. So take a browse and read the sections which are of interest to you.

Welcome

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Here in Wandsworth we have a wide range of professionals who are there to help and support you.

**Doctor/GP**
Your Doctor is often the best person to speak to if you are worried about your general health, sexual health or mental health. What you say... may suggest you speak to your parents. If they cannot treat you, they can advise you on where to go and what to do next.

**Chemist**
Many common illnesses and queries can be dealt with by your local Chemist. This can avoid going to the Doctor although you should make an appointment if you are worried.

**Sexual Health Services**
The Point Battersea - Sexual Health Services for young people offers advice and treatment of STIs, pregnancy and contraception. The centre can offer support in all matters of sexual health, including issues around sexuality. The Point is a drop-in clinic so no appointment is necessary see page 43.

**Teachers**
Teachers and tutors can be great people to talk to. If they cannot help they will be able to signpost you to someone who can.

**School Nurse**
The school nursing team and school staff will help support your health and development.

**Youth Service**
Wandsworth Youth Service is for young people aged 11-19 or up to 25 if you have a disability.

- Runs 11 youth clubs throughout the borough.
- Offers a wide range of activities.
- Has targeted programmes to help young people who are at risk of dropping out or on the edge of getting into trouble.

Tel: 020 8871 7553

**Parents/Carers**
Parents and carers are sometimes the best people to talk to about your feelings. It can be hard to chat to a parent about sex, relationships or even drugs, but you may be surprised and find the support and help you need. Things are often easier when shared and could make things at home easier. Tell your parents to visit www.wandsworth.gov.uk/la

Click on ‘Parenting Support’.

**Friends**
It’s great to have friends to chat to and share worries and ideas with. Don’t forget they may not have all the experience you need in advising on things like health, drugs or alcohol, but they play an important part in our lives and how we feel. Discuss and find out more about possible problems together.
Positive body image

Getting the balance right

Turn on the TV or flick through a magazine and chances are you’ll see pictures of perfect looking celebrities staring back. This might affect your body image and could make you feel bad about yourself or that you should try to change the way you are.

Many young people who are perfectly normal and healthy feel that they don’t look ‘right’ because they are comparing themselves to role models such as pop stars, models or other celebrities who are often skinny. This can lead to an unhealthy body image. If you do feel that you are overweight, talk to an adult you can trust and try to find out more about healthy eating and exercise.

It’s a good idea to eat well and stay a healthy weight but some young people can take dieting too far and develop an eating disorder.

The two main types of eating disorders are Anorexia Nervosa which is when you starve yourself and Bulimia Nervosa which is when you make yourself sick after you eat or take laxatives. They are both very bad for you.

Make sure you talk to an adult or friend you trust to get the help you need.

Getting the balance right

Look out for:

Signs of Anorexia include:
• Eating less and less.
• Losing a lot of weight very quickly.
• Growing more body hair (usually girls).

Signs of Bulimia include:
• Eating too much in one go.
• Going to the toilet after eating to be sick.
• Sore throat and mouth infections.

Facts about eating disorders:
1. Eating disorders can be beaten.
2. An eating disorder is serious.
3. An eating disorder is not a dieting craze.
4. An eating disorder is not attention seeking.
5. An eating disorder is an illness.

Boys as well as girls can have eating disorders.

If you have an eating disorder:
• It’s hard to cope with an eating disorder alone - talk to someone you trust.
• If you are worried ask your parent or carer to make an appointment for you with your Doctor.
• Remember that the sooner you get some help, the easier it will be for you to beat your problem.

If a friend has an eating disorder:
• Tell them that you’re worried and that you’re there for them.
• Get them to see their Doctor.
• Set a good example and show your friend how important it is to have a healthy diet.

Contact:
• www.b-eat.co.uk
• www.youngminds.org.uk
Bullying

The real story

Bullying at school, can often be things like name calling, hitting, happy-slapping or stealing someone's things. It also includes stuff that's less visible, like sending nasty texts or spreading gossip about someone.

People get picked on for lots of reasons. Being bullied can make you dread going to school and can also make you feel depressed, lonely and even suicidal.

