

# r u ok?

**a supporting guide**  
for parents, carers, teachers,  
play workers and others working  
with 8–12 year-olds and wishing  
to use Health Scotland's  
“*r u ok?*” range of five leaflets



## **r u worried?**

Worry and anxiety - no. 1



## **r u sad?**

Sadness - no. 2



## **r u friends?**

Friendship issues - no. 3



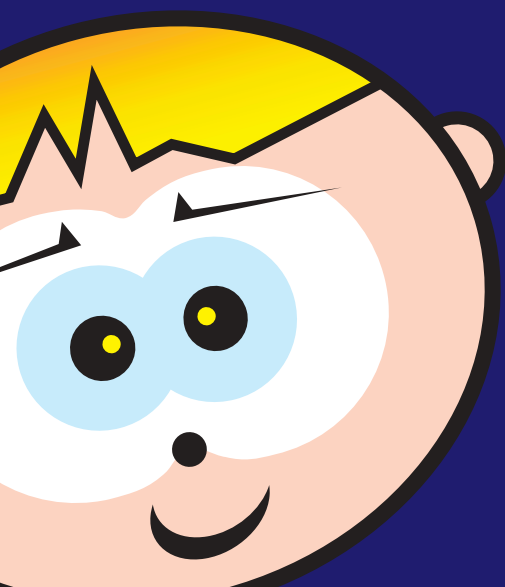
## **when someone dies...**

Bereavement and loss - no. 4



## **family break-ups**

Parental break-ups - no. 5



## Who is this guide for?

This guide has been developed for parents, carers, teachers, play workers, youth workers and others wishing to use Health Scotland's "r u ok?" leaflets with children aged 8–12. The full range of leaflets, including additional copies of this supporting guide and a promotional poster, is available from your local health promotion department.

## Children and mental health and well-being

Mental health and well-being (including emotional well-being) has been identified as a national priority in Scotland. It is a part of general health and therefore everyone has mental health needs, whether or not they experience mental illness. Mental health and well-being includes feeling respected and valued, feeling we belong, having the ability to cope with life events and having various skills such as decision making, problem solving, communication and handling relationships. It is important that children receive education in these areas and are supported through major life events with their mental health and well-being in mind. An awareness of personal states of mental health and well-being and the knowledge and confidence to seek appropriate help are to be encouraged as crucial life skills. They are of particular importance as children approach the transition to adulthood and face major life events such as bereavements, making friends, getting a job and parental break-ups.

## Why these five topics?

The topics covered by the five leaflets were chosen because children have indicated that they are areas of particular concern. The range does not represent an exhaustive list of key issues. Rather, these leaflets seek to complement similar printed resources produced by other organisations and initiatives, for example on bullying. (See Further Reading and Contacts for more information on issues affecting children.)

## Why 8–12 year-olds?

Teachers, parents and other workers in the field have indicated a lack of resources dealing with issues of emotional well-being and mental health for pre-secondary school children. Those seeking similar materials for older children and young people should consider using *Cool Heads* (12–16s) or *Head Kit* (16–18s). These are also produced by Health Scotland and are available from local health promotion departments.

## Developing the "r u ok?" range

The "r u ok?" range has been based on a range of booklets developed in conjunction with children in East Lothian by East Lothian Council, Lothian Primary Health Care Trust Child and Adolescent Services, NHS Lothian, the Health Improvement Fund and Changes Community Health Project. New texts and designs were then tested with groups of children from across Scotland and from a range of social backgrounds, as well as with parents, teachers and other adults. The content and appearance of the "r u ok?" range as published is a result of this process.

## Distributing the leaflets

The "r u ok?" leaflets are designed to be used either alongside discussion or as support resources to complement one-to-one contact with a child facing a particular difficulty.

## r u worried?, r u sad?, r u friends? and family break-ups

These leaflets may be distributed freely in leaflet racks or as a take-home complement to circle time, lessons or discussions on related topics.



## when someone dies

This leaflet should not be made generally available and must only be used in conjunction with discussion or one-to-one support of individual children, as the subject matter is likely to cause distress to children who are not affected by bereavement. However, it may be appropriate to send the leaflet to the families of children who are coping with a loss.



## Using the leaflets in discussion

Excepting *when someone dies*, the leaflets are most effective when they are used in the context of lessons or discussions rather than being delivered "cold". They may be used as supporting handouts for lessons that touch on the same topics or as materials around which discussions can revolve.

## Further support and information

Each “r u ok?” leaflet carries national telephone numbers and websites appropriate to the age group for further help, support and information. When distributing the leaflets, however, it is important that teachers and group leaders highlight any *local* avenues of support that exist (for example, school counsellors, nurses or others dedicated to the welfare of children).

Further sources of information and support for adults working with or caring for children are listed below.

