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FOOD, MOOD AND MENTAL HEALTH

Clergy Wellbeing Conference Birmingham - Wednesday 24th September 2025

BIRMINGHAM MIND | ASTON VILLA FOUNDATION

Mike Jefferies
Training Manager
Birmingham Mind
mikejeffries@birminghammind.org

Aimee Jefferson
Health and Wellbeing Manager
Aston Villa Foundation
aj52@avfc.co.uk

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POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH

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Mental health is a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community. It is an integral component of health and well-being that underpins our individual and collective abilities to make decisions, build relationships and shape the world we live in. Mental health is a basic human right. And it is crucial to personal, community and socio-economic development.

World Health Organisation

POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH

Five ways to wellbeing:

Step 1 - Connect
Step 2 - Get active
Step 3 - Take notice
Step 4 - Learn
Step 5 - Give

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THE CONNECTION: FOOD & MOOD

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WHAT ARE SOME BARRIERS TO YOU EATING IN A WAY THAT SUPPORTS YOUR MOOD?

MICROHABITS THAT WILL SUPPORT YOUR MOOD

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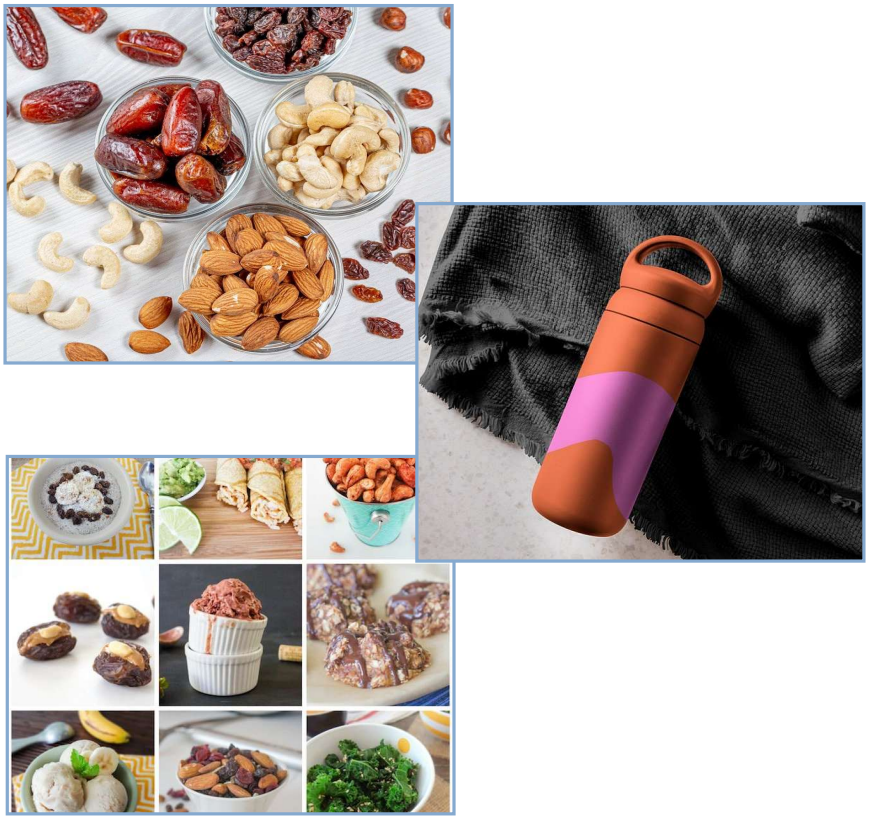
SUPPORTIVE HABITS FOR FOOD AND MOOD

1. Rainbow Rule
2. Breakfast Boost
3. Add Protein to Snacks
4. Be Caffeine Smart
5. Feed your Brain with Omega-3s
6. Take care of your gut
7. Swap out your sugar
8. Stay Hydrated
9. Plan grab and go snacks
10. Eat regularly



MICROHABITS TO SUPPORT YOUR MOOD

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Rainbow Rule

Aim to include a variety of colours across the week (not just in one meal). Different colours = different phytonutrients that support brain and mood.

