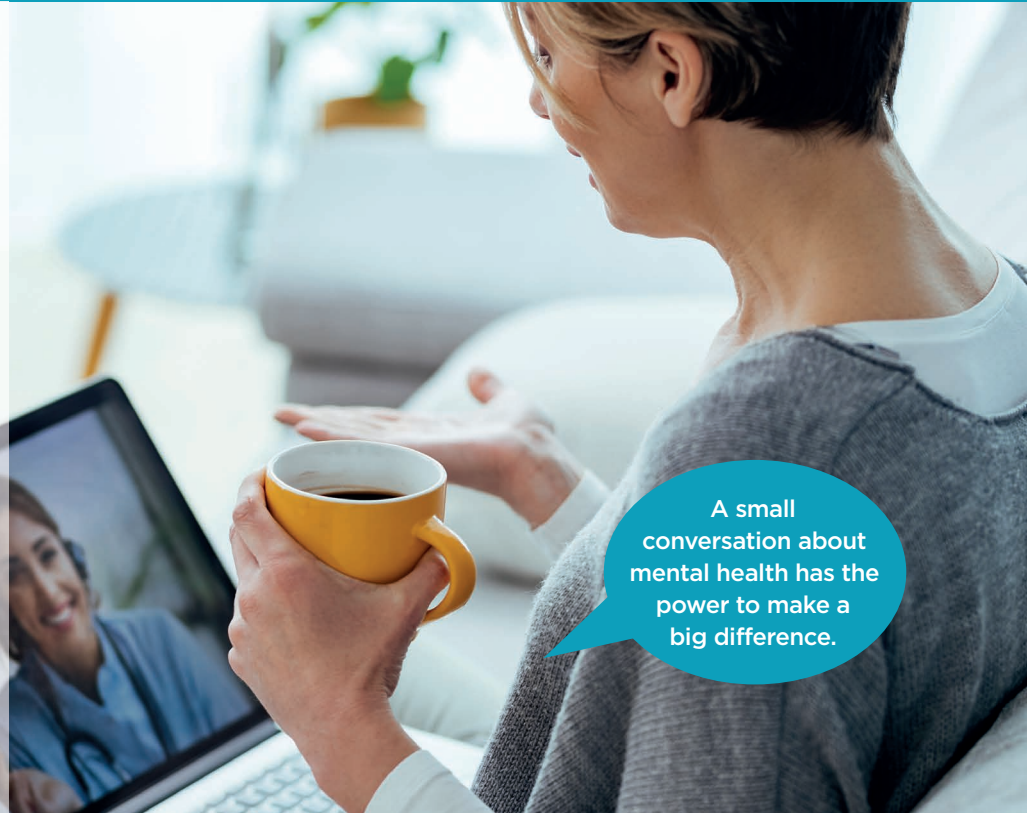


Time to Talk Day is the day to get us all talking about mental health. This year's time to talk day on 4 February may be different, but during the pandemic talking about mental health is more important than ever.

The more conversations we have about mental health the more barriers we can break down and the closer we'll come to ending mental health stigma and discrimination.

This year's focus of time to talk day is the power of small, because however you have a conversation about mental health, whether it's a quick message to a colleague, a virtual cuppa, or a socially distanced walk and talk, it has the power to make a big difference. For more details on time to talk day run through the charity, time to change, click [here](#).



A small conversation about mental health has the power to make a big difference.

Mental health problems affect one in four of us, yet many people can feel isolated, ashamed and worthless because of this. **Time to Talk Day** encourages everyone to be more open about mental health, to talk, to listen, to improve lives. Every conversation brings us a step closer to ending the feelings that too many of us experience. Poor mental health can affect anyone, of any age, gender or background.

Starting a conversation with someone around their or your own mental health can feel uncomfortable. You may be worried that you will say the wrong thing but remember saying nothing is far worse. You may have concerns about how others are coping with the current situation.

## Here are some tips on helping others:

- Ask others how they are feeling.
- Ask someone twice how they are feeling, this will give them the opportunity to be honest and to realise that you genuinely want to know.
- Listen and don't judge, it's great that people are happy to talk to you about how they are feeling, so ensure you really listen to them.
- Ask how long they have felt this way.
- Ask if there is anything you can do to help.
- Ask what support they need. Provide them with details of professional organisations, who may be able to help.
- Treat them in the same way, don't change the way you act towards someone once you are aware of their poor mental health.
- Little gestures can have a big impact, this may be just having a virtual cuppa or watching a film together.

With the majority of children not currently going to school, they may be missing their friends and struggling with home schooling. Like adults, children will respond to this situation in different ways, such as being more clingy, anxious, withdrawn or angry. Try to respond to your child's reactions in a supportive way, listen to their concerns and give them extra care and attention. Remember to listen to your children and re-assure them.

For more details on supporting children during the pandemic click [here](#).



**Time to Talk Day** isn't just about helping others, it's also about thinking about your own wellbeing.

Research has shown that emergency services workers are twice as likely as the public to identify problems at work as the main cause of their mental health problems, but they are also significantly less likely to seek help. So during the pandemic it's even more important to look after your own mental health when working on the frontline.