## Further reading

*Please note: Health Scotland cannot accept responsibility for the quality or accuracy of information provided by organisations other than itself, either in print or via the Internet.*

**Mental Health Media** produces a number of training and information resources on the mental health of children and young people. Catalogue available from Mental Health Media, 356 Holloway Road, London N7 6PA. Tel. 020 7700 8171, or visit [www.mhmedia.com](http://www.mhmedia.com)

**Mind Publications** has an excellent range of materials on all aspects of mental health and mental illness. Catalogue available from Mind Publications, 15–19 Broadway, London E15 4BQ. **MindinfoLine**: 0845 766 0163. Some can be downloaded from [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)

**YoungMinds** publishes factsheets, reports and information booklets on the mental health of children and young people for children and for parents. Catalogue available from YoungMinds, 102–108 Clerkenwell Road, London EC1M 5SA. Tel. 020 7336 8445. Factsheets can also be downloaded from [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)

**The Mental Health Foundation** produces reports, information leaflets and training resources on mental health and especially that of young people. Catalogue available from The Mental Health Foundation, 83 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0HW. Tel. 020 7802 0300. Many of their resources can be downloaded from [www.mentalhealth.org.uk](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk)

**Health Scotland** (formerly HEBS and PHIS) publishes a number of valuable resources on specific mental health issues. These can be obtained or by contacting your local health promotion department or visit [www.hebs.com](http://www.hebs.com)

## Contacts for adults

### Emergencies

Call the police on 999 or textphone 18000. Ask for a “child protection police officer” if you’re worried about abuse.

### Parentline Scotland

Freephone 0808 800 2222 — information, support and advice for parents.

### YoungMinds Parents’ Information Service

Freephone 0800 018 2138 — free, confidential information and advice for any adult with concerns about the mental health of a child or young person.

### The Child Bereavement Trust

Aston House, West Wycombe, High Wycombe, Bucks HP14 3AG. Tel: 01494 446648, [www.childbereavement.org.uk](http://www.childbereavement.org.uk). Training, information and support for people working with children who have been bereaved or adults who have lost a child.

### See Me Scotland

Tel. 0131 624 8945, Scotland’s anti-stigma campaign for mental health. Contact for information and campaign resources.

### Scottish Association of Mental Health

Cumrae House, 15 Carlton House, Glasgow, G5 9JP. Information, support and advice on mental health issues. Telephone information centre 0141 568 7000, open 2–4.30pm Mon–Fri.

### Cruse Bereavement Care

Tel. 0870 167 167 7 — support and advice for anyone coping with the loss of a friend or relative. Call for details of a group near you.

### Stepfamily Scotland

Tel. 0131 225 5800 (11am–5pm Mon, Tue & Wed, 1–5pm Thu, 9–11am Fri). Information and support for those living as part of a stepfamily.

### [www.childcarelink.gov.uk](http://www.childcarelink.gov.uk)

Search for childminders, nurseries and after-school care in your area.

### [www.seemescotland.org](http://www.seemescotland.org)

Information and campaign resources.

## Contacts for children

### Childline

Freephone 0800 1111 — any time — call for advice, information and support on any worry or write to Freepost 1111, Glasgow G1 1BR giving a safe address for a reply.

### Carers' Support Services

Support for people caring for a relative who is unwell or in need of care. Look in *The Phone Book* business section under "carers" for local projects.

### Cruse Bereavement Care

Tel. 0870 167 167 7 — support and advice for anyone coping with the loss of a friend or relative. Call for details of a group near you.

### Stepfamily Scotland

Tel. 0131 225 5800 (11am–5pm Mon, Tue & Wed, 1–5pm Thu, 9–11am Fri). Information and support for those living as part of a stepfamily.

### The Line

Freephone 0800 00 22 00 (3.30–9.30pm Mon–Fri, 2–8pm Sat & Sun). Information, counselling and messages home for young people living away from home.

### Who Cares? Scotland

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

### [www.itsnotyourfault.org.uk](http://www.itsnotyourfault.org.uk)

Information and advice when parents are splitting up.

### [www.headroom.net.au/cubby](http://www.headroom.net.au/cubby)

Excellent site with information and advice on friends, stress and more.

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

Childline website – fact sheets, links, email help, problem pages and more.

### [www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)

Information and advice on bullying.

### [www.antibullying.net](http://www.antibullying.net)

Information, advice and links on bullying.

### [www.rd4u.org.uk](http://www.rd4u.org.uk)

Information and support if someone close has died, message boards and email support.

## MAKE SURE CHILDREN USE THE INTERNET SAFELY!

The Internet can be an excellent source of information and support for people of all ages but children, as in other areas of life, need to be protected:

- take an active interest in their online activities including which sites they visit
- be aware of any relationships they form via chat rooms, message boards and email
- make sure they know never to give out personal details on the Internet
- make sure they know never to agree to meet anyone they've talked to online

For more information for parents on safer Internet usage for children, go to [www.wiseuptothenet.co.uk](http://www.wiseuptothenet.co.uk). Children should visit [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk).

