

Helpful Guides

How to reach out for support when **you need help**

Discover the power of reaching out for support when you need it. This will guide you through the importance of seeking help and provides practical tips for effective communication, fostering a supportive network around you.



Reaching out for help when you need it can be challenging. While it's ultimately up to us to process our own difficulties, sometimes this can be overwhelming, and we need some assistance to do it.

When we do reach out for help, we should try to do it in a way that communicates what we need and how the other person can help.

It's okay to ask for help

Asking for support for a problem can be very difficult. It takes courage, and we should recognise this when we do it or when others come to us for help.

What you should remember is that anyone can need and ask for support. You don't need to have reached a point of crisis in order to reach out for assistance with an issue.

How to ask for support

So how do you actually go about asking for support? There isn't one right way to do so, but these are a few tips to make asking for help easier.

1. Find someone you trust

When you ask for support, it's important to ask someone you trust. This is particularly true when you're dealing with a complex issue that requires sensitivity and tact to manage. For example, you could talk to:

- A parent, sibling or another family member
- A friend
- A colleague
- A teacher, lecturer or other education staff (if applicable)
- A healthcare professional, like a doctor or nurse

Remember that not everyone will be able to deal with every problem in the same way. For example, some situations are better handled by a healthcare professional than a friend, but we understand this is not always possible.

However, it's better to reach out to someone trusted than no one at all!

2. Prepare what you're going to say

As with any potentially tricky conversation or speech, it can help to think about what you will say before you say it. This way, you can pick out important bits of information and decide what you're comfortable sharing.

For example, if you're asking for help with stress, you might think about what's causing the stress and things that might help alleviate it.

If you feel unable to prepare mentally beforehand, that's okay! Instead, physically prepare yourself by deep breathing and finding a time that's least stressful for you and the person you're asking.

3. Identify what support you need

Sometimes this isn't possible, but it helps to know what kind of support you need. This is particularly true when asking friends or family – or any non-professional – for help. If you're not sure exactly what support you need, don't worry. However, if you can start to work it out, it can help you access this support more quickly.

When visiting a GP or healthcare professional for a complex issue, you might not be aware of all available support. In this case, be open to advice from your health provider and follow up on their recommendations.

4. Take your time

You might not always ask for support on your first try, and that's perfectly fine. Asking for help with any issue, particularly if it's very personal, can make you feel vulnerable.

Generally, we try to avoid vulnerability, even when necessary, so it might take you a few tries to get the words out. If it does, remember that this is perfectly normal. Take your time, find an appropriate time for this conversation, and remember that you're taking a positive step toward improving your mental health.

For more information on accessing support and looking after your mental health, don't hesitate to get in touch with the Fircroft Trust.

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Visit thefircrofttrust.org and see how our Specialist Services can benefit you.

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