

PRACTITIONER GUIDE

Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) are an NHS service that aims to help young people up to the age of 18 who are finding it hard to manage their emotional and psychological health, and who are suffering with acute, chronic and severe mental health problems.

Who are CAMHS?

CAMHS is an NHS specialist service, provided by Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust for young people up to the age of 18 years and their families who are experiencing difficulties with their mental and emotional health.

Many young people experience difficulties with their mental health, for example, anxiety, low mood, trauma, eating difficulties, which can impact on all aspects of life including education, home life, hobbies and interests, socialising and having fun.

It is important to know that everyone has mental health and that we can all experience tough times which can sometimes cause our mental health to suffer. CAMHS work with young people, their families and other organisations to achieve the following:

- Assess and diagnose mental health and neurodevelopmental difficulties
- Identify realistic goals or changes
- Identify and build on strengths
- Improve self-esteem and confidence to cope with difficulties
- Learn emotional coping techniques to help manage difficult or upsetting thoughts, feelings, urges or experiences
- Empower the young person to identify, express and communicate their needs, take responsibility for their health and wellbeing and feel confident in knowing where and how to get additional support if necessary.

CAMHS cannot “cure” mental health difficulties or prevent difficulties ever coming back, but they can help a young person build skills of their own to help them achieve their potential and get the most out of their life.

Accessing Support

If you are worried about a young person please refer to the specific guidance on the [CAMHS website](http://www.hampshirecamhs.nhs.uk) in relation to the different mental health difficulties that they may be experiencing. This will give tips, help and guidance on whether a [referral to CAMHS](http://www.hampshirecamhs.nhs.uk) may be helpful.

As a specialist service, CAMHS expect people to have accessed other services in the community before making a referral to them, for example counselling services.

A professionals consultation line is available Monday to Friday, 9am - 2pm on **0300 304 0050**.

www.hampshirecamhs.nhs.uk