If you’re being bullied, you’re not alone. You might feel that there’s no way out but there are lots of ways to get help. If people are making nasty remarks about you then it may be because they are jealous. Perhaps you’re better looking than they are, work harder or perhaps the teachers like you better. One way of dealing with remarks is simply ignore them each time so that you show them that it isn’t having the effect of upsetting you in the way they think.

The bullies will have worked out what buttons to push to make you upset. Don’t try to hide it or ignore it - tell a friend, tell a teacher and tell your parents/carers. It won’t stop unless you do.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying by text, instant messaging or email messages. It can be making insulting comments about someone on the internet through a website or through social networking sites. It can also be the uploading of embarrassing videos or photographs by people you trusted on the internet or distributing them by mobile phones. This is called ‘sexting’.

Do not respond to the messages, save them or take a screen shot as evidence. There are 'report abuse' facilities on many websites.

Contact

• www.bullying.co.uk
• www.nspcc.org.uk
• www.samaritans.org 08457 90 90 90
• www.childline.org.uk 0800 1111

Spotting the signs

Signs someone’s being bullied:
• They become unhappy or withdrawn.
• They start missing school.
• They’ve got physical injuries they don’t want to talk about or try to hide.
• They pretend to be ill.

Are you being bullied?:
• It probably won’t stop until you tell someone you trust.
• Act confidently to send out the message that you’re not afraid.
• Stay with others - you’re more likely to be picked on if you’re on your own.
• Keep a diary and keep all text messages as evidence of what happens.

Is your friend being bullied?:
• Take their worries seriously.
• Stick up for them.
• They might want you to be with them for support when they tell their parents, carers or teacher.

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Difficulties at home

You don’t have to cope alone

Young people often experience tensions at home. Your relationships with the people you live with can be the source of all kinds of problems. Sometimes the situation is more serious than others, but whatever is going on, it can take up a lot of your head-space and make you feel bad. Remember it’s not your fault and you don’t have to cope alone. Talk it through with someone you trust, like a parent/carer, teacher or friend, and get the help and support you need. Or get in touch with one of the support organisations listed under contacts. When communication breaks down you can lose perspective on what is happening. The key is to find ways to build up your resilience, so that you can cope better.

You may be experiencing abuse (physical, emotional or sexual) at home (see page 14), or maybe you have a parent/carer or sibling who is taking drugs or drinking too much and you feel that things are getting out of control. It can be just as upsetting to feel caught up in problems between other family members. It is important that you keep yourself safe. Talk to someone to get some help and support.

Contact

• Your School Nurse
• www.samaritans.org 08457 90 90 90
• www.childline.org.uk 0800 1111
• www.nspcc.org.uk 0808 800 5000
• www.missingpeople.org.uk 0800 700 740

Domestic violence

Domestic violence includes threatening behaviour, violence, psychological, sexual, financial or emotional abuse. It also includes forced marriage, female genital mutilation and so called honour killings. Domestic abuse is a crime and a major social problem affecting many families.

If you are worried about domestic violence, talk to someone who understands such as your School Nurse or the 24-hour National Domestic Violence Freephone Helpline 0808 2000 247.
Abuse

It’s not your fault

Most young people get enough care and love to grow up into happy, healthy adults. But some aren’t so lucky, and experience domestic abuse - either to them or to one of their parents/carers. It can feel like your life is falling apart.

There are four kinds of domestic abuse:

**Physical** - which is assault, wounding or serious injury.

**Sexual** - which is when you’re forced to have sex, or someone touches you in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable.

**Emotional** - which is when someone criticises you all the time or shouts at you.

**Neglect** - which is when you don’t get enough food or don’t have clothes to keep you warm.

A young person usually knows the person who is hurting them or making them do things that they should not. Abuse can happen anywhere and to anyone. If you are being abused it can be very upsetting ... and unloved. You must tell someone. Your teacher, School Nurse, Social Services or the Police will be able to help you.

Signs someone’s being abused:

- They become quiet and withdrawn.
- They have injuries they can’t explain.
- They don’t like being touched.
- They put themselves down.
- They have no friends.
- They have no clothes.
- They have no books.
- They have no toys.
- They have no family.
- They have no support.
- They have no trust.

