



By



# MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING TOOLKIT FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Supported by



The  
Reflection  
project



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## INTRODUCTION

This toolkit is designed to help parents, carers and guardians support the mental health and wellbeing of young people. It includes faith and culture-sensitive tips and strategies, along with a summary of the Value Every Mind programme being implemented in schools.

### Summary of the Value Every Mind Programme

To celebrate Muslim Aid's 40th anniversary, we have partnered with the Muslim Mind Collaborative to deliver the Value Every Mind Programme. Supported by The Reflection Project and Association of Muslim Schools, we aim to support students, parents, guardians and school staff in Muslim schools. Here's an overview of what we are doing in schools:

● **Workshops and Assemblies:** Educating students about mental wellbeing, sharing coping mechanisms around stress and anxiety in a way that respects their faith and cultural backgrounds.

● **Creative Activities:** Engaging students in creative writing, drawing, colouring and mindfulness exercises inspired by Islamic art and patterns to help them manage their emotions.

● **Championing wellbeing:** This programme offers holistic support providing toolkits and resources to promote well-being.

● **Parental Involvement:** Encouraging parents and guardians to participate in workshops and support their young people at home with the techniques learned.



“

Allah is sufficient for me. There is no God worthy of worship except Him. In Him I put my trust. And He is the Lord of the Mighty Throne  
*The Holy Qur'an*  
*Surah At-Tawbah 9:129.*

”

### Understanding Mental Health and Wellbeing

- **Mental Health:** Refers to our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act.
- **Wellbeing:** Involves creating a supportive environment where young people feel safe, respected, and valued.

### What is Stress and Anxiety?

**Stress:** A response to an external trigger, such as a work deadline or a fight with a loved one. Stress is usually short-term and can be a positive motivator. Once the stressor is removed, stress levels usually go down.

**Anxiety:** A persistent feeling of unease, even when there's no clear reason. This sense of fear or anxiety can stay with you and come up at any time, often without an obvious cause.

**Physical symptoms:** increased heart rate, rapid breathing, sweating, and feeling nervous or on edge.

## MANAGING SYMPTOMS: FAITH AND CULTURALLY SENSITIVE TIPS

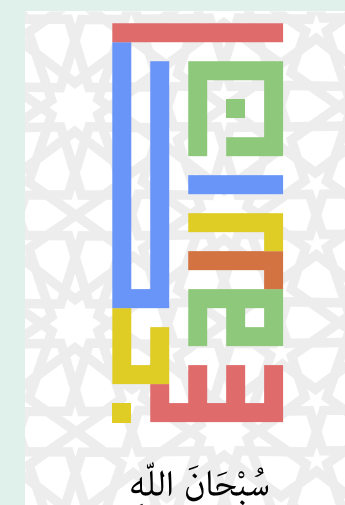
Different things work for different people at different times, so you can try whatever you feel comfortable with.

### 1 Prayer and Spiritual Practices:

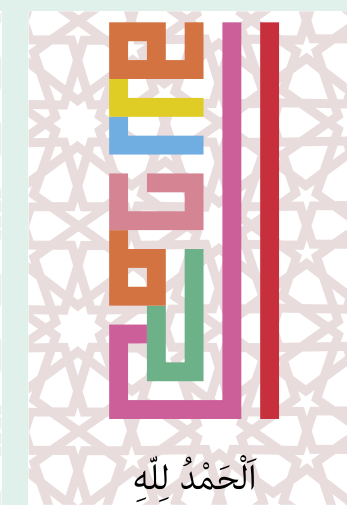
**Daily Prayers (Salah):** Performing the five daily prayers can help instil a sense of peace and routine.

**Dhikr (Remembrance of Allah):** Reciting phrases like "SubhanAllah," "Alhamdulillah," and "Allahu Akbar" can provide comfort and reduce anxiety. Dhikr using a tasbeeh can be additionally helpful as it provides a sensory focus which can help disrupt anxious thoughts.

