

r u sad?

a guide to what you can
do when you're sad

We're all sad sometimes – it's a normal part of life.
If we never felt down, we'd never know what happy was, right?

But why do we get sad?

What can we do about it?

How can we help a friend who's sad?

What happens if it goes on too long?

This leaflet is here to try to answer these questions. At the back, you'll find details of other places where you can get help and more information if you feel you need it.



You might also find these other leaflets helpful too:

- **r u worried?** – coping with worry
- **r u friends?** – making, keeping and helping friends
- **family break-ups** – coping when parents split up
- **when someone dies** – coping when someone dear to you is gone

Ask a teacher about them or look in the school library.

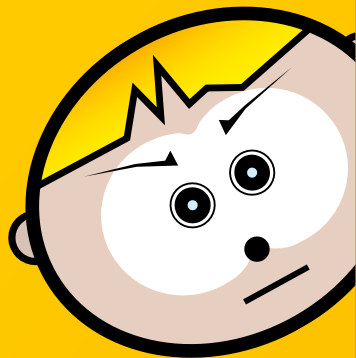
Aha! You say you never get sad?
Pull the other one!

Why the long face . . . ?

Everyone's different.

What makes one person sad might not be such a big deal to someone else.

Loads of things can put us on a downer.



Ever had to deal with one of these?

- Bust-ups with mates
- Loneliness
- Bullying
- Hard times with schoolwork
- Parents breaking up
- Being ill
- A friend or family member being ill
- Someone dying
- Moving house
- Moving school
- Getting a new stepfamily

Big changes in our lives and **anything** that upsets us can make us feel sad.

What does it feel like?

Sadness affects people in different ways:

- Bad dreams
- Trouble sleeping
- Not being hungry
- Being more hungry
- Crying a lot
- Short temper
- Not wanting to see mates
- Getting into trouble more often
- Not being able to concentrate
- Low energy



Any of that stuff will make your life harder to deal with. The result is that sadness can become a vicious circle and make us more and more sad as time goes on.

What can I do about it?

First, look at the next page.

Four steps to feeling happier

Action stations.

There's no point in just soldiering on – we need to do something to get ourselves out of the rut. Often, we need to take a number of steps before we get back to normal.

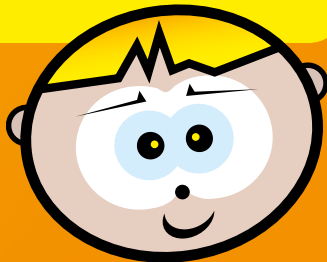
Don't worry – it's not rocket science.

Nothing a genius like you can't handle.



Step 1: Enjoy yourself

Go do something nice. Go on!
Read a comic, get dressed up,
have a kickabout – whatever
rings your bell. The main trick is
to get your mind onto something
else for a while.



Step 2: Chill

Being sad causes us **stress**.
So, we need to **chill out**. How?
Take a bath, take a walk, listen
to some tunes, watch the clouds.
Maybe you can do yoga or
meditate? Try different things until
you find what relaxes you best.

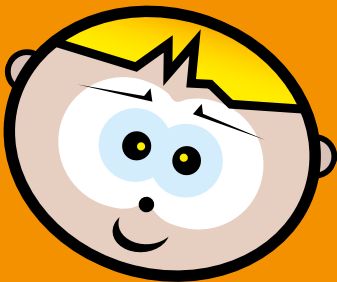
Help! You can call or email
Childline any time with any problem:
Freephone 0800 1111 or visit
www.childline.org.uk

Step 3: Think positive

Sadness makes us dwell on the bad side of life.

- Think about all the good things in your life instead. You might be a good mate or a quick reader.
- Think about good times you've had in the past.

Reminding ourselves of the good things can make the world seem a brighter place.



Step 4: Sort it out

Now that you're in a better frame of mind, try to pinpoint what's bugging you.

- This could take a while (it's often not what we think of first).
- Some things we just have to put up with – compensate by chilling lots and enjoying yourself.
- Other problems can be sorted out if we talk to the right person (like a teacher if it's something at school).

Tip: Even just talking can help get things straight in our heads. Talk to a friend or adult you trust or write it out on paper.

How can I help a friend who's sad?

Be there

Don't think that they want to be left alone. They'll soon tell you if you're bugging them.

