

Relate NI



**Supporting Workplace
Relationships**

About Relate NI

This E-Book is an introduction to Relationship Support for managers and decision makers within organisations, and those who oversee staff wellbeing, many of which have become more over the pandemic period about the challenges facing employees in managing healthy relationships and work.

Relate NI have been supporting employers from various industries through the pandemic through the development and delivery of workplace based seminars and programmes to support healthy relationships.

In the resource, we make the case that relationships are central to an effective workforce, and for this reason, organisations should have a strong interest in how they can support employee relationships as a core organisational sustainability issue.

Relate NI is passionate about enabling good quality relationships and that's why our mission is to make expert information and support for healthy relationships available to everyone. Through our experience of working with parents and children throughout Northern Ireland over 75 years, we've come to understand that relationships not only give our lives meaning, they are of vital importance to our happiness.

For the last 75 years, we have been supporting the health and wellbeing of children & young people, individuals, couples, and families through our therapeutic services because we know how important our relationships are to our health and wellbeing.

A photograph of two young women sitting on a couch, laughing heartily. The woman on the left is wearing a white t-shirt and has her head tilted back. The woman on the right is wearing a red top and has her hands clasped near her face. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a living room setting.

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87% of people told us that relationship support helped to improve their well-being

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Relationships: The Golden Threads for our Well-Being

Deloitte estimates that poor mental health, worsened by lack of dependable relationships costs UK employers up to £45 billion per year. [1]

Research shows us that healthy relationships, such as those that families, friends and colleagues can provide, play a critical role in developing resilience and performance.

Not only do relationships give our lives meaning, but they are integral to our physical, mental and emotional health & well-being - just as important to our health as sleeping, diet and exercise.

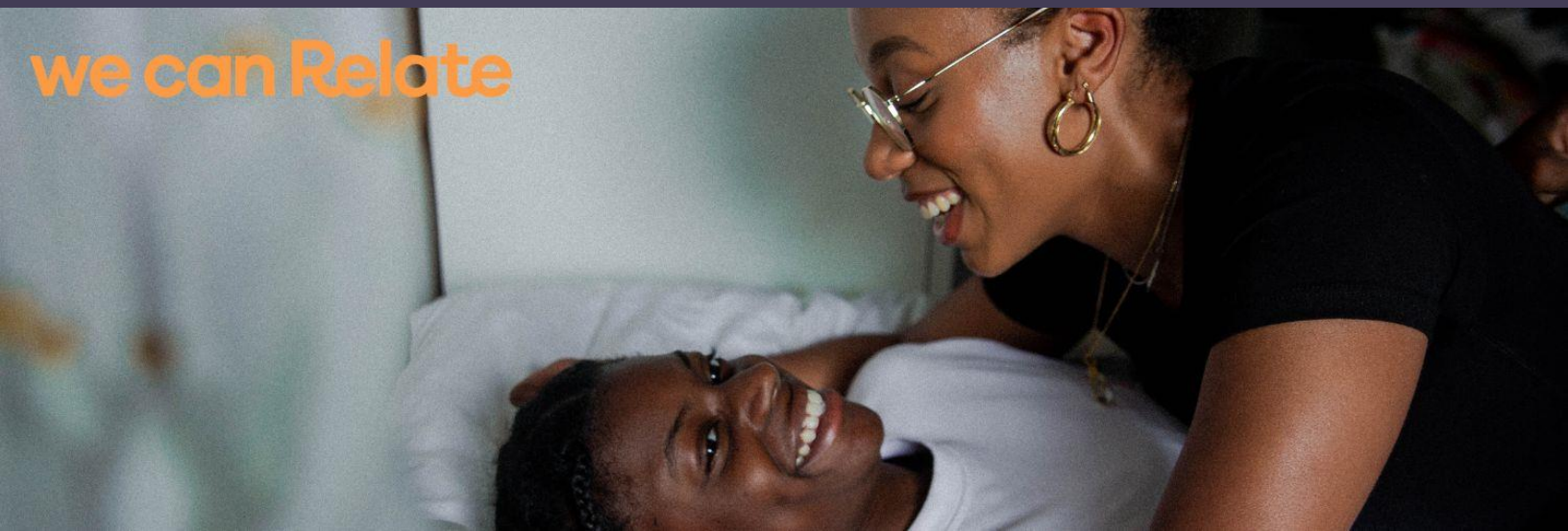
In fact, Healthy Relationships can act as a crucial protective factor which can help us recover from illness and even stop us from getting sick in the first place!

In this way, **healthy relationships support effective workers**. For this reason, organisations should have a strong interest in how they can support employee relationships, both within the workplace and at home, as a core organisational sustainability issue.

In many organisations however, policies and procedures often fail to cater for the link between what is happening in employees lives – particularly in their family lives – and employee performance.