Contact

- www.refuge.org.uk 0808 2000 247
- Call 999 in an emergency
- www.childline.org.uk 0800 1111

If you are being abused:

- Remember that it’s not your fault.
- You have the right to feel safe at home.
- Don’t suffer in silence, even if you might be worried about talking.
- Tell someone you can trust, like a parent/carer, teacher or friend.
Why do young people try drugs and alcohol?

Lots of young people want to know about drugs and alcohol - this doesn't mean you have to take them or feel like you should just because people around you are. There are lots of reasons why people drink or take drugs, sometimes it is because they think it's going to be fun. Drugs can seriously affect your health and the way you see the world around you. They can lead to depression, loss of judgement and even death. There are many risks with any drink or drug use, so ask yourself, is it really worth it?

Maybe you’re thinking about taking drugs because you’re stressed at school or worried about your home life. Try to understand why you want to take drugs or drink, and try to find a better way to deal with pressures. Talk to an adult you trust about the way you feel.

Prescription medicines should only be taken by the person whose name is on the medicine. Even prescription medicines can have serious side effects if not taken correctly. If you are worried seek advice from the person who has prescribed them to you or your Doctor.

Alcohol, drugs and substances

How much is too much?
- If you’re an adult man, the most you should drink is four units a day.
- If you’re an adult woman, the most you should drink is three units a day.
- A unit is half a pint of beer or a single measure of spirits. When you drink more than twice the recommended daily limit it’s called binge drinking and it’s bad for your health.

Are you drinking too much?
- Are you drinking because you’ve got problems at school or at home? Try to solve these.
- Are your friends drinking a lot too?
- Remember, it’s ok to say no, don’t feel under pressure to drink.

Is your friend drinking too much?
- Help them to face the fact that they’ve got a problem and get some help.
- Remember that they have to want to change their habits - you can’t do it for them.

Commonly used drugs

People use all sorts of substances, both legal and illegal to get ‘high’. Illegal drugs are things like Cannabis (weed), Amphetamines (speed), Ecstasy (E), Cocaine and Heroin. Many legal substances are also harmful and addictive like cigarettes, alcohol, glue, petrol and aerosols. It’s illegal for shopkeepers to sell tobacco products or alcohol to anyone under 18.

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Frank 0800 776650 www.talktofrank.com
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E-safety and exploitation

Staying safe

The internet is a great way to keep in touch with your friends who you don’t see every day, through social networking and chatrooms. Sexual exploitation can happen to anyone and can happen in different ways including being groomed through the internet, face to face, mobile phone, introduced through friends, peer grooming and even being exploited as some sort of gang initiation.

It is important to make sure you know the person you are speaking to because not everyone tells the truth about who they are. They may not be the same age as they have said and not the same age. There are adults who use the internet to exploit young people. Never post unsuitable images of yourself on the internet, and never let someone else take pictures of you and use them in this way. These photographs may seem like a bit of fun in the heat of the moment, but they will be there forever and there’s not much you will be able to do about it.

Staying safe on the internet by making sure you are only speaking to people you know. Don’t give out details about yourself, and never go on your own and meet someone from a chatroom or social network site if you don’t know them.

Bullying can happen on the internet, in chatrooms and text messaging. It is as serious as physical bullying and must stop. If you are being bullied you must talk to someone you trust.

Contact

- www.ceop.police.uk
- www.thinkuknow.com
- www.childline.org.uk

What to do if you think you are in danger:

- If you think someone is in a chatroom or forum is lying about who they are - report it by using the Click CEOP button.
- Warn your friends if someone has added you as a friend and you don’t know them, they may have added your friends as well.
- If you think you are being bullied or targeted on the internet, via chatrooms, email or text then let someone know.

How to stay safe on the internet:

- Don’t use your real name in chatrooms and forums.
- Edit your privacy settings on your social networking site so that only people you know can view your information.
- Don’t be afraid to use your age.
- Don’t give out your email address, mobile number, home address or school address.
- Be careful where you post your photos and who can see them, remember once something is on the net then it can be accessed by lots of people, and you might not want them looking at your pictures!
- If you decide to use a chatroom, use a public one, not private, where there are only two people.
- Don’t agree to meet anyone you’ve met on the internet.
- Grooming is where typically an older person will use the internet or its services to communicate with young people.
- Peers and friends can become involved and try to introduce others to exploitation. Do not be pressurised into doing something you do not feel is right.