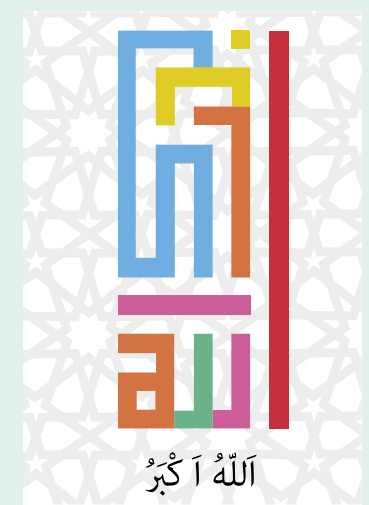
**Qur'an Recitation:** Reading or listening to the Qur'an can be soothing and helps in seeking spiritual comfort. Visualising the Arabic words as you recite or listen can provide an additional sensory focus to help interrupt anxious thoughts.



Subhan Allah  
GLORY BE TO GOD



Alhamdulillah  
PRAISE TO GOD



Allahu Akbar  
ALLAH IS THE GREATEST



## 2 Mindfulness and Relaxation:



**Journaling:** Encourage young people to write about their thoughts and feelings to help manage stress. They could include surahs which they find helpful. Encourage conversation around journals but they should remain private and not read without a young person's permission.

**Nature Time:** Spend time outdoors in natural settings to relax and refresh the mind. While outside, encourage young people to notice the temperature of the air on their skin and as they breathe, the colours and sounds around them, as sensory focus can help interrupt stressful thoughts.

**Breathing Exercises:** Teach young people deep breathing techniques to manage stress. These can be combined with dhikr and sensory techniques.

### Deep calm



- Breathe in for **4** seconds
- Hold for **7** seconds
- Breathe out for **8** seconds
- Repeat **4** times

### Slow breaths



- Breathe in slowly as you count **4 2 3 4**
- Breathe out slowly as you count **4 3 2 1**
- Repeat **4** times

### Square breathing



- Breathe in as you count **1 2 3 4**
- Hold your breath as you count. **1 2 3 4**
- Breathe out as you count **1 2 3 4**
- Hold your breath as you count. **1 2 3 4**
- Keep your counting even and repeat **3** times

[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

## 3 Healthy Lifestyle:

**Balanced Diet:** Try to eat a range of nutritious foods and stay hydrated.

**Exercise:** Encourage regular physical activity to boost mental and physical health.

**Sleep:** Ensure young people get enough rest. Try to maintain a good sleep cycle, including a dark, quiet environment, no screens for an hour before sleep, phone out of reach and a regular sleep schedule.



## 4 Social Support:

**People you Trust:** Encourage open communication with people you may trust like friends, family and teachers about feelings.

**Community Activities:** Engage in community events or volunteer activities to stay connected.

**Youth Groups:** Join Islamic youth groups or activities to find support and companionship.

## 5 Seeking Help:

**Counsellors and Teachers:** Encourage young people to speak to school counsellors or trusted teachers if they need help.

