

INVICTUS

well-being

How to start a conversation about their mental health

It's okay to feel uncertain about talking about mental health – you're not alone.

If you're worried about speaking to a young person about their mental health and well being, it can help to feel prepared. You don't need to have a long conversation every time, you might just want to check in to see how they're feeling.

Take a look at the advice below, especially if it's your first time talking to them:

- Try to find a time and place that suits you both. The time may never feel perfect, but it can help if you both feel calm and comfortable. This could mean talking in a quiet place, or it could mean doing an activity together.
- It can help to practise what you want to say. You could practise in your head or aloud with someone you know. You could write things down too, or talk to someone on a helpline, like the [YoungMinds Parents and Carers Helpline](#).
- There's no perfect way to begin a conversation. However you choose to do it, try your best to start in a calm and open-minded way. You might not understand exactly what they're going through, and that's okay.
- Try not to feel disheartened at your first attempt. They might not respond well the first time, or might not want to engage at all. You can try again at a different time when they're ready.
- Give them the space they need. Pressuring them to talk can push them away. Let them know you're there for them and let them come to you. It's important to respect their boundaries – there are some things they might not want to share or talk about with you.