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Stress and feeling low

Depression, stress and anxiety are serious and common problems and there is a great deal that can be done to help. The first step to getting help is to be able to recognize the problem. Sometimes it is easy to put ourselves under too much pressure about how we look, school work and exams and what other people think of us.

People are more at risk of becoming depressed if they are under a lot of stress and have no one to share their worries with.

Depression is commonly caused by a mixture of things rather than any one thing alone. Some people have experiences that lead to depression including family breakdown, the death or loss of a loved one, stress, abuse, bullying and physical illness. Depression can also be triggered if too many changes happen in your life too quickly.

Depression affects so many aspects of your life, your outlook, how you feel and what you are able to do. It can mean you find it difficult to cope with normal daily life.

Depression can cause serious problems, such as:
- Difficulties getting on with friends and family.
- Loss of friends.
- Loss of confidence and difficulty making decisions.
- Difficulty in study, work and performing well in exams.
- Difficulty with day to day tasks.
- Eating problems, turning to food for comfort and eating or dieting excessively.
- Lying, stealing and missing school.

Simply talking to someone you trust and who you feel understands, a school counsellor can lighten the burden. It can also make it easier to work out practical solutions to problems. For example, if you are stressed out by exams or study, you could talk to your teacher, a youth worker or someone from another organisation.

What to do next
- Try to understand why you are feeling this way.
- Talk to someone and don't keep it to yourself.
- You can talk to your GP in confidence if you have continuous feelings of depression and hopelessness.
Guns and knives

It’s not big and it’s not clever

Some people think that by carrying a knife or gun they will be respected by others. In fact, you are putting both yourself and others at great risk of being hurt or even fatally wounded.

Guns and knives are dangerous and can get you into serious trouble. It won’t earn you any respect and they are not cool - so don’t carry them.

An ‘offensive weapon’ can be anything made or adapted to cause injury. It is an offence to have a pointed or bladed item in school. Teachers have the right to search you without your consent.

You may own a fake toy gun; it’s hard to tell the fake one from the real thing so Police will respond to any call from someone of any age that has seen a knife or gun. It is an offence to have an imitation firearm in a public place, so if you do own these toys, make sure you keep them at home.

If you do ever see someone with a gun or knife make sure you report them. Either tell an adult or call the Police; it’s your right to feel safe on the streets.

Did you know:

- It’s illegal to buy most types of knives if you’re under 18.
- The maximum sentence for carrying a knife is four years.
- A knife with a blade of any length that locks in place is illegal.
- Most victims are wounded by their own knife.
- Anyone over 16 can be charged and taken to court if caught with an illegal knife, even if it’s the first time you’ve been stopped by the Police.
- If you’re under 16 and are caught carrying a knife, you could receive a community sentence or a Detention and Training Order.
- You could be searched at any time if a Police officer thinks you may be carrying a knife.
- Carrying an imitation firearm in public can lead to 12 months imprisonment including a BB gun.

Contact:
- www.crimestoppers-uk.org
- www.stoptheguns.org
- www.safe.met.police.uk
- www.adifferentending.co.uk

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Loss and bereavement

It’s not your fault

If someone close to you dies or disappears from your life, like a member of your family, a friend, a boyfriend or girlfriend or even a pet, it can be really hard. It’s normal to feel shock, sadness, anger, guilt, fear or depression.

You might also feel grief if you don’t see your parents any more, if they have divorced or separated. You may have split up with a boyfriend or girlfriend and feel very alone.

Everyone reacts differently and when you feel like this it means you’re grieving, or going through grief.

You’ll have days when you feel really sad, and might wonder if you can ever feel happy again. We all feel like this at times but after a while it will feel less painful.

It’s okay to get on with your life, this doesn’t mean you have forgotten the person you are missing.

Always talk to a parent/carer, teacher or someone you trust. Often just talking about things helps and can also help you to cope better.

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Are you missing someone?

• Don’t bottle things up. It usually helps to talk about how you’re feeling with another person, either with a friend or a counsellor.

• You might feel that alcohol or drugs could help you feel better. But they won’t help you get any happier.

• If you feel you want to harm yourself or even kill yourself, it’s really important to tell someone so they can help you, like a parent/carer or a friend.

Is your friend missing someone?

