



## It's time to talk about mental health

**It's good to talk - right? It helps us to connect, to share feelings and above all to understand each other. And yet there are some things that we still struggle to talk about – even things that profoundly affect our health and wellbeing and run through the fabric of society.**

Mental health and wellbeing has, throughout medical history, been the embarrassing little brother to physical medicine – the awkward subject that we don't really know how to talk about comfortably.

**One in four** people experience a mental health problem of some kind each year in England - and let's be honest, 2020 has done little to alleviate that situation.

Mental health issues include conditions like obsessive-compulsive disorder, bipolar, eating disorders, panic disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder - as well as, more commonly, anxiety and depression which are experienced by one in six of us **every week**.

### Time to open up...

If ever there were a time to start talking to each other about mental health, it's surely now.

According to the World Health Organisation, *"...the COVID-19 pandemic is increasing demand for mental health services. Bereavement, isolation, loss of income and fear are triggering mental health conditions or exacerbating existing ones."*

And on top of this, COVID-19 has interrupted essential mental health services around the world - just when they're needed most.

### Time to talk!

Time to Talk is an annual national awareness day to raise the profile and acceptance of the mental health conditions that affect so many of us.

**Time to Talk Day is on 4 February** and there are so many ways you can get involved. This year's theme is The Power of Small - to emphasise how just tiny actions and conversations can really help those living with mental health issues.

### How to make a difference

- Start a conversation with someone about mental health – [\*\*start talking!\*\*](#)
- Talk online about your experiences with mental health issues – [\*\*start sharing!\*\*](#)
- Support someone with mental health challenges – [\*\*start helping!\*\*](#)
- Stand up to stigmatising media coverage – [\*\*start challenging!\*\*](#)
- Become a Time to Talk Champion – [\*\*start inspiring!\*\*](#)
- Get involved with local campaigns and activities – [\*\*start searching!\*\*](#)

You can also sign up to regular email updates if you want to keep up to speed with all the amazing work that Time to Talk does throughout the year – [\*\*sign up here\*\*](#)

### Reaching out for support

Living with mental health issues can feel isolating, frightening and lonely – but you don't need to suffer in silence because there's a world of support out there just waiting to hear from you - [\*\*reach out here.\*\*](#)