Add Protein to Snacks

Nuts, seeds, cheese, eggs, hummus — help mood regulation & keep you fuller for longer

Breakfast Boost

Even something small (banana + nut butter, yogurt + oats) helps stabilise morning mood and reduces reliance on caffeine spikes.

MICROHABITS TO SUPPORT YOUR MOOD

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Caffiene Smart

Always have caffeine with food, decaf/cut off after 3pm. Try swap for herbal teas/matcha

Take care of your gut

Live yogurt, kefir, sauerkraut + fibre (fruit, veg, pulses) = happier gut, calmer mind

Feed Your Brain with Omega-3s

Oily fish, walnuts, chia & flax seeds support brain health and resilience

MICROHABITS TO SUPPORT YOUR MOOD

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Sugar Swaps

To reduce sugar crashes switch to fruit, dates, oatcakes, or a square of dark chocolate instead of high-sugar snacks

Plan Grab & Go Packs

Keep a pouch in your bag: nuts, dried fruit, oatcakes = rescue snacks when time is short

Stay Hydrated

Drink water at regular intervals throughout the day. Try and have a glass of water with every meal. If you need to add lemon/cucumber/mint

Eat Regularly

Try not to go longer than 4–5 hours without food — it helps avoid dips in energy & irritability.

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Remember: it's ok to choose more convenient foods if this is what feels possible right now.

MENTAL HEALTH & SELF COMPASSION

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WHAT IS SELF COMPASSION?

Self-compassion is the ability to care for yourself when you're struggling.
Most of us are very good at being compassionate to others, but we don't treat ourselves with compassion.
When you notice that your mind is being critical or harsh, do something helpful, not harmful.

NHS Inform (Scotland)

WHAT IS SELF CARE?

Self Care – It matters even more for those supporting others!

We're going to think about this by comparing what we all do.

It's "Shout out time!":

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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Contact NHS 111 England or NHS 111 Wales. If you call 111, you can select option 2 to access a 24/7 helpline offering urgent mental health support.

For a listening ear or just someone to talk to the Samaritans are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You can call them on 116 123 (Freephone). You can also email jo@samaritans.org but email responses may take several days.

Our page of mental health helplines lists many more services that may suit you.

