

## Transition to Higher Education A Resource for School Staff

Teachers and support staff play a vital and diverse role in the lives of the students; education, a role model, building welcoming environments, mentoring and nurturing, listening and provide support in times of need.

This guide considers how staff can best support students, within their dynamic and important role, during the transition to higher education, including: promoting independence and self-discovery, providing emotional support and looking after yourself during this process.

### Preparing for University



#### Resources

Below are helpful resources from 'Student Minds' and 'Studential' to help preparing for university. You may also want to signpost your students to these websites:

- <https://www.studentminds.org.uk/knowbeforeyougo.html>

Know Before You Go is an e-resource that is intended for Year 12-13 students, and educators who support you, as you transition from school/college to university.

This life skills resource helps you to anticipate, identify and navigate situations you will encounter when entering higher education. It contains information on many topics including paying bills, study skills, housemate issues, identity questions and embedded throughout is how to maintain good mental health and seek help as needed.

- <https://www.studentminds.org.uk/transitionintouniversity.html>

This resource is here to help you be successful on campus, focusing on time management, relationships, identity, finances, sexual activity, mental illness, suicide and addictions and more. It also includes tips and strategies for helping students through challenging times and recommendations of where to go to get additional help, if needed.

- <https://www.studentminds.org.uk/supportforafriend.html>

The '[support for a friend](https://www.studentminds.org.uk/supportforafriend.html)' page, although not specific to staff, may contain information that is useful to you.



- <https://www.studential.com/university/freshers-week-guide-2020>

Guides on what to pack for university, cooking, freshers' week, budgeting, council tax and more.

## Tips

Transitioning to higher education can be both an exciting and anxiety provoking time for young people. See some top tips from below:

1. Provide regular opportunities for students to talk to staff/peers about the changes ahead and check-in on how they are feeling.
2. Be alert for signs that students might be struggling, such as anything unusual in the way they normally communicate, an impression of low mood or seeming not to be enjoying things.
3. Encourage them to get involved at the earliest opportunity. If they're nervous about socialising, remind them that everyone will be in the same boat and will all be wanting to make friends. They could look into societies or clubs that they are interested in, social events or make plans with housemates to get to know one another. Making connections and interacting with others can help them feel more part of the university, course or company and it will build a support network around them too.
4. Try to encourage them not to compare their experience with others. There may be a lot of posts placed on social media capturing how they are preparing for the transition or 'Freshers' week'. Encourage them to enjoy their own experiences and not to become worried about what others are doing. Equally, there will be a range of academic abilities and skills amongst their peers and colleagues. Reassure them that they have worked hard to get to where they are and are just as capable as anyone else.
5. Encourage them to keep tutors and supervisors aware if there are any problems or difficulties that they are experiencing. They can help to put support into place or extend deadlines.



## Support at University

Universities have a range of different services to support student wellbeing.

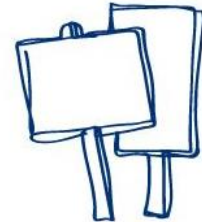
Visit the university's website to find out what specific support is available. This might include counselling, student advice services, support networks as well as other resources. Many Universities have active Student Unions which may also offer support to students.

### ➤ Nightline

<https://www.nightline.ac.uk/about-nightlines/> - A student listening service which is open at night and run by students for students. Every night of term, trained student volunteers answer calls, emails, instant messages, texts and talk in person to their fellow university students about anything that's troubling them. As the Nightline volunteers are fellow students, they can directly empathise with their callers' problems.

## Support in the Local Community

- GP: you will be able to find contact details of your local GP surgery on their website.
- Local Mind: <https://www.mind.org.uk/>
- Victims Support: <https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/>
- Citizens Advice: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/>
- Talking Therapies (IAPT) services



## Useful Wellbeing Resources for Young People

### ➤ Mood Zone

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/> - Mood Zone. It offers practical advice, interactive tools, videos and audio guides to help you feel mentally and emotionally better. Mood self-assessment.

### ➤ Northumberland NHS

<https://web.ntw.nhs.uk/selfhelp/> - This website has free to download self-help leaflets, including resources on anxiety, depression, anger, and self-harm.

### ➤ Get Connected – The Mix

<https://hatw.co.uk/helpline/get-connected/> - The Mix is a support service for under 25s, available 365 days a year. They're there to help you take on any challenge you're facing – from mental health to money, from homelessness to finding a job, from break-ups to drugs.

### ➤ Kooth

<https://www.kooth.com/> - Free, safe and anonymous online support for young people. Monday–Friday, 12pm–10pm

### ➤ Shout

**85258** - A crisis text service. Anxious? Worried? Stressed? Get 24/7 help from our team of Crisis Volunteers.

➤ **Samaritans**

116 123 - Whatever you're going through, you can call us any time, from any phone for free.

[jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org) - Sometimes writing down your thoughts and feelings can help you understand them better. Email response within 24 hours.

## Support for Parents/Carers

In this time of change, parents and carers may find their own mental wellbeing is impacted. There are many sources of information and support available to parents and families:

➤ **Student Minds** - <https://www.studentminds.org.uk/supportforparents.html>

We recognise that for a parent, the transition of a child from school to university, can be a significant challenge. We are often approached by parents looking for further information on how they can best support their child and have captured some of the most frequently asked questions.

➤ **Young Minds**

[Young Minds Parents Helpline](#) is available to offer advice to anyone worried about a child or young person under 25. Available Mon-Fri from 9:30am to 4pm (Freephone) 0800 802 5544

➤ **Family Lives** - <https://www.familylives.org.uk/about/>

We recognise that the best way to support families is to provide professional, non-judgmental support and advice in a way that all members of the family can freely access. We provide this through our helpline, extensive advice on our website, befriending services, and parenting/relationship support groups. Nearly all our services are accessible at no charge to parents and you can contact us 365 days a year.

## Session Plan Ideas (virtual)

- 1) Students to watch the following video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w91c3k5dXAM>

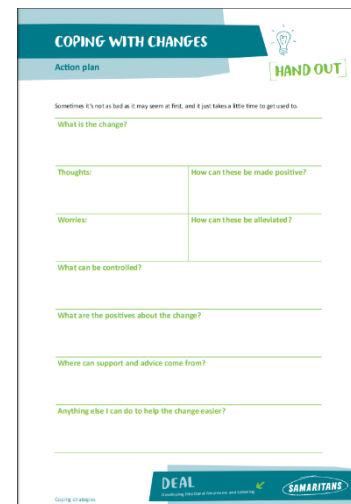
- Follow-up Question:

What can help us prepare for changes and challenges that may lie ahead? Ask students to share ideas.



- 2) Each student to select one upcoming change and make an action plan for how to best prepare for and cope with this change.

[https://media.samaritans.org/documents/DEAL\\_Action\\_Plan\\_handout1.pdf](https://media.samaritans.org/documents/DEAL_Action_Plan_handout1.pdf)



- 3) Students to fill 'coping toolbox' (find on final page) with different strategies to cope with changes, life challenges and to promote wellbeing.

- When adding to your toolbox, consider different aspects of the 5 Ways to Wellbeing and personal self-care strategies.



Please complete our short feedback survey, by following the link below:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=m2PRzsLrNkWUuWHRbLXGI9UxgkzfSKdAvjJRtOXa-zxUMINYS09UWkNETjVLQUY3MUU3VTkzWkxSRy4u>

## Coping Toolbox