### Here are some tips:

**Think about your purpose:** be clear about why you are doing this job.

**Be clear on expectations:** make sure you know what is expected of you and whether it is realistic.

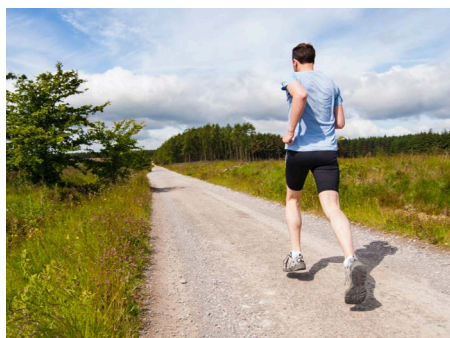
**Keep your boundaries:** establish clear boundaries between work and personal life, don't take work home with you.

**Talk to colleagues:** make time to talk to your colleagues about your experiences and share fears and concerns.



**Value your own family and relationships:** while work is important, your family and relationships need to be valued.

**Keep active:** regular exercise can boost your self-esteem, can help you concentrate, relax and increase your overall wellbeing. This can be as simple as a regular walk, being outside in nature can also help improve your mental health.



**Get plenty of sleep:** sleep helps regulate the chemicals in our brain that transmit information. These chemicals are important in managing our moods and emotions and an imbalance in those chemicals can result in us becoming depressed or anxious. Read our sleep guide [here](#).

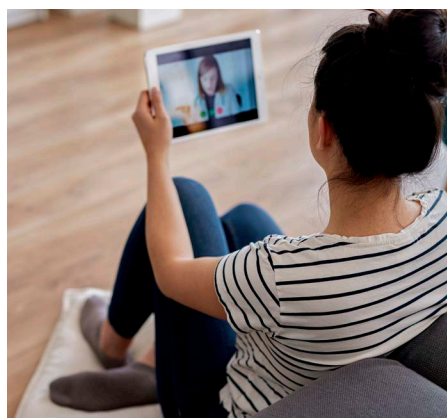
**Eat well:** nutrition is now more important than ever, having a balanced diet helps to ensure we have the correct nutrients.



**Avoid alcohol:** The numbing effects of drinking are only temporary and can often lead to mental health issues. Alcohol can also damage the immune system. Try to adopt positive coping strategies such as talking, going for a walk or listening to music instead. If you do drink, try to stay within the recommended unit guidelines.



**Keep in touch:** it's good for you to catch up with friends and family on a video call or over the phone.



**Take a break:** a change of scenery or pace is good for you. Make sure you take time to relax and re-charge.

**Do something you're good at:** doing something you enjoy and you are good at can give you the 'feel good' boost that everyone needs. Enjoying yourself can help beat stress.

**Care for others:** supporting others uplifts you as well as them.



**Ask for help:** sometimes you need help from others, so don't be afraid to ask for help, from a family member or friend, your GP or a professional organisation, see the list at the end of this guide for more details.



**Get the best out of the 'new normal':** it may be hard but we all still need to live in the best way we can during these unusual times. This may be creating your own routine of things you enjoy doing, running, cycling, binging on Netflix, helping others in the community or learning a new skill, it doesn't really matter what it is as long as you feel like you are achieving something and spending time looking after your own physical and mental wellbeing.

For more information on looking after your mental health during the pandemic click [here](#) to access our guide

Mental health conversations have the power to make a big difference, but sometimes these conversations can bring up some difficult things that people may not have spoken about before. This might mean that they need some support.

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**.

If you feel a loved one, colleague or yourself need additional support, contact a GP, a counselling professional or one of the organisations listed here:

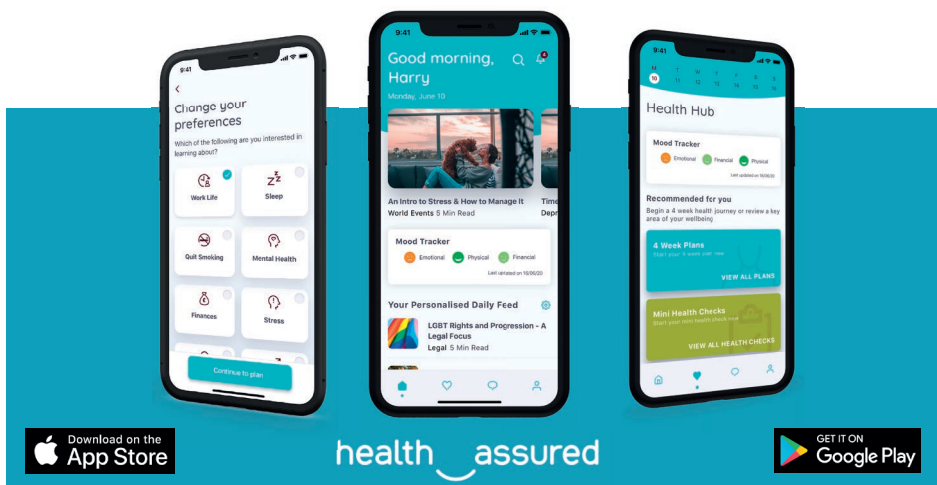
[Samaritans](#)

[Mind](#)

[NHS](#)

[AnxietyUK](#)

[Mental health org](#)



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://healthassuredeap.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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