• Some people don’t know what to say to a friend when they’ve lost someone, and so they just steer clear. Let your friend know you’re there for them.

• Your friend might want to do ‘normal’ things with you to make them feel better.

When you suffer a loss, it’s normal to:

• Have trouble sleeping, eating or concentrating at school.

• Go off things you normally enjoy.

• Pretend that you feel okay, even if you don’t, because you want to be ‘strong’ for people around you.

Contact

• For support and advice speak to your school nurse
• www.childbereavement.org.uk
• Cruse Bereavement Care 0808 808 1677 www.cruse.org.uk
Peer pressure

Peer pressure is when you think you should do something because other people your age say you should, or because you think everyone else is doing it too. Sometimes people do things because they want to be liked, or they worry that they'll get teased if they don't follow the crowd. If you are doing things because your mates are, or changing what you normally do to fit in, then you are being affected by peer pressure.

Some of the things you might feel pressure to do now or in the future:
• Wear the same clothes as your mates.
• Drink alcohol, smoke or take drugs.
• Commit a crime.
• Change your friends because your other mates don't like them.
• Skip school.
• Have a boyfriend or girlfriend.
• Start having sex.

It's normal to want to fit in with everyone else, but in the end people will think you're a lot cooler if you learn to make your own decisions. Just because people say they are doing something doesn't mean that they are, most young people don't do things they feel they shouldn't.

Are you feeling peer pressure?
• It's hard if you're the only one saying 'no' but be brave.
• If your friends want you to do something, ask yourself how you really feel about it, and stick to what you believe in.
• If you say 'no' to something, real friends should respect your decision*. If they don't, maybe you need to find new friends.
• It's better to have a few friends than lots of friends who try and make you do things you don't want to do.

Is a friend of yours feeling peer pressure?
• If your friend doesn't want to do something either, back them up.
• This can really help them, and it'll make peer pressure easier to resist.
• Help them to make their own choices - they will gain confidence.
• Don't put pressure on your friends.

Look out for:
• People might say “Everyone else is doing it, so why aren’t you?”
• Nobody should be made to do anything they don't want to as they will probably regret it.

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Contact
• NSPCC 0808 800 5000 www.nspcc.org.uk
• ChildLine (24hour) 0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk
• www.ruthinking.co.uk
• www.likeitis.org.uk
Self-harm

Understanding and support

Self-harm is injuring yourself on purpose so you bleed, leave a scar, mark or bruise or taking an overdose. The most common ways to self-harm are cutting, scratching, hair pulling and burning. Some may use drugs or alcohol as a form of self-harm. We have a Substance Misuse Worker who you can meet and chat to. Girls are thought to be more likely to self-harm than boys, but this is because boys are more likely to punch out at walls, which isn’t always recognised as self-harm.

People self-harm for different reasons. Some people feel bad because they’re being bullied or abused, some may be stressed or are suffering a loss or maybe missing someone.

People who self-harm often don’t ask for help because they feel ashamed of doing it, but there is support out there and it needn’t rule someone’s life.

You may feel powerless right now but once you have talked it through with a youth worker, parent, carer or your Doctor you can work towards understanding why you are self-harming and how to go about working through this difficult time.

What to do

If you are self-harming:
• Don’t keep it bottled-up, talk to someone you trust.
• Keep a record of how you feel when you want to self-harm.
• Keep wounds clean or they might make you ill.

If a friend is self-harming:
• Listen to them and let them talk about how they feel.
• It might help them if they know you’re there for them.
• Encourage them to see their Doctor who will be able to get them some counselling. This will help them talk about why they self-harm.
• Visit websites and contacts for support.

Contact
• Samaritans 0845 70 90 90 90 • Childline 0800 1111
• www.mind.org.uk • www.youngminds.org.uk
• www.b-eat.co.uk • www.thewalke.org • www.netlink.org

www.thesite.org
Sex and relationships

“Talk about it

“My boyfriend said he would finish with me if I didn’t sleep with him. I realised then he didn’t care enough about me to respect my feelings.”

If we respect others it helps us remember to respect ourselves. Positive relationships with friends, family as well as people we come across in our everyday lives are so important.

Our friends play an important part in our lives and help shape us as a person. Make sure you value them and let them know you do. The way we treat other people makes a big impression on them, so, try to be positive and helpful - a smile goes a long way!

