

# A Picture of Health

## In focus this month: Mental Health

In Public Health we look at the way people in Tameside live as a whole population. This helps us understand what the main health and wellbeing challenges are for people living here, so we can look for ways to improve levels of health. We'll be sharing facts and figures about health in Tameside with you every month, to put you in the picture. We'll also be giving you information on how you can help yourself and the people around you to live well.

**1 Surviving or Thriving?** Its Mental Health Awareness Week on the 8th – 14th May 2017 and Tameside, Oldham and Glossop Mind will be putting on a fantastic evening (11th May) of expert talks, creative workshops, seminars and activities where you can explore new ideas around mental health. Too many of us are 'surviving' with poor mental wellbeing without really thinking about what they can do to achieve a 'thriving' mental health. Register your free place today for this fantastic event!



**2 Anxiety can feel like a sense of unease, worry, or fear.** It has its origins in our natural response to dangerous situations, and at the right time, can be a life saver. It gives us the energy to stand up or run away if we feel threatened. Nowadays we're more likely to need that energy to get through an exam or a job interview, but the biological instinct remains. Some people develop an anxiety reaction in non-dangerous situations, e.g. going to the supermarket. When this happens the symptoms can be unpleasant. Understanding anxiety and its symptoms can help to reduce fear, and take control back. Take a look at this beginner's guide to anxiety to understand more. Alternatively call the Anthony Seddon Fund to see what activities & groups could help 0161 637 9256.



**3 Mental health and physical health go hand in hand, that's why people who take regular exercise tend to enjoy better mental health than others.** Exercise releases feel-good hormones, increases self-esteem, and can provide good social opportunities. Exercise can be recommended for the treatment of depression, and for those with anxiety or stress, it can quiet the mind by helping focus on the outside world. If you choose to exercise in the great outdoors, the distractions nature provides can be a real mood boost. Physical activity is also one of the 5 Ways to Wellbeing, these principles incorporated into your life can increase your sense of wellbeing.



**4 Postnatal depression affects just under 400 new mums in Tameside each year.** As with any mental health matter, it's easy to think that you're the only one affected, but if you didn't feel that instant bond with your baby, you are not alone. With all eyes on a new baby it can be difficult to admit that you're not feeling as joyous as people expect, whilst hormone levels are naturally up and down at this time, it's important to know when Post Natal Depression might be a factor. See what other mums said about their experience here, and remember that GPs and Health Visitors are there to help.

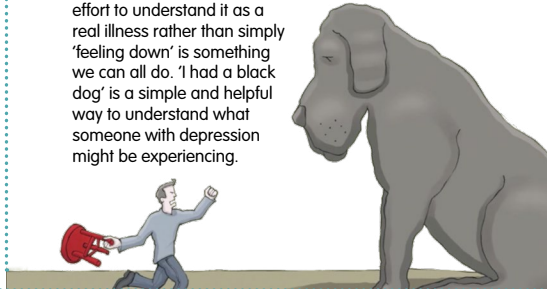
You are not alone



**5 People tend to think that smoking and drinking calms the nerves, but in fact, they are known to make anxiety worse.** Despite this, some people still choose to smoke, drink, or 'self-medicate' mental health problems with things that harm their physical health. The Healthy Minds service provides a range of treatment and support options for people struggling to cope with low mood, stress, anxiety, depression, or any of the common mental health problems, and can help find a healthier way of coping. If you would like to speak to someone from Health Minds, fill in the online form on the Healthy Minds website, and a member of the team will be in touch.

**HEALTHY MINDS**  
Got something on your mind?

**6 Over 14,000 people are registered with depression in Tameside, and around 1 in 10 of us will experience depression at some point in our lives.** Chances are you'll know someone who is living with it, or you may have it yourself. There's still further progress to be made on attitudes towards depression, and making an effort to understand it as a real illness rather than simply 'feeling down' is something we can all do. 'I had a black dog' is a simple and helpful way to understand what someone with depression might be experiencing.



**7 For many years mental health has been talked about in hushed whispers, and people have been reluctant to speak out about their experiences for fear of being judged.** Thankfully times are changing and mental health is now being talked about more openly. Time to Change is a campaign that encourages us all to have a conversation with someone about mental health. Try it yourself. With one in four of us experiencing a problem at some point in our lives, you're guaranteed to know someone who'd be relieved to chat. Not sure where to start? Watch this video.

**time to change**  
let's end mental health discrimination

**8 Self-harm is sometimes used to cope with an overload of distressing thoughts or emotions.** Whilst it is believed that around 2 children in every secondary school class self-harm, it's not just the preserve of young people. Over 600 adults in Tameside went to hospital to treat self-inflicted injuries last year alone. Someone who is self-harming may need help to find a better outlet for their problems. If you are worried about self-harm in a young person, speak to our Healthy Young Minds on 0161 716 3600. Or if you are or know an adult who is self-harming, encourage them to speak to their GP. If the person is seriously hurt call 999 in an emergency.



**9 Getting older and retirement both involve a change in lifestyle for most people and it's important to take care of yourself mentally as well as physically.** Some people think that mental health problems are an inevitable part of getting older but this simply isn't true and doesn't have to be the case. While a significant number of people do develop dementia, loneliness and depression in old age, practical tips from the Mental Health Foundation help support older people to feel a sense of purpose and be connected with friends and family.



**10 Stress. We all experience it from time to time.** In itself it's not a bad thing, in fact, some people thrive on it. It can give us the extra energy we need to rise to a challenging situation. Sometimes though, stress is prolonged. For example, ongoing money worries, relationship problems or a workload that is too much pressure. When long term stress occurs it can affect how you feel, think and behave. It can also affect how your body works. We can't always change our situations to remove the thing that is causing our stress, but we can try to change the way you feel about it. Getting a different perspective or finding ways to bring periods of calm into your day can help. Have a look at One You to see how you can reduce stress in your life.



**11 Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people tend to experience more mental health problems than straight people.** The reasons why are varied, but self-acceptance, bullying, discrimination, and attitudes of friends and family can all play a part. In a survey 44% of LGBT people said they had thought about suicide, double the number of heterosexual and non-trans people. The LGBT Foundation offers advice to young people who may be experiencing mental health problems as a result of their sexuality or gender. If that's you, take a look and you'll see that help is never far away.



**12 For some people, it can feel like there is no way out of their problems.** Even with a loving and supportive network of friends and family, they may feel their only option is to take their own life. Sadly, around 26 people do so in Tameside each year. Nobody's story needs to end this way. With support and treatment it is possible to allow negative feelings to pass. The Sanctuary offer 24-hour mental health crisis support for adults, and a place to go for anyone who is struggling to get through the night. Save this number in your phone in case you or someone you know ever needs it in a crisis 0300 003 7029.

**SelfHelp**  
The Sanctuary