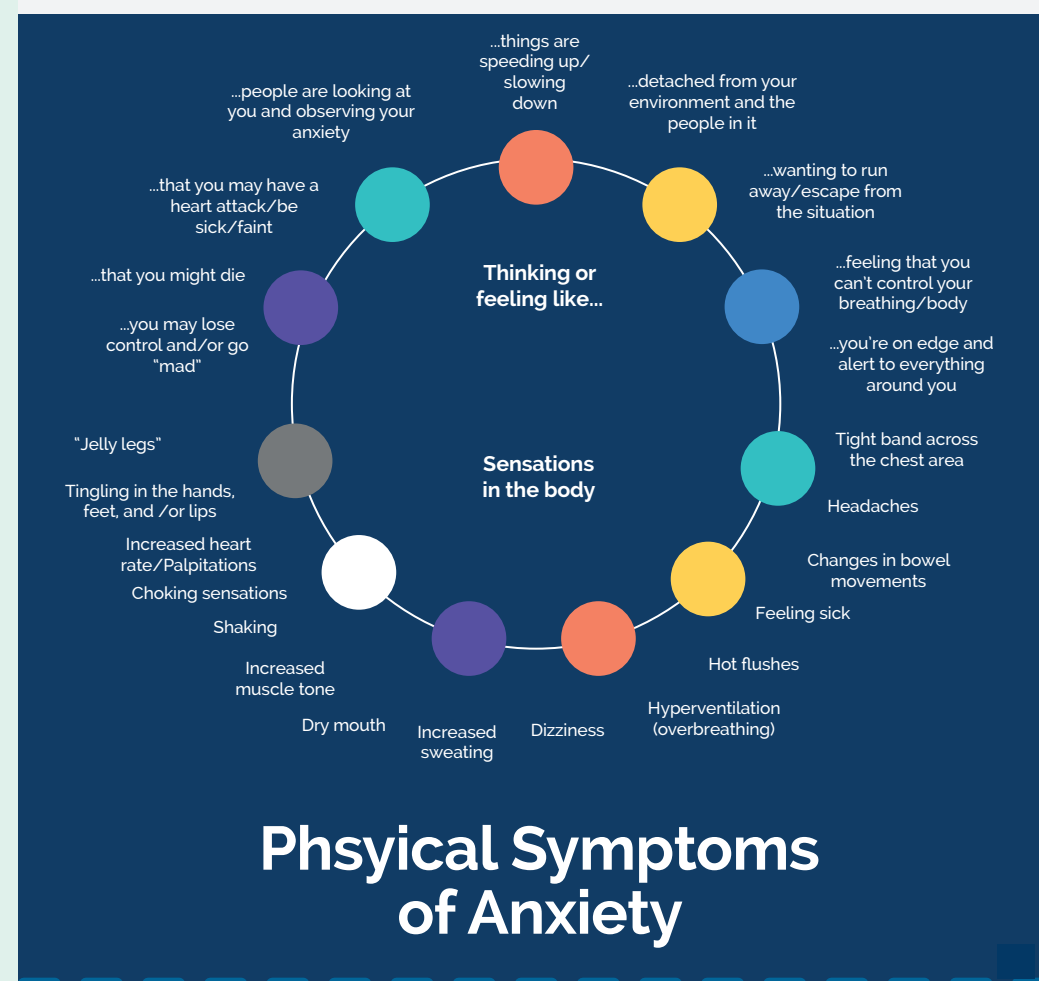
**Mental Health Resources:** Utilise resources available in your community that are specifically designed to support mental health.

## TIPS FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

### Notice Symptoms of Stress & Anxiety:

Symptoms of stress and anxiety can often overlap. Just remember stress is like a fire alarm going off when you've burned your toast – it makes sense because something's actually happening. But anxiety is like the alarm going off when there's no smoke or fire at all. It keeps ringing, even when everything seems fine.

## Psychological Symptoms of Anxiety



Resource provided by: [inspiredminds.org.uk](https://inspiredminds.org.uk)

### Create a Supportive Environment:

- Foster open communication and listen to the concerns of young people with empathy and without judgement.
- Make time for family activities and encourage young people to engage in hobbies and interests.

### Promote Healthy Habits:

- Support young people to maintain a balanced diet, regular exercise, and has a proper sleep schedule.
- Encourage mindfulness practices and relaxation techniques.
- Encourage creative and expressive outlets such as writing, drawing, and movement.

### Be Involved in their Education:

- Communicate regularly with teachers and school staff to stay updated on their progress.

### Seek Professional Help When Needed:

- Don't hesitate to seek professional counselling or support if a young person shows signs of prolonged stress or anxiety.
- Utilise available community resources and mental health services.

*Supporting a young person's mental health and wellbeing is crucial for their overall development and happiness. By implementing these tips and strategies, you can create a nurturing and supportive home environment that promotes their mental health. Take care of yourself as well, as your health and happiness are vital for creating a positive and nurturing atmosphere at home.*



## Useful links



### The Reflection Project

● Website: [thereflectionproject.org](http://thereflectionproject.org)

Provides safe, professional mental health support to Muslim-heritage children and families, guiding them through the healing process. By collaborating with local communities, consulting with mainstream services, and offering comprehensive training for therapists, they ensure faith and culturally sensitive 1:1 therapy. Their expert therapists create a safe space for young people to express their faith identity freely while navigating life's challenges.



