

How can we actively minimise debt and keep financially savvy?

Source 1: From the government's money advice website:

What is a debt consolidation loan?

If you've got lots of different debts and you're struggling to keep up with repayments, you can merge them together into one loan to lower your monthly payments. You borrow enough money to pay off all your current debts and owe money to just one lender. There are two types of debt consolidation loan:

- Unsecured - where the lender has no claim on your other financial assets if you miss repayments
- Secured - where the amount you've borrowed is secured against an asset, usually your home. If you miss repayments, you could lose your home

Source 2: From Martin Lewis' money advice website:

Should I take out a student loan?

With headlines shouting about £50,000 student debt and that getting bigger as living loans increase in 2016, it's safe to say many students and parents are scared by this huge sum - and worry about how they'll ever repay it.

But in essence that fear is misplaced. That's because the price tag of university is mostly irrelevant. What matters in practical terms is how much you have to repay - and that's a completely separate number from the total amount of tuition fees, maintenance loan and interest, because it all depends on what you would pay.

What you repay solely depends on what you earn after university. In effect this is, financially at least, a 'no win, no fee' education. Those who earn a lot after graduating or leaving university will repay a lot. Those who don't gain too much financially from going to university will repay little or nothing. Full-time students only need to start repaying these at the earliest in the April AFTER they graduate (or leave), no matter how long their course is.

Source 3: Short term loan pop-up advertisement:



Source 4: 'Wonga in numbers' (image from the Daily Mail):



5,853 per cent annual interest rate charged by Wonga

£474 is the total cost of a £400 loan that is repaid after 17 days

3.8m loans approved by Wonga last year

BY NUMBERS

£15 net profit made by the firm on each loan

36 per cent increase in profit over the past year

55.5 per cent of Wonga customers are single

TV ad: Wonga's Betty

Source 5: From the national debt advice website:

How we can help you

National Debtline is a debt advice charity run by the **Money Advice Trust**. We are a free and confidential debt advice service for people in England, Wales and Scotland. We have helped millions of people deal with their debts. Our team of expert debt advisers care about improving your situation and will help you to take control of your debts.

On this site you will find all you need to get started on your debt free journey. There are guides, fact sheets, budgeting tools and sample letters to help you write to your creditors. You can also get debt advice by using our webchat service, emailing us or by calling our helpline.

Our debt advisers come from a variety of different backgrounds. All of them are dedicated to helping you tackle your debts.

"Nine out of ten people who get free debt advice from us say they feel more confident in tackling their debts and managing their money as a result."

Source 6: From the Samaritan's website:

At Samaritans, we're aware that people are feeling under increasing pressure over money. At the start of the current financial crisis in 2008, one in 10 of our calls was about money, debt and related issues. Since then, this figure has risen to one in six.

Although we know that worries about debt or the threat of losing a home can cause stress and depression, it's important to understand that suicide is complex, and it is seldom the result of a single factor. It is likely to have several inter-related causes.

For example, years of worry over money and debt can easily take a toll on relationships with family and friends. Relationship breakdown is itself a major cause of depression and suicidal feelings. It is clear that however complex a person's issues might be, there is an undeniable link between financial worries and poor mental health