Find your local Mind: Find local Minds where you live | Info and support | Mind

SIGNPOSTING - HUB OF HOPE

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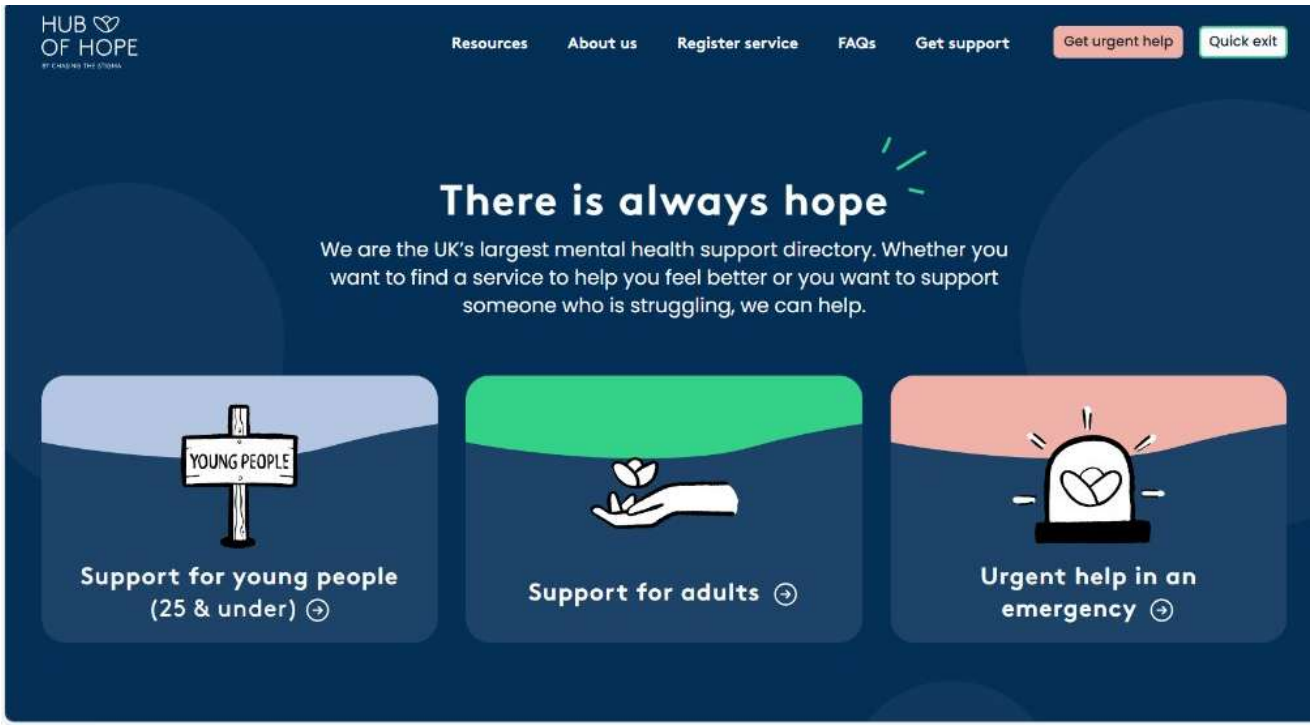
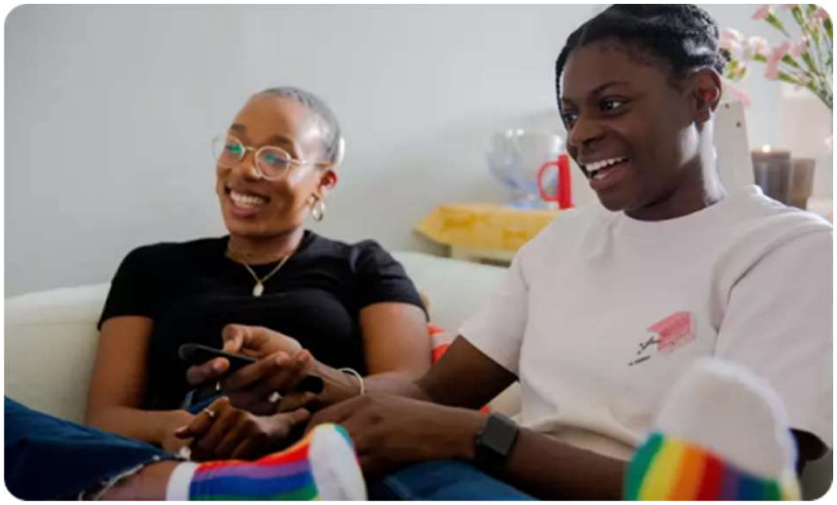
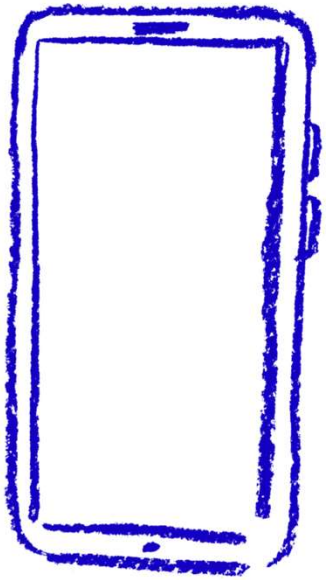


SIGNPOSTING - MIND APP LIBRARY

https://mind.orchahealth.com/en-GB





SIGNPOSTING - HELPLINE

How It Works:
Text Space to 85258
Receive **four quick automated replies**
Connect with a **trained mental health professional** who will listen, support, and guide you
Free, confidential, anonymous – and it **won't appear on your phone bill**

Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health Foundation Trust has launched a new, confidential 24/7 text messaging service in partnership with Shout—the UK's first round-the-clock mental health text support service.

SIGNPOSTING - TALKING SPACES

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HELPLINE

0121 262 3555

Get the support you need.