Furthermore, Workers who are struggling with their out of work relationships, can carry some of their built up frustrations and feelings into workplace relationships, which can have a knock on effect on team cohesiveness, productivity and retention – so much so that 41% of UK workers are considering leaving their current employers within the next year. [2]

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Family Relationships – A Sustainability Issue

Supporting employees to sustain healthy family relationships is central to good corporate citizenship.

Employers tend to assume all employees family lives are similar, and that they do not change drastically from when they first commenced employment. Understanding how employees' families are impacted by work is the first step to creating family friendly working practices.

Job roles which are designed to be flexible, and fit around diverse family lives allow more people to enter and remain in the job market. This is particularly important at the moment as many industries struggle with attracting and retaining quality personnel.

A 2020 Survey by Fastn which surveyed 3000 UK employees after 1 year of employment found the following;

- 70% of respondents said their family situation changed during the period of their current employment.
- Only 19% felt their employers recognised this change.
- 42% of young people anticipate work goals will be major impediments to forming long-term, committed relationships.
- Yet 79% think being in lasting and fulfilling relationships is as important or more important to their futures than their working life.
- 35% of employee-parents report facing obstacles to their parenting because of work.
- 69% said a future employers track record on supporting families to thrive would be important to them. [3]



“Following my separation, I was able to attend a number of funded counselling sessions through an employee assistance program at work, this has helped me navigate my separation better so that I could be there for my children and still remain at work.”

Relationships In (& Out) of the Workplace



Remote working has become commonplace in many organisations and employees can experience this very differently. For some, the flexibility that remote working allows can mean more time with their families and improved family relationships. As discussed above, this can have positive effects on well-being and productivity.

For others, the blended workplace can mean the loss of key support structures and they may experience loneliness and isolation as a result. Consider how this may be exacerbated during the festive/winter season, and how you may be able to combat it.

We can go weeks or months without seeing colleagues, suppliers or clients and when issues arise, the lack of consistent relationships can mean issues become exacerbated. As teams change, it may become that we have never met people who we work with every day.

Miscommunication in particular can severely impact a relationship, and this is a particular workplace hazard where we use email and other forms of digital communication, which sometimes leads to a loss of nuance. Christmas parties and other social events can be a great way to foster relationship building within your team, but they can also be a risk to further deteriorating relationships when not managed appropriately.

Whether your team is working on site or at home, supporting teams to communicate effectively is key to supporting a positive working environment.

How Relate NI can help Relieve The Pressure

Support Employees Through The Cost of Living Crisis & Christmas

Relate NI have launched a new campaign to Relieve the Pressure on individuals, couples, families, children & young people this Winter.

Our website has a range of helpful resources to help people communicate effectively, manage expectations around Christmas and unlock the protective power of their relationships to get through the winter.

Because you signed up to download this e-book, we will send you our weekly winter campaign resources for the duration of the campaign – ending in mid January.

If you are somebody who supports colleague well-being as part of your role, why not utilise these within your staff intranet or internal comms? If you [get in touch with us](#) we would be happy to see how we can provide additional resources and support to you and your colleagues.

[Visit the campaign webpage here for the full suite of resources.](#)

Relate NI is also looking for new strategic partnership opportunities

As mentioned above, relationship support is an effective means of supporting people to sustain healthy relationships and enjoy the well-being benefits which that brings.

Last year we supported almost 23,000 people improve their lives through healthy relationships.

However, 425,000 people in NI alone require relationship support.

We are currently only helping 1 in 20.

We are keen to work with organisations on projects and schemes which can help us support more people to develop healthy relationships.

As part of this, we can provide workplace wellbeing support to organisations and employees.

To start a beautiful new relationship with us, email caramcveigh@relateni.org

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The information provided in this book is aimed at supporting you to **Relieve the Pressure** on your colleagues and employees during the festive season,
and consider how you may be able to support relationships more long term.

Can you support us to help more individuals & families across NI with relationship support?

[Find out 6 ways you can support us here](#)

If you would benefit from speaking to one of our trained counsellors, contact us at:

028 90323454
office@relateni.org

Relate NI Services:

- Adult Relationship Counselling for Individuals Or Couples
- Family Counselling
- Relate Kids
- Relate Teen
- Sex Therapy
- Relationship MOT

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Reference List

[1] Deloitte (2021) Poor Mental Health Costs UK Employers Up To £45 Billion A Year accessed via <https://www2.deloitte.com/uk/en/pages/press-releases/articles/poor-mental-health-costs-uk-employers-up-to-pound-45-billion-a-year.html> [28/11/2022]

[2] Reeds [2022] One In Four UK Workers Considering Leaving Their Jobs access via <https://hrnews.co.uk/one-in-four-uk-workers-considering-leaving-their-job/> [29/11/2022]

[3] Fastn [2022] Good for Business: Good for families. Supporting families to thrive.

www.relateni.org/relieve-the-pressure

@RelateNI on socials



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88% of attendees
would recommend
Relate NI to a
friend or colleague

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