

An important message for Families in Essex

Subject: World Suicide Prevention Day
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The Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service (ECFWS) supports children, families, schools and communities to address current physical and emotional health, social, and financial issues that may affect the healthy development and future outcomes of young people.

Each month, we promote and support specific local, national and international campaigns by providing education, advice and information to other organisations that can improve health and wellbeing for all. Our campaigns can be interactive with real-life practical learning examples, including web links to resources, which can be used in the classroom or at home.

Observed on September 10th, every year, **World Suicide Prevention Day (WSPD)** provides the opportunity for people, across the globe, to raise awareness of suicide and suicide prevention.

Suicide prevention remains a universal challenge. Every year, suicide is among the top 20 leading causes of death globally for people of all ages. It is responsible for over 800,000 deaths, which equates to one suicide every 40 seconds. Every life lost represents someone's partner, child, parent, friend or colleague. For each suicide approximately 135 people suffer intense grief or are otherwise affected.

The good news is that everyone can make a difference – as a member of society, as a child, as a parent, as a friend, as a colleague or as a neighbour. There are many things that you can do daily, and also on World Suicide Prevention Day (WSPD), to prevent suicidal behaviour. You can raise awareness about the issue, educate yourself and others about the causes of suicide and warning signs for suicide, show compassion and care for those who are in distress in your community, question the stigma associated with suicide, suicidal behaviour and mental health problems and share your own experiences.

Family Wellbeing

As part of the International Association of Suicide Prevention's (IASP) campaign for World Suicide Prevention Day, they have developed [Step Closer: A World Suicide Prevention Day Awareness Film](#). Step Closer is a short film with a positive message encouraging connections and that we all have a role to play in working together to prevent suicide.

In addition, they are launching the [Take a Minute](#) initiative. Taking a minute to reach out to someone in your community could change the course of another's life. Evidence suggests that the offer of support and a listening ear are more likely to reduce distress, as opposed to exacerbating it. Therefore, as a family you could pledge to:

- Take a minute to notice what is going on with you, your family, your friends and your colleagues.
- Take a minute to reach out and start a conversation if you notice something is different.
- Take a minute to find out what help is available for both you and others.

If you or anyone you know needs help, advice or support you can direct them to:

Samaritans Call: 116 123

Papyrus (children and young people under the age of 35) Call: 0800 068 4141

Family Wellbeing

Supporting Children and Young People who have experienced loss

Unfortunately many families will experience grief and loss from the bereavement of a loved one at some point in time. Child Bereavement UK has an excellent list of [resources](#) to support bereaved children of all ages, including picture books for very young children to more complex books for young adults.

Young Minds has some [helpful information](#) to support parents of children and young people experiencing loss, including how to talk to your child about loss and information on the different ways children and young people may respond to loss.

When a child or young person is grieving, it is important to give them opportunities to express their feelings. Child Bereavement UK has some helpful [resources](#) to understand and own their feelings. Resources are age appropriate, separated into those under 7, 7-11 and young people.

To find out more information about us and the wide range of services we offer, please visit www.essexfamilywellbeing.co.uk

We are always looking for ways to improve and provide you with information that is beneficial and relevant to you. We value your opinion and would love to hear your feedback on our briefings.

Please send your reply to Essex.Communications@virginicare.co.uk

