

Your overall wellbeing is fundamental to how fulfilled your life feels. Positive wellbeing improves your resilience and will help you overcome difficulties and life's challenges. A parent's wellbeing will have an effect on their child's. So ensuring you look after your wellbeing is vital.

Now in its third year, World Wellbeing Week is an ideal time to think about your overall wellbeing.

Evidence suggests there are 5 steps you can take to improve your mental health and wellbeing:

Connect
Be active
Give
Learn
Take notice

For more details on the 5 steps to wellbeing click [here](#).

Connect

Connecting with the people around you, your family, friends, colleagues and neighbours are key to your overall wellbeing. These relationships will support and enrich you.

This has been particularly important and challenging during the pandemic. Good relationships are important for your mental wellbeing. They can help you to build a sense of belonging and self-worth, give you an opportunity to share positive experiences and provide emotional support and allow you to support others.



Be active

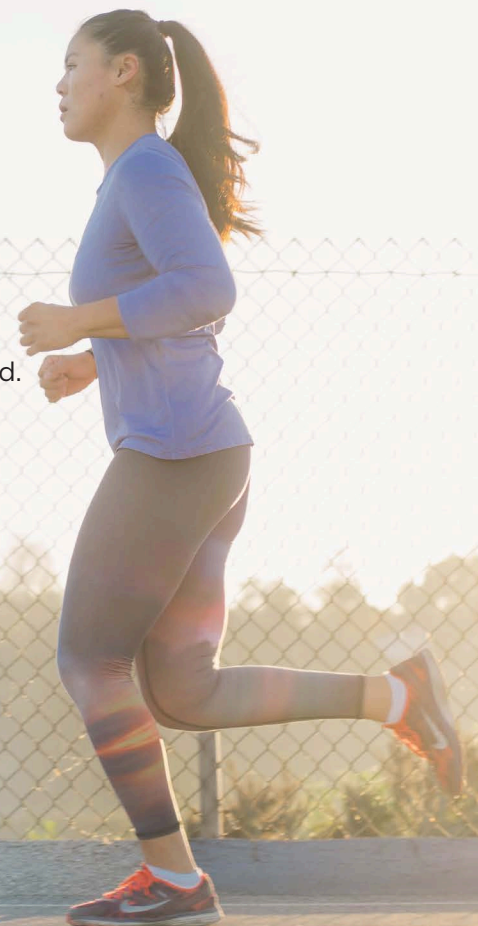
Research shows that being sedentary is bad for your health, so ensure you keep active. Exercise helps both your physical and mental health, so it's important to stay active.

A few hours of gentle exercise a week will release endorphins that make you feel energised. This could be as simple as a walk, a run, a cycle ride, dancing or even some gardening. In simple terms exercising makes you feel good.

According to the charity Mind, regular physical activity is associated with lower rates of depression and anxiety across all age groups. Exercise is essential for slowing age-related cognitive decline.

Being active is not only great for your physical health and fitness, it can also improve your self-esteem. Setting goals or challenges and achieving them, causes chemical changes in your brain, which can help to positively change your mood.

For more details on looking after your physical health read our physical health guide [here](#) and our wellbeing and workout guide [here](#).



Give

Giving to others is a great way to boost your wellbeing. We know that it can give a sense of purpose and create feelings of positivity.

It could be small acts of kindness towards other people, or larger ones like volunteering in your local community.

People choose to volunteer for a variety of reasons. For some it offers the chance to give something back to the community or make a difference to the people around them. For others it provides an opportunity to develop new skills or build on existing experience and knowledge. Regardless of the motivation, by volunteering they are making a difference to the community.

Volunteering is a hugely valuable and rewarding experience for the volunteers and the communities they support. If you are interested in volunteering read our guide [here](#).

Giving Blood is another way to help others and save lives.



Learn

Research shows that learning new skills can improve your mental wellbeing by boosting self-confidence and raising self-esteem, helping you to build a sense of purpose and helping you to connect with others.

Even if you feel like you do not have enough time, or you may not need to learn new things, there are lots of different ways to bring learning into your life.

Some of the things you could try are learning a language or new craft, cooking a new recipe, tackling a DIY project or setting up a book club.

Take notice

Paying more attention to the present moment can improve your mental wellbeing. This includes your thoughts and feelings, your body and the world around you.

This is often called Mindfulness, which can help you enjoy life more and understand yourself better. It can positively change the way you feel about life and how you approach challenges. Read [here](#) for more information about mindfulness.



