

Issue 5:
April 2021

'Kind Minds' Newsletter

Children and young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing - Staffordshire

This newsletter has been produced by several partner organisations across Staffordshire, with the aim of pulling together useful information about children & young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing.

We plan to produce a newsletter every half-term and **we would welcome your thoughts on the types of information that would be most useful to you.** Please contact louise.andrews-gee@staffordshire.gov.uk

DFE Wellbeing for Education Return Project: Phase 2 UPDATE

The national 'Wellbeing for Education Return' project, funded by the Department for Education (DfE) and Department of Health & Social Care (DHSC), in partnership with Public Health England (PHE) and NHS England & Improvement (NHSE&I) was developed to support the wellbeing of pupils/ students as they returned to schools/ colleges in September 2020.



The project involved adapting national training materials to suit local contexts, identifying 'local experts' to deliver the adapted training package (webinars) to all state-funded schools in Staffordshire, and providing ongoing support to state-funded setting on promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing until March 2021.

The delivery of the final webinars was completed during January 2021, with 66% of delegate places attended. [Two interactive pathways for Children & Young People's Mental Health Support](#) in Staffordshire were developed; one each for the north and south of the county to align with the two mental health NHS trusts.

Some examples of feedback from the delegates that attended the webinars in November 2020 and January 2021 include:

-I found it useful. The map (CYP MH Support pathway) was very useful and I like the Group Problem Solving model and am thinking of ways to implement this into staff training and additional CPD tasks after school'

-'Very informative and great resources and ideas suggested'.

-'I also think the section of staff wellbeing is very important and we will take on board some of the strategies to reduce the stress for our staff'.

Future topics for phase 2 of the project include 'staff wellbeing' and 'emotional wellbeing of under 5's'.

Further work will commence in April 2020 to progress Phase 2 of the project.

Please contact karen.coker@staffordshire.gov.uk if you would like to be part of the discussions around phase 2 of the project, which will focus on staff wellbeing (all phases of education) and the emotional wellbeing of under 5s.

Staffordshire Emotional Health and Wellbeing Support's new digital platform – Silver Cloud

Action for Children are excited to offer our **new self-help option** to our digital platform Silver Cloud. The platform will enable you to access a programme full of Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) techniques for anxiety and depression for young people aged 16+ and for parent/carers of younger children.

It allows people to complete therapy in their own time, at a time and pace that suits them. We offer the following programmes to help parent/carer work through a number of modules which will help them to support and respond to children and young people who are anxious:

- Parenting your Anxious Child
- Parenting your Anxious Teen

The following programmes are available to young people aged 16+

- Space from Stress
- Space for Resilience
- Space from Anxiety
- Space for Positive Body Image



All the programmes are designed to help improve and maintain wellbeing by addressing underlying issues that can have a negative impact on feelings.

If you are unsure what programme might suit, or if you need one at all, you can take a short quiz when signing up to find out.

Use the following link to sign up: <https://actionforchildren.silvercloudhealth.com/signup/>

NEW MPFT Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) Website

The Midlands Partnership Foundation Trust has a new CAMHS website!



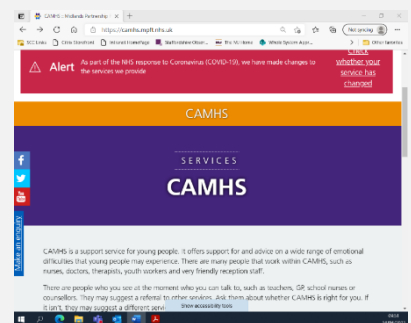
The new website has pages for [young people](#) to find more information about mental health and emotional wellbeing. There are pages for [parents and carers](#) with resources and information to help support their child or young person experiencing difficulties/ unhelpful emotions. There is also a page for [professionals](#), with the latest referral forms for all CAMHS services across East and West Staffordshire.

The new website also includes a [new self-referral pathway](#), so that young people wanting to refer into mental health services can do that themselves.

It also includes a [youth participation page](#). Youth participation actively involves young people in decision making processes on issues that affect them. The youth participation page is where young people can find out all about youth participation, find sign-up forms and upcoming events.

Find out more about the CAMHS services across East and West Staffordshire at the NEW website, here:

<https://camhs.mpft.nhs.uk>





Spotlight on.... HOPE project at Springcroft Primary School



We at [Springcroft Primary School](#), Blythe Bridge, believe that children's wellbeing and mental health is always a priority. After all, if we are not emotionally or mentally well, we are unable to learn and flourish.

We take a **whole-school approach** to mental health and emotional wellbeing. Not only do we support mental health and emotional wellbeing within our PHSE/ RSE Curriculum (taught twice weekly in all year groups) but we have proudly been part of the **HOPE project** for five years.

HOPE stands for **H**elping **O**ur **P**upils **E**motions. It is a school emotional wellbeing service, supporting children, young people and their families and offering sign posting, self-help guidance, early intervention and promoting a whole-school approach for emotional wellbeing.

