

# Police Scotland supports Mental Health Awareness Week 2016



The Police are regularly the first point of contact for people experiencing mental ill health or distress.

Police Scotland is improving how officers work with healthcare partners and mental health charities to provide a person centered approach to such incidents to ensure the person is afforded the most appropriate response without being criminalised, stigmatised or put in a position of fear.

We are also raising awareness in our communities of the avenues of support which can be accessed directly.

As part of this commitment, Police Scotland will be raising awareness both internally and externally of the Mental Health Awareness week which is running between 16th and 22nd May, which is driven by the Mental Health Foundation.

Since their first Mental Health Awareness Week back in 2000, the Mental Health Foundation has helped generate public debates around how anxiety, sleep deprivation and exercise can impact on our mental health. This year the Mental Health Foundation is talking about Relationships.

## Why Relationships?

Police Scotland knows that poor relationships within families can often be connected to behavioral problems, substance misuse and poor mental wellbeing.

As a result of these issues a number of people often come to the attention of the Police as a result of committing criminal

offences. This is one of the reasons that Police Scotland is focused on reducing domestic violence and abuse as it has an adverse effect on the wellbeing of individuals and the family as a whole.

The Mental Health Foundation believes we urgently need a greater focus on the quality of our relationships. We need to understand just how fundamental relationships are to our health and wellbeing.

We cannot flourish as individuals and communities without them. In fact, they are as vital as better-established lifestyle factors, such as eating well, exercising more and stopping smoking.

The Mental Health Foundation are lobbying national governments, public bodies and employers to promote good relationships and to tackle the barriers to forming them, including mounting pressures on work-life balance and the impact of bullying and unhealthy relationships.

But there is a challenge for the public too. The Mental Health Foundation is asking everyone to go the extra mile in prioritising their relationships.

They are calling on people to make a relationship resolution: to assess how much time we actively commit to building and maintaining good relationships, and to ask whether we can invest more in being present with and listening to friends, family and colleagues.

### Give Your Time

Put time aside to nurture important relationships. We can be so busy with school or work that we don't spend time with the important people in our lives.

### Be Present

It can be tempting to check your phone, Facebook messages or

even work emails when with family and friends. Try to be present in the moment and there for your loved ones.

## Listen

Actively listen to what others are saying in a non-judgemental way. Concentrate on their needs in that moment.

## Be Listened To

Share how you are feeling, honestly, and allow yourself to be listened to and supported.

## Recognise Unhealthy Relationships

Are certain relationships making you unhappy? Recognising these can help you move forward and find solutions to issues.

Call 101 for non-emergencies and general enquiries, in an emergency call 999. If you have information about a crime you can also contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.