Sometimes, because we all want to be loved it is easy to mistake casual sex for love. You are putting yourself at risk of STIs as well as getting pregnant. If you have decided you’re ready then practising safe sex by using contraception will reduce the risk of STIs and pregnancy. For the best protection against both of these, using condoms and a hormonal contraceptive like the Implant is the best option.

You have to be 16 or older to have homosexual (gay) or heterosexual (straight) sex.

Getting help

• Free and confidential advice, information, tests, treatment and contraceptives are available at The Point Service, Stormont Health Clinic, Antrim House, 9-11 Stormont Road, Belfast. 028 5586 3700. This is a confidential service. We will not tell anyone about your visit unless we are worried that someone under 18 is being harmed.
• If you’ve had sex without contraception, or think it’s failed, you can take emergency contraception up to 72 hours later.
• If you think you might be pregnant, talk to your parents. Free pregnancy testing is available at all young people’s sexual health clinics, GUM clinics and some Doctors.

Are you ready to have sex?

• Don’t let anyone pressure you. Someone who really cares about you will not try to pressure you into having sex.
• Don’t do it because you think all your friends are. Most young people wait until they are at least 16 before they have sex, even if they say differently.

Contact

• www.besavvy.org.uk
• www.idas.org.uk/healthyrelationships

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• www.besavvy.org.uk
• www.idas.org.uk/healthyrelationships
If you are sexually active, one of the risks you undertake is the possibility that you will become pregnant. This is a risk taken by both partners. No form of contraception is 100% reliable. You can get pregnant or a Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) the first time you have sex. Talk to your parent, carer or someone you trust about it. Go ‘Double Dutch’ - use a condom to prevent STIs and a LARC (long-acting reversible contraception) like an implant, to prevent pregnancy.

It is not ideal to be a teenage parent and it is a good idea to think about and plan contraception, so you are prepared. It is also unpleasant and sometimes embarrassing to have an STI.

Here in Wandsworth we have the C-card scheme. You will need to register for a card, which you can use to provide you with free condoms as well as advice and help. It is a confidential service for all young people, which offers condoms to all, even if you are 15 or under and you have discussed your needs with our sexual health professionals and they agree.

It’s not worth the risk

Chlamydia is a real risk

Chlamydia is the most commonly diagnosed STI. Most people who are infected have no symptoms, so they do not know they have it. If left untreated, it can cause complications including infertility. Condoms can protect against Chlamydia.

Wandsworth C-CARD

For further information visit www.gettingon.org.uk or visit your local sexual health clinic or your GP.

Contact

- www.chlamydiatreatment.nhs.uk
- www.rhs.org.uk/sex/it'salking/about
Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender

You are not alone

Sexuality comes in many different forms and can in some cases be quite difficult to deal with. It may even be possible that up until now you have never considered the idea that you may not be straight.

There are people who can describe themselves as ‘gay’ or ‘straight’, whilst others feel they don’t fit into either category. Whatever you’re feeling in terms of sexuality you are perfectly normal. There is no rulebook which talks about what is right or wrong.

You may be afraid to tell friends or parents how you feel. It may take time, but they will often accept the fact or maybe they know already.

You have the right to be ‘you’ – so don’t change! Accept and understand the way you feel. It may also surprise you to know there are many people out there in exactly the same situation as you!

Contact

• www.queeryouth.org.uk
• www.stonewall.org.uk
• www.llgs.org.uk/services.html 020 7837 7324
• www.beaumontsociety.org.uk 01582 412220

Look out for:

• There are no physical signs to look out for with sexuality.
• Understanding sexuality can be confusing and people might need support and guidance.
• If you experience discrimination regarding your sexuality, talk to an adult you trust (or see contacts).
• If you experience homophobia or discrimination talk to an adult you trust.
Respect yourself and others

Choosing to respect yourself is one of the most important decisions you can make. In respecting yourself it is easier to respect others. Respect for yourself means that you will take care of yourself in many ways. You will care for yourself physically, emotionally, mentally, and sexually. Stand up for yourself in your relationships, don’t do anything you don’t want to – respect yourself, you are worth more.