### Approachable Parenting (AP)

● Website: [approachableparenting.org](http://approachableparenting.org)

A non-profit organisation dedicated to empowering families through tailored parenting programs and services. Their mission is to help parents cultivate positive family dynamics and increase their confidence and self-esteem. AP offers a range of services, including parenting courses, marriage education, family counselling, and one-on-one mentoring, all designed to support parents/guardians from pregnancy through adolescence.



### The Value Every Mind Schools Project by the Muslim Mind Collaborative

● Website: [mentalhealth.muslimaid.org/workshops](http://mentalhealth.muslimaid.org/workshops)

Aims to improve mental health support for Muslim young people in schools. The project provides a comprehensive toolkit to help schools enhance faith literacy and cultural sensitivity. This includes resources to tackle Islamophobia, stereotypes, and unconscious bias, and to promote understanding of the lived experiences of young Muslims. The goal is to destigmatise mental health issues and create a more inclusive and supportive environment for Muslim students.



### Young Minds

● Website: [www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/parents-helpline](http://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/parents-helpline)

Offers a free and confidential information, advice and support to parents and carers who are concerned about their child or young person's mental health. You can speak to them over the phone, or chat to them online.



### MIND UK:

They have a dedicated section on their website for working with Muslim communities, including resources like [www.suffolkmind.org.uk/product/the-quran-emotional-health/](http://www.suffolkmind.org.uk/product/the-quran-emotional-health/)



### Muslim Counsellor and Psychotherapist Network

● Website: [mcapn.co.uk](http://mcapn.co.uk)

Directory of Muslim counsellors and psychotherapists.

The MCAPN operates as an independent network, providing resources to the public, alongside services and resources to its members.



### Inspired Minds

● Website: [inspiredminds.org.uk](http://inspiredminds.org.uk)

18+ only. A faith based, grassroots mental health charity located in London providing professional, nonjudgemental, confidential support to those affected by mental health challenges. Their team includes Counsellors and CBT therapists.



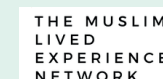
### Muslim Community Helpline

● Website: [muslimcommunityhelpline.org.uk](http://muslimcommunityhelpline.org.uk)

**Phone:** 0208 908 6715 OR 0208 904 8193

Free, confidential, non-judgemental listening and emotional support service.

**Service hours:** Monday to Thursday: 10 am to 1 pm. Fridays 10am-4 pm



### The Muslim Lived Experience Network

● Website: [mlxn.org.uk](http://mlxn.org.uk)

A small group of NHS Mental Health Lived Experience Practitioners based in London. They offer free peer support for Muslims and promote mental health literacy through workshops and training. They challenge harmful practices in mainstream mental health services and champion safe, therapeutic and culturally appropriate healthcare for Muslims and non-Muslims alike.



### Muslim Youth Helpline

● Website: [myh.org.uk](http://myh.org.uk)

A free, non-judgemental confidential helpline for Muslim youth providing emotional support by phone, live chat, WhatsApp or email.



## ABOUT US



An international charity where our vision is to make an impactful contribution to a world that is just and harmonious, as ordained by God, where everyone can achieve their potential with dignity.  
[www.muslimaid.org](http://www.muslimaid.org)



This unique faith-sensitive School Programme helps students, parents, guardians and staff manage stress and anxiety. Delivered by the Muslim Mind Collaborative and Muslim Aid, it is supported by the partners listed here.  
<https://mentalhealth.muslimaid.org/workshops>



A community-focused initiative supporting the mental well-being of British Muslims. They provide culturally and faith-sensitive services, working to reduce inequalities in health, education, employment, and housing.  
<https://muslimmindcollaborative.co.uk/>



Guided by the Qur'an and the Sunnah, the Association of Muslim Schools strive with sincerity to represent, inspire, motivate, support and build capacity in institutions, so that they become centres of excellence.  
<https://ams-uk.org/>



Our vision is for every Muslim youth in the UK to feel heard and healed through timely access to faith-sensitive therapy. That's why all our therapy services are free.  
<https://thereflectionproject.org/>