Emotional

The pandemic has made many of us feel anxious and stressed. It's great that restrictions are starting to ease across the UK and we are starting to come out of lockdown, but these changes may lead to your feeling anxious about leaving the safety of your home.

If you are concerned about returning to the office after working from home click [here](#) to read our guide.

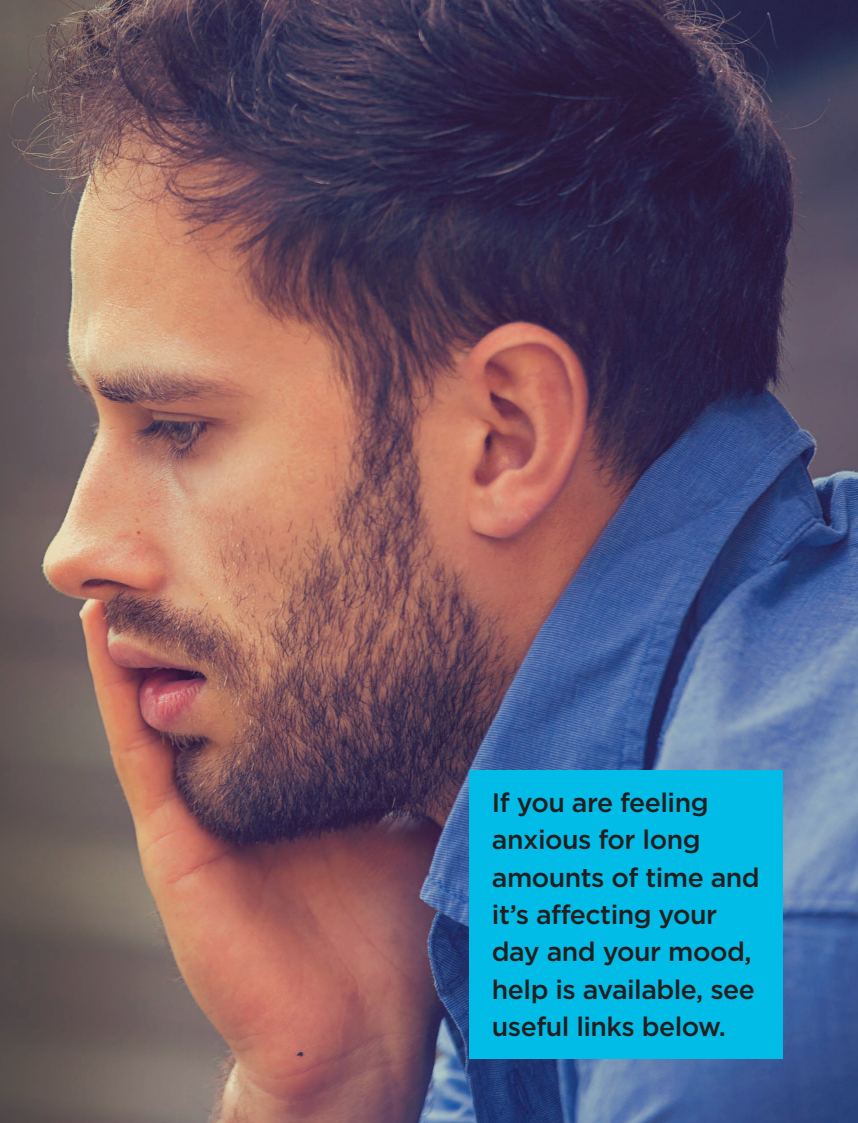
Physical exercise can help take our minds off these feelings. But it's important to keep mentally fit as well.

We might feel fine, but everyday stress can creep up on us. If underlying stress isn't taken care of, it can lead to mental and physical health issues.

Taking care of your mental health is as important as taking care of your physical health. According to Mind, mental health problems affect around one in four people in any given year.

For more details on looking after your mental health, read our guide [here](#).

To read our stress awareness guide click [here](#).



If you are feeling anxious for long amounts of time and it's affecting your day and your mood, help is available, see useful links below.

Sleep

It's common knowledge that a good night's sleep makes us feel better. An average of 8 hours will replenish all of our energy stores. What's more, this downtime helps protect us from infection, providing a shield for our immune system.

Here are some tips of getting a good night's sleep:

- **Cut out the caffeine earlier:** try to avoid tea, coffee and fizzy drinks after 2pm to get a better night's sleep.
- **Switch off the screens:** the blue light emitted from these suppresses the secretion of melatonin (a sleep-inducing hormone) so switch off 2 hours before bed, try reading a book instead.
- **Set the right temperature:** this is between 15°C - 19°C, according to [Sleep.org](#)
- **Remove all distractions:** blackout blinds will block out light pollution from the street and wax earplugs can remove most outside noise.