Many young people who are perfectly normal and healthy feel that they don’t look ‘right’ because they are comparing themselves to role models such as pop stars, models or other celebrities who are often skinny. This can lead to an unhealthy body image. Try to accept yourself for who you are and give yourself a break – don’t be too hard on yourself.

It also means believing in yourself, that you are capable of reaching your goals and that you are worth being respected by others. When it comes to relationships and sex, respecting yourself means making decisions that are right for you, and being informed about all the things that come with sexual health. It’s OK to respect yourself enough to say, “No, I’m not ready to have sex” or “No, I don’t want another drink”.

What really counts

Don’t try to be something you are not by:

• Giving up healthy eating.
• Overdoing it at the gym/exercise and taking steroids.
• Comparing yourself to celebrities or others.
• Expecting unrealistic goals, it’s important to have goals and ambitions, but don’t give yourself impossible tasks.
• Trying to do what others want, so they like you (peer pressure).

Contact

• School Nurse
• Beating Eating Disorders 0845 634 7650 www.b-eat.co.uk
• www.need2know.co.uk
Sexual exploitation

Reduce the risks

Sexual exploitation of Young People involves both boys and girls, being forced or influenced by other young people, an adult, group or gang into engaging in sexual activities for money, profit, food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts etc. Sexual exploitation can also occur through the use of technology for example being persuaded to post sexual images on the internet or on your phone.

Young people involved in sexual exploitation can become victims of serious physical and sexual attacks, which can sometimes lead to death. They can easily become addicted to drugs and alcohol and face a high risk of catching Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs). The emotional and psychological damage can be huge and can lead to self-harm, severe depression and even suicide.

If you are a young person who needs support and advice, please talk to an adult you trust. If you would like to talk to someone in confidence you can contact Childline, who are available 24 hours a day. You can call them free on 0800 111 111 and this number won't appear on a telephone bill. Remember, if you are in any danger or feel unsafe, get in contact with the police immediately on 999, or talk to an adult you trust.

Contact

- www.ceop.police.uk
- www.thinkuknow.com
- www.childline.org.uk

Sexual exploitation

Adults who benefit from child sexual exploitation use many different methods to target young people. It can begin with an ‘exciting’ new friendship with an older boyfriend or girlfriend. The young person may receive expensive gifts and be given alcohol or drugs. Before long they create a loyal and dependent relationship with the victim. It is against the Law and a form of sexual abuse, which puts the young person at risk from physical, emotional and psychological damage.
Young people with disabilities are exactly the same as young people without disabilities, however, having a disability could mean you are unable to do the things that other people can do. You may face more challenges, but life can still be as fun and full of achievement.

Being a teenager can be a tough time, sometimes it's even harder with a disability. Everyone wants to fit in and it can be easy to feel you are alone. Remember you don't have to go it alone - there's loads of support, practical and financial help out there for you.

This can be an exciting time. Up until now, your parents have probably made all your decisions - now you can start to make some choices for yourself.

Whether you're at a special needs, mainstream school or college, a good education can improve your chances later in life, education is important for everyone.

Just because you have a disability of some sort does not mean you can't live a full and exciting life.

When you're 16:

- If you have a disability, these things can change:
  - You can choose where you live for example, you might want to stay at home with your parents or apply for sheltered housing.
  - You can leave school and start work if you want to. Disability Employment Advisers at your local job centre can help you.
  - You may get Incapacity Benefit if you can't work.
  - If you want to continue with your education, you may get extra money with a Disabled Student Allowance.

Contact:

- www.whizz-kidz.org.uk
- www.barnardos.org.uk
- www.actionforkids.org
- www.scope.org.uk
- Disability Alliance: 020 7247 8776 www.disabilityalliance.org
- www.skill.org.uk
- www.enabledpeople.co.uk
Young carers

It’s not always easy

If you look after a parent, relative, brother or sister who is ill, has a long-term illness, has a physical or mental disability, is addicted to drugs or alcohol, then you could be a young carer.

Sometimes it might be too much to cope with and you may feel alone, angry or worried. It’s good to talk about how you feel and ask for help if you need it.

Caring for someone can make you feel tired so try to look after yourself, too. It’s okay to have some time doing things you enjoy, like relaxing with friends or listening to music. The person you are caring for wants you to enjoy life too.

