



OSCAR KILO
Family Life

Advice on mental health

**If you have a family member
or friend working in policing**

Policing is a stressful job, often exposing police officers and staff to situations and events that most of us would never want to see.

As with any kind of work, there can be good and bad days. But if you work in policing, a bad day can mean attending a sudden death, a fatal traffic collision or carrying out an investigation into horrific abuse, all of which can take its toll.

On top of this, policing requires a 24/7 presence, meaning your friend or family member can work long hours, and a variety of shift patterns that can disturb social and home life.





You may notice changes to your family member or friend such as:

- › Becoming subdued, distant**
- › Appearing angry or sad**
- › Having trouble sleeping**
- › Spending less time socialising**

These are understandable responses to what can be a difficult job. For the majority of those working in policing, they will pass without issue.



For you, as someone who is close to them, it can feel confusing when someone's behaviour changes and you might not understand why, however, it is important to be supportive and understand that for many officers it is important to keep work and home separate.

There are a number of things that might be useful for both of you:

- › Your family member or friend might be more comfortable talking to colleagues, encourage them to do so**
- › There will be support available in their force – encourage them to find out what kind of help they can access (this will usually be through occupational health as the first port of call)**
- › If they want to talk, listen without judgement, don't pressure them to share details**
- › Encourage healthy coping strategies such as exercise, hobbies and healthy eating**
- › Plan fun and/or relaxing things such as days out or holidays together**



“Supporting the mental health of those working in policing is critical. There is help available to officers and staff within forces, numerous police charities and of course the NHS. Recognising there’s an issue is the vital first step. It’s sometimes family members who realise there may be an issue and we recognise they need to be well informed about the pathways which are out there so they can encourage their loved ones to seek help.”

Andy Rhodes, Director of the National Police Wellbeing Service.

You also need to consider your own mental health and not take on too much. If you're concerned about your friend/partner it might be helpful to speak to one of the organisations listed [here](#) to find targeted, professional advice for those who work in policing or care for those who do.





College of
Policing



**The National Police
Wellbeing Service**

If you have a family member or close friend who works in the police,
we're here for you too. It's a role that throws up unique challenges
and this can have a wider impact on the wellbeing of families.

You'll find more resources and support
for families and friends on our website:



www.oscarkilo.org.uk/family-life