For more information, read our sleep guide [here](#).



Financial

Staying in control of your day-to-day finances will help you ensure you have enough money to meet your needs which will lead to long term security and financial freedom to make choices that allow you to enjoy life.

Money worries are not just a financial problem they can cause relationships problems, people to lose homes and families to break down. People from all walks of life can end up in debt for many different reasons, like divorce, redundancy, ill health or bereavement. It's not always easy to talk about money worries but if you're struggling financially it's important to take action.

For more details, read our debt awareness guide [here](#).

Financial problems is one of the biggest worries that can negatively affect your mental health. According to the Police Federation's annual Pay & Morale survey results published in November 2019 around one in eight officers were seeking financial support to cover living costs.

It's important to start talking about money worries before your situation gets worse. Talking about money will give you the confidence to get help and find out who can best advise you on any problems.

It can give you a great sense of relief to share your problems, so you're not facing them alone. It's important to seek professional advice as soon as possible and not wait until it's more difficult to find a solution.

We've teamed up with **PayPlan***, one of the UK's leading free debt advice providers, who offer free and confidential advice to anyone in serious financial difficulties.

They're able to advise you on a range of debt solutions suited to your individual circumstances, helping to protect you and your family with a sustainable way to manage your debt.

Get free and confidential help to combat your debt, call [PayPlan*](#) on 0800 197 8433.

It's not always easy to talk about money worries but if you're struggling financially it's important to take action. If you're worrying about money there are things that you can do to get your finances back on track, read our Let's Talk Money guides [here](#).



For more information relating to your wellbeing and the support that is available you may find the links below useful.

Useful links:

[NHS](#)

[Samaritans](#)

[Mind](#)

[AnxietyUK](#)

[Police Mutual
Care Line](#)

[Managing Debt](#)

[Gov.uk](#)

[World Health
Organisation](#)

[Which](#)

[Money Advice
Service](#)

[Money Saving
Expert](#)



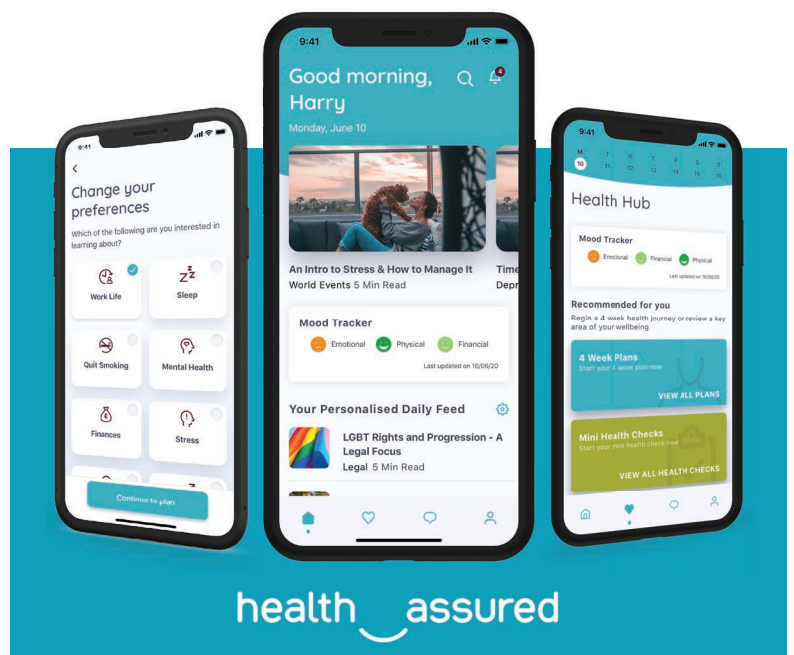
Police Mutual Services

Our Care Line Service provided by Health Assured can offer advice and information, helping with a range of concerns including emotional support. Take a look at the e-portal or download the APP.

Health & Wellbeing e-portal

<https://healthassuredapp.co.uk>

Username: policemutual Password: careline



Download the [Health Assured App](#) and register today - your code is **MHA107477**

For more information on how Police Mutual are supporting you during the coronavirus pandemic click [here](#).

Call us 01543 441630

Visit policemutual.co.uk

We're open from

9am - 5pm Mon - Fri

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Mutual**
We look after our own