

Hi

Below are details of resources to help you tackle loneliness and isolation this winter, whether you're feeling lonely yourself, or you know someone else who is. We've chosen to focus on kindness, as a kind act can make a positive difference to our own and to others' mental wellbeing.

Tips for managing loneliness this winter

The darker days of winter can be difficult, even at the best of times. The reduced social contact and uncertainty which the COVID-19 pandemic has brought, may mean that more of us feel lonely* or isolated this winter. Christmas is likely to be a particularly challenging time, for those of us who are unable to see loved ones, or to celebrate in the way we usually do. Both [Mind](#) and [the NHS site](#) suggest practical tips to help us manage loneliness. They also give details of where we can go for support.



The Mental Health Foundation's page [loneliness during the COVID-19 pandemic](#), focuses on self-help strategies and ways we could support others, who might be lonely.

**Recent research suggests certain groups have an increased likelihood of feeling lonely. You can find more details in the [COVID-19 Mental Health and Wellbeing Surveillance Report](#).*

Kindness and mental wellbeing

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance and power of kindness. During the first lockdown we heard many stories of people who had gone out of their way to help others.

[Studies](#) have shown that being kind to others, also makes us feel good. Being kind is easy. Small gestures, such as checking on a neighbour who lives alone, or ringing someone for a chat, can have a big impact. As the pandemic continues it's important for us to be kind, both to ourselves and to each other.



The Happy? OK? Sad? site has a page on [kindness and mental wellbeing](#), which includes links to free resources and tips for practising kindness.

The Mental Health Foundation's [acts of kindness during the coronavirus outbreak](#), also gives suggestions for how you can improve wellbeing through kindness.

#DoGoodDecember

You can download a free ["Kindness Calendar"](#) for December 2020, from the Action for Happiness site. The focus is on doing good for others. For each day in December the calendar suggests a simple kind act, which you could try.

Looking after our mental wellbeing

Each of the age-related pages on the [Happy? OK? Sad? site](#) has a section, "looking after our mental wellbeing". This includes links to information, evidence-based resources and self-management strategies, which can help you maintain or improve your mental wellbeing. Information and resources relating to sleep and wellbeing have recently been added to this section of the site.

The Mental Health Foundation has advice on [facing winter during the COVID-19 pandemic](#). This includes tips for protecting your own mental wellbeing, as well as ways you could support your family and community.

COVID-19 and mental wellbeing

The Happy? OK? Sad? site's [COVID-19 and mental wellbeing](#) page covers the mental wellbeing of adults, children and young people. The information includes links to tips and suggestions for self-management, free CBT-based resources and government guidance.

Kind to Your Mind

The [Kind to Your Mind](#) campaign was developed to help us look after our mental wellbeing during the pandemic. The campaign encourages us to:

- **Take care of our mental wellbeing**, as well as our physical health.
- **Use the free wellbeing resources on the ALMA website**. There are resources for physical and mental wellbeing, such as online CBT courses and recommended apps.
- **Ask for support if we're struggling**.

Mental health support

Many local and national mental health support services have adapted during the pandemic, so they can offer support online or by phone. Some services may still offer limited face to face support. As guidance can change so quickly, the best way to find out what a service is currently offering, is to



contact the service directly. You can find details of a wide range of local and national mental health support services on Warrington's Happy? OK? Sad? site.

To find support service information:

1. Go to www.happyoksad.org.uk
2. Click one of the blue age related buttons "adults", "young people", or "older people"
3. Then look under the dark heading "information and support"

The [I need urgent help](#) page on the Happy? OK? Sad? site, has details of mental health services you can contact, if someone needs help right now.

Local NHS Mental Health Crisis Line

The Mental Health Crisis Line is:

- available **24 hours a day, seven days a week**
- for people experiencing a **mental health crisis**, who need **urgent support**
- for people concerned that a **friend or family member** is in a mental health crisis
- for people who **live in Warrington**, Halton, Knowsley or St Helens
- for **people of all ages**, including children and young people
- **free to call: 0800 051 1508**

More details about the Crisis Line, which is run by North West Boroughs Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, can be found [here](#).



North West
Boroughs Healthcare
NHS Foundation Trust

Need urgent help with your mental health?

Live in **Halton, Knowsley,
St Helens or Warrington?**
Call us on our new **Freephone
number!** We can help.



0800 051 1508

www.nwbh.nhs.uk/help-in-a-crisis

Stay Alive App

The Stay Alive app is for anyone who feels suicidal. It's also for anyone concerned that someone else may be considering suicide.

The app has been localised for Cheshire and Merseyside and recently updated. It includes:

- Information on how to access local and national crisis support.
- A 'life box' where you can store photos that are important to you.
- A safety plan.
- Fact-based reasons for staying alive.
- Bereavement resources.

You can download the app free from the App Store or Google Play. More details about the app can be found on the [Grassroots Suicide Prevention website](#).

