



Information for Parents of Children and Young People (10-17 years old)

Welcome.

I understand that this can be a difficult time for you.

Do you find that your child or young person does any of the following? -

- Find it difficult to handle stress?
- Constantly worry?
- Set themselves really high standards and be overly critical of themselves?
- Find it hard making/keeping friends?
- Sometimes have outbursts (seemingly for no reason)?
- Find a way of coping which can be seen as unhealthy or dangerous?
- Sharing thoughts and feelings that upset you both? or
- Turns away from you, leaving you wondering what is really going on?

You are here because you are a parent/guardian who really cares for their child.

What you probably want for them is for them to be confident, happy and well-adjusted. The trouble is right now they are going through a lot which is making them unhappy, scared, anxious and/or depressed. This possibly scares you too. You know something is wrong and different but getting your teen to be able to articulate their feelings is hard (mainly because they don't KNOW half the time and can't put them into words.), or if they do talk, you don't know how to help them.....because you're their family, **not** their therapist.

The first thing to say is that this is actually REALLY normal, you are definitely not alone.

The second thing to say is well done getting this far by coming onto this site, it's actually a very brave thing to do.

After having a meeting with you, probably on the phone, my first priority will be to get to know your child and create a safe therapeutic relationship with them. This means talking with them and listening to them for the first few sessions at least. I am laid back and relaxed - I have found that stiff formality and kids really don't mix! My priority is to help them feel safe, get used to working online and see that they can trust me, as therapy really doesn't work without that trust. I will try and get their perspective of what is going on and how they're feeling. After that, I will have more of an idea on how to help them. It is fine if they want you to be there with them for this initial session, but I will need to see them 1-1 afterwards.

(NB If you are wanting to refer your child because of an eating disorder, I need to direct you to **go straight** your GP. Treating eating disorders is incredibly complex and requires a specialist team around your child. I would need to inform your GP prior to therapy starting if I were to work with your child for an eating disorder and it would need to be dependent on how critical the eating disorder was for me to be able to do so. Please visit the NHS website www.nhs.uk/conditions/eating-disorders for more information.

I look forward to hearing from you and hopefully helping your child.

Justine Fitzgerald.