Be patient

They might not act like they normally do. Cut them some slack.

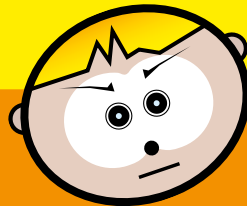
Listen

Being there to listen can be the best help ever.

- Let them know they can talk to you.
- You might have ideas that could help.
- Just being understanding is the biggest help.
- Don't blab their secrets (unless they're in danger – in which case tell an adult).

Give them this leaflet

If you've found this leaflet useful, they might too.

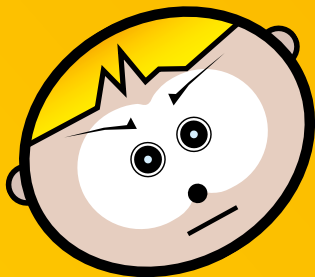


How else can I help?

You could help them get help if they need to.
Asking for help can be hard if you're not feeling right.

So:

- offer to go with them to a teacher or other trusted adult
- help them write an email to Childline www.childline.org.uk
- get in touch with one of the other contacts at the back of this leaflet for them (but only if they agree to it).



What if I'm still worried about them?

Sometimes a friend will be very sad. If you're not sure what to do, tell an adult you trust. You can be a great help to adults while they decide what to do – you probably know more about how your friend is feeling than they do.

Don't take it all on yourself – sometimes it takes more specialised people to help.

Helping others can be hard work – make sure you **chill out** afterwards.

Feeling sad for a long time . . .

Feeling sad for a long time is called **depression**.

What does depression feel like?

It feels like things will never get better. It's important that a depressed person gets help.

Who can help?

- School nurse/doctor – go direct or ask a teacher how to see them.
- Special staff – through the family doctor, parents (or guardians) can make arrangements to see someone trained to support young people who are depressed.

When is the best time to get help?

The sooner a depressed person gets help, the sooner they'll start to feel better.

What about my friend?

If you think a friend is depressed, tell a trusted adult.



Moving forward . . .

- Everyone has ups and downs.
- Learning to cope with difficult feelings makes you stronger.
- The reasons for sadness change but good ways to cope are always useful.
- Nothing lasts forever – even sadness.

Help



Emergencies

Call the police on 999.

Ask for a 'child protection police officer' if you're worried about abuse.

Childline

Freephone 0800 1111 – any time – call for advice, information and support on any worry or visit www.childline.org.uk for message boards, email and online chat.

Who Cares? Scotland

Phone 0141 226 4441 (9 am–5 pm Mon–Thu, 9 am–4 pm Fri) – advice, information, advocacy and local support for young people living in care or who have been in care.

Hope Again

Call 0808 808 1677 – support and advice for anyone coping with the loss of a friend or relative. Call or visit the website for details of a group near you. www.hopeagain.org.uk

Parenting Across Scotland

Supporting children, parents and families in Scotland. Information, support and advice for parents.

www.parentingacrossscotland.org

Help

www.whocaresscotland.org	Advice, information, advocacy and local support for young people living in care or who have been in care. Telephone: 0141 226 4441
www.childline.org.uk	Childline website – fact sheets, links, email help, problem pages and more
www.bullying.co.uk	Information and advice on bullying
www.hopeagain.org.uk	Information and advice if someone close to you has died, message boards and email support
https://respectme.org.uk	Information and advice on bullying
https://carers.org	Support for people caring for a relative who is unwell or in need of care

Surf safe! Never give out your real name, telephone number or address online. Visit www.thinkuknow.co.uk for information on using the internet safely.

NHS Health Scotland cannot guarantee the quality of information on websites run by other organisations.



This resource may also be made available on request in the following formats:



 **0131 314 5300**

 **nhs.healthscotland-alternativeformats@nhs.net**

Thanks to the Scottish Mental Health Week Task Group and all the young people who gave their time to the research.

Published by NHS Health Scotland

1 South Gyle Crescent
Edinburgh EH12 9EB

Text: John Wallace
Design: Think-em

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Number 2 in the 'r u ok?' series

Adapted, with kind permission, from a series of booklets produced by East Lothian Council in partnership with Lothian Primary Health Care Trust Child and Adolescent Services, Changes Community Health Project, NHS Lothian and the Health Improvement Fund.

