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## Talking through problems

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### Summary

- Talking about your problems can release pent-up feelings.
  - Talking to someone outside of the situation may help you to find a solution to the problem.
  - If you don't think you can discuss the problem with anyone you know, you can call a confidential telephone counselling service.
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It can be hard to talk to people about how you feel. You may be worried that they won't take your feelings seriously. You may also be worried about what will happen after you tell them your problems.

If you think you don't know anyone who will listen, you can call a confidential counselling service. **Kids Helpline** (Tel. **1800 551 800**) and **Lifeline** (Tel. **13 11 14**) are telephone counselling services that are available 24 hours a day.

### Talk to someone you trust

Talking to someone you trust about something upsetting may help you to:

- sort through the problem
- see the situation more clearly
- look at the problem in a new or different way
- release built-up tension – this can help you to gain new insight into the situation that is causing the problem
- find out that you are not alone – you may find that many other people share your feelings
- identify options or solutions you hadn't thought of before.

### Don't keep your problems to yourself

If you don't talk about your problems, you may find your pent-up tensions or feelings burst out in a way that is embarrassing or inappropriate. You might also find that things may get worse if you don't try to get on top of them straight away.

### Finding the right person to talk to

An important first step is deciding who you want to talk to. You need to feel that you can trust the person you are talking to.

There are counsellors who specialise in talking to young people or families. They can provide counselling in specialty areas, including:

- mental health
- alcohol and other drugs
- pregnancy
- family issues
- schooling and careers
- abuse (including physical, sexual or emotional abuse).

### Other ways to deal with your feelings

It is important to find ways to express your feelings. This can help you to release built-up tensions and make better decisions. There are a number of ways you can express how you feel, including:

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- **set aside some time** for yourself, even if it is just ten minutes
- **write about how you feel** – this can be a useful way to explore your feelings. Some people keep diaries, others just write down whatever comes into their head. You may want to write a story about whatever is bothering you
- **walk away** from situations that might stress you out or make you angry
- **self-talk** – consciously change negative thought patterns to help you look at things in a more positive light
- **relaxation** is one way to focus your thoughts and consider the big picture. Is your stressful situation worth getting stressed about? Will it matter in the long run?
- **play sport** – sport gives you plenty of chances to get rid of pent up energy
- **be creative** – draw or paint; make a collage
- **use music** – singing, playing or listening to music (or just shouting) can all help. Dance to music at home, or go out and dance as much as you like.

### Where to get help

- A counsellor (for example, at your school or work)
- A social worker (at a community health centre)
- **Kids Helpline** Tel. **1800 55 1800**
- **Lifeline** Tel. **13 11 14**

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