

# Talking Mental Health: Are you OK?

## Preparing for the conversation:

### Be ready

- Make sure you are in a good headspace and are willing to genuinely listen
- Choose somewhere relatively private and comfortable
- Pick a time that will be good for them to talk, making sure you have enough time to talk properly

### Be aware

- Understand that if you ask if someone is ok, the answer could be: “No, I’m not”?
- Understand that you can’t ‘fix’ someone’s problems
- Be able to accept that they might not be ready to talk, or may prefer to talk to someone else

## Having the conversation:

### 1. Ask



Has someone displayed changes in mood or behaviour? Choose an appropriate time and place, and ask open questions which encourage the person to respond freely with their thoughts and feelings.

### 2. Listen



Listen without judgement to ensure they feel understood, care about and accepted. If they need time to think, sit patiently with the silence.

### 3. Encourage Action



Help work through one small step that might improve the situation. Suggest additional support options. If there is resistance, just reassure you are always ready to have a chat when they are ready.

### 4. Check in

Always follow up – make a joint decision to talk in the near future.

