



Phone Support for Young People

Please all have a look at “Delivering Effective Online Support” alongside this document.

This guidance is in relation to general (non-mental health) phone-based support for young people: think “chatline” not “helpline”:

1. We are not an emergency service for young people, at the end of this guidance are some dedicated helplines which we can give to young people
2. Our overall aim is to listen, signpost and give advice if required.
3. If you do get a phone call that a young person says they are in IMMEDIATE risk or danger, please ask for an address and let the Safeguarding Officer (Zara Scott-Davies) know straight away or call the Police. Remember your Safeguarding training.
4. Log all the calls you receive take and record concerns; send these to your line manager, copying in SMT – these will be logged & monitored centrally.
5. Follow guidance in your Employee Handbook relating to your conduct: you are a professional providing support – not a friend.
6. Listen carefully to young people and allow them the space to speak, a short silence is fine, then precis back to them what they have said. Young people often have the answers to their issues, they often just need to say it out loud. Try and break the issue into bite-size chunks – this is often easier to deal with.
7. Be calm, gentle and non-judgmental.
8. If you receive an abusive or an inappropriate (for example prank or sexualised) phone call, tell the caller you are terminating the call and contacting the Police. (In reality the Police probably won't be interested but the caller won't know that) Report this to a SMT member to give you support
9. Young people may just want to talk about their feelings and managing with Covid-19: follow government information, encourage them to use different mediums to express their feelings, writing, drawing and having contact and chatting to other people.
10. Some young people may be having conflict with their family, encourage them to talk through what they are doing, and then encourage them to think of other family pressures. Encourage the young person to think of how these pressures could be relieved, maybe board games, cooking, singing together.
11. Unfortunately, we cannot ring a young person back as we would need consent for this.
12. Encourage young people to participate in our online website and activities: signpost to our website & social media channels.
13. Ask young people about some of the positive things in their lives - this can often put a balance into their thinking.



14. If you feel a young person is going to make a disclosure, remember your Safeguarding training: ensure that you immediately explain that if they tell you something which is a safeguarding issue you will have to pass this on

Helpful sign posting organisations:

- [Young Somerset's Wellbeing Service-www.youngsomerset.org.uk](http://www.youngsomerset.org.uk)
- [Childline - 0800 1111](http://www.childline.gov.uk)
- [Staying Safe Online](http://www.staying-safe.org)
- [Samaritans – 116 123](http://www.samaritans.org)
- [Kooth - www.kooth.com](http://www.kooth.com)
- MeeTwo: <https://www.meetwo.co.uk/>