Themes: Advocacy, Mental Health
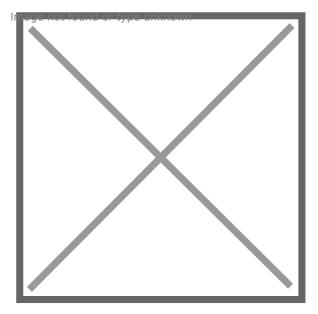**Aimed at:** All People

We all have mental health. But not all of us live with good mental health.

When we experience good mental health, we can make full use of our abilities, cope with the normal stresses of life and play a full part in our families, workplaces and communities,as well as among friends. Despite our mental health being such an important personal and social resource, the extent of mental health problems in the population means that too many of us are struggling, rather than thriving and reaching our full potential. This is why we must start talking about prevention and mental health.

What causes mental health problems?
To learn how we can prevent mental health problems, we need to search for answers to this fundamental question: what causes mental health problems?

What has prevention got to do with mental health?
We know that mental ill health will always be a part of life but the causes of mental ill health can be addressed to prevent such high numbers of people from developing a mental health problem. We can also support people living with mental health problems to stay well and prevent people from relapsing or reaching crisis point.

Society - policy and publications
Our individual actions are rarely enough. We need more efforts across society to

empower everyone to be the change they'd like to see. We don't need to wait until we become unwell to change how we talk about mental health.

We take a public mental health approach to prevention, finding solutions for individuals, those at risk and for society, in order to improve everyone's mental wellbeing.

The practical things we do

Community and peer programmes; we test and evaluate the best approaches to improving mental health in communities and then roll them out as widely as possible.

Research; we publish studies and reports on what protects mental health and the causes of poor mental health and how to tackle them.

Public engagement; we give advice to millions of people on mental health. We are most well known for running Mental Health Awareness Week across the UK each year.

Advocacy; we propose solutions and campaign for change to address the underlying causes of poor mental health.

What we don't do

We are not an academic think tank or research institute. We generate and apply evidence in real world settings.

We are not a mental health service provider for when people are unwell.

We don't only focus on individual actions and steps - we look at both the personal and societal changes that can improve and protect everyone's mental health.

Embracing the challenge of prevention

The COVID-19 pandemic has shone a light on how health is not simply an individual, medical issue. Good health is a collective endeavour which depends on each other and a society that supports people to thrive. Read how the Foundation embraced the challenge of prevention through our work.

Our five-year strategy places prevention at the heart of the Mental Health Foundation's work, with a focus on preventing mental health problems before they happen and helping people to stay well.

Join our movement and keep up to date with our work.

Area: Bassetlaw, Bolsover

Contact Details

Colechurch House
1 London Bridge Walk
SE1 2SX

020 7803 1100
https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/

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