

WHAT ARE SEMH NEEDS (Social Emotional Mental Health Needs)?

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SEMH needs are a type of special educational need where a child communicates through behaviour in response to unmet social, emotional or mental health needs.

Children with SEMH needs often have difficulties in managing their emotions or their behaviour. They can show inappropriate responses to their emotions. They can feel scared, anxious and misunderstood.

It is estimated that around 150,000 children in mainstream and special schools are experiencing SEMH challenges.

Some behaviours children with SEMH needs might display could be –



- Anger
- Frustration
- Verbal or physical aggression
- Lashing out
- Self-harming
- Withdrawing
- Possible law-breaking such as stealing or vandalism

Some tips for working with children who have SEMH needs



- Try to slowly build a relationship of trust
- Provide clear and fair boundaries and stick to them
- Help the child to identify their own challenges and give them strategies to develop self-responsibility
- Make every day a fresh start
- Be consistent and say what you mean

For more tips click [here](#).

Which schools can cater for SEMH needs?



Children with SEMH needs can be supported in both mainstream and special schools through the EHCP (Education Health & Care Plan) process. The process for accessing support is the same as for any child with special needs. To read more about schools and the special needs process click [here](#).

If you need support in getting a specialist independent placement for an autistic child or young adult, we can help. Click below for our Autism Schools and Colleges Placement Support Service.