It can be hard to think about your future, whether you plan to get a job or apprenticeship, go to college or university. But you have to live your life too. That doesn’t mean that you love your family any less. There are many support groups locally to help you.

Being a carer

• Being a carer means looking after someone, even if it’s just for a few hours a week.
• If you’re finding things hard, is there anyone else who can share the caring?
• Not talking about how you feel means you might miss out on getting the support you need.
• Unfortunately some young carers are bullied at school or fall behind in lessons. Talk to your parents, teacher or an adult you trust.
• If you’re planning to work in the future, some companies have Carers Policies to make it easy for you.
• The government has started New Deal for Carers to try to take some pressure off young carers.

Contact

• Wandsworth Young Carers Project 0207 228 2566
  young.carers@klsettlement.org.uk
• www.connexions-direct.com
• ChildLine 0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk
• www.childrenssociety.org.uk 0845 300 1128
• www.direct.gov.uk

Wandsworth Young Carers Project

Wandsworth Young Carers Project supports children and young people aged 5-18 who are affected by the illness or disability of a family member and provide care (physical and/or emotional) to that family member. The person they care for may have a physical disability, chronic illness, mental health issues, drug or alcohol dependency or MHD/ADs. Caring can be isolating and demanding for children and young people and we aim to ensure that they are supported and that they have occasional breaks from their caring role.
Useful contacts

National contacts

- Action for Children
  Practical information for children, young people, and parents going through a family break-up.
  0300 123 2112
  www.actionforchildren.org.uk

- Beating Eating Disorders
  For advice and information on all types of eating disorders.
  0845 634 1414
  www.b-eat.co.uk

- Brook
  0808 802 1234
  www.brook.org.uk

- Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre
  www.ceop.police.uk

- Family Planning Association (FPA)
  0845 122 8690
  www.fpa.org.uk

- Family Information Service
  Offers information and assistance on finding support services for families.
  020 8871 7899
  www.wandsworth.gov.uk/fis
  fis@wandsworth.gov.uk

- National Domestic Violence Freephone Helpline
  0808 2000 247

- Samaritans
  0845 57 90 90 90

- YoungMinds Parents Helpline
  020 7089 5050
  www.youngminds.org.uk

- www.anxiety.org.uk
  08444 775 774

- www.besavvy.org.uk

- www.childline.org.uk

- www.drinkaware.co.uk

- www.healthyrelationships

- www.juniorcitizen.org.uk

- www.mind.org.uk

- www.nhs.uk

- www.nhs.uk/Change4Life

- www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

- www.quitbecause.org.uk
  0808 00 22 00

- www.smokefree.nhs.uk

- www.raceequalityfoundation.org.uk

- www.redcross.org.uk

- www.refix.org

- www.sunsafe.org.uk

- www.thesite.org

- www.wreckedlastnight.com

- For LGBT young people
  www.alternative.org.uk
  www.bit.org.uk

- Frank
  0300 776 8600
  www.frankfrank.com

- National Health Service
  Offers information and assistance on finding support services for families.
  020 8871 7899
  www.wandsworth.gov.uk/fis
  fis@wandsworth.gov.uk

- Sexual Health Services
  The Point Service, Stormont Health Clinic, Antrim House, 5-11 Stormont Road, Battersea SW11 5EG.
  020 8812 5700.

- Youth Service
  020 8871 7553
  www.wandsworth.gov.uk/youth

Local contacts

- Family Information Service
  Battersea CAB
  123 Balhambridge Grove, London SW11 1DA.
  020 7042 0333
  www.wandsworthcab.org.uk

- Testing & Balham CAB
  46 Balfour Road, Battersea High Road, London SW11 7BC.
  020 8322 0360
  www.wandsworthcab.org.uk

- Roehampton CAB
  166, Roehampton Lane, Roehampton, London SW15 4HL.
  020 7042 0333
  www.wandsworthcab.org.uk

- Citizens Advice Bureau
  Battersea CAB
  123 Balhambridge Grove, London SW11 1DA.
  020 7042 0333
  www.wandsworthcab.org.uk

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  123 Balhambridge Grove, London SW11 1DA.
  020 7042 0333
  www.wandsworthcab.org.uk

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  166, Roehampton Lane, Roehampton, London SW15 4HL.
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  www.wandsworthcab.org.uk