HOPE provides the **support and space for listening and talking** to a child or young person and can help with a range of issues, including: any aspect of family life affecting a child's emotional wellbeing; school refusal; bullying; anxiety; low self-esteem; and, bereavement.

At Springcroft Primary School we have a **team supporting children** including the Head Teacher, Special Needs Co-ordinator (SENDCo) and the HOPE team including the HOPE mentor (Wellbeing Lead). We are now able to offer 1:1 support, nurture groups supporting self-esteem and anxiety, and a weekly 'remembering club' bereavement group.

There are **other services that link with HOPE** such as educational psychology, school nurses, Local Support teams (LST) and child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS). Further information including useful resources and signposting can be found on the HOPE page within our school webpage, here: www.springcroft.staffs.sch.uk

At Springcroft Primary School we have several ways a child can **access the HOPE project**. Typically, a parent/ carer or member of staff will contact the Head Teacher or Wellbeing Lead with any concerns, who will then co-ordinate the most appropriate person or service to help. Children can also self-refer using our 'Listening Ear' approach or through the 'Worry Monster' in EYFS and KS1.

The HOPE project and our whole-school approach is making a noticeable difference at Springcroft Primary School. By having a **compassionate listening ear**, we can do so much without 'medicalising' the child and their troubles. Since starting the project we have only needed to make one referral to CAMHS. More often, a **brief, timely and simple intervention** makes a huge difference to a child's and their family's lives.

Here are some examples of what parents have recently told us:



- *'I have noticed a drastic change in the short time you have been speaking with him. He is a lot happier'.*
- *'HOPE' has given my child chance to open up and talk about his feelings with others in a similar situation'.*
- *'I was worried that my child would have to go through a lengthy mental health referral process. The HOPE project worked with my son's anxieties and within four weeks we started to notice a change....no further referrals needed'.*

For more information about the HOPE project, please contact Rachel Raynor (HOPE leader) at hopeproject2016@outlook.com or watch this short video [HOPE intro to CYP - YouTube](#).

With thanks to by Emma Gleave (Emotional Wellbeing Lead/ HOPE mentor), Springcroft Primary School. Contact hope@springcroft.staffs.sch.uk

Department for Education (DfE) Mental Health Pilot for Looked After Children

Here in Staffordshire County Council (SCC) we have spent the last two years working closely with the DfE, Anna Freud Centre, their partners and also nine other local authority pilot sites across England to develop an understanding of how we could more effectively support the emotional and mental health of our children who are looked after.

Locally we took a social work led approach to the pilot requirements, driven forward by our Virtual Mental Health Lead (VMHL) Danny Mulligan and underpinned by the [mentalizing approach](#) endorsed by a consortium of national mental health partners. A small cohort of children were identified to partake in the pilot, once their agreement had been sought of course.

The pilot has introduced us to new '[practice tools](#)' that have enabled our practitioners to better understand the experiences of some of our children, realise how these can effect day to day life and to link directly to their emotions, thoughts, and actions. Conversations and direct work with children have then gone on to inform the development of a 'wellbeing passport' for children. These personal documents are intended to be owned by the child and entirely reflective of their voice, informed by the conversations that have taken place and validated by our VMHL. An example of one of the four passport designs developed for printed or digital use can be found below:

It is without doubt that throughout the life of the pilot there have been some challenges to overcome, the global pandemic being just one to note! That said, as we have seen the development of the wellbeing passports emerge there has been benefit for the children, foster carers, social workers and personal advisers that have been involved. These passports are incredibly moving but also provide a real insight from a child's perspective. We thought sharing their views might be the best way to share this with you....

Children's feedback:

- "I've enjoyed doing my passport".
- "Doing this has helped me talk about my mental health".
- "I like the look of the passports"
- "Can the name be changed to 'the listening passport'? If so, I want credibility for this!!!".

Practitioner feedback:

- "It's given me a deeper perspective."
- "It gave me a way to talk to him about what he really wants for the future."

- *“It has given my statutory visits a purpose and has helped me think about care planning specifically.”*
- *“It’s given me more confidence to work with mental health issues.”*

As already touched upon, the VMHL role has been instrumental in delivering training around the mentalizing approach, has been the driving force behind delivery but has most importantly been the guide for practitioners through their journey in supporting children to be part of this. Here are Danny’s thoughts and reflections on the Staffordshire pilot experience:

“It has been a pleasure to be involved with this piece of work and we have learnt so much. I’m particularly grateful for those involved who have given their time and energy despite some real challenges. I believe the wellbeing passports are a powerful tool to help children explore their mental health and emotional wellbeing with the added advantage of them owning it. For social care workers it is a valuable direct work resource helping them feel more confident to work with mental health.

I hope the learning from this pilot improves the way children’s mental health is assessed and more importantly ensures the mental health needs of children in our care are linked to wider systems of support.”

Echoing the VMHL’s comments, and on a final note we’d like to say a huge thank you to each person who has been involved in the pilot here in Staffordshire.

Our reflections and learning to date have been shared with the DfE, along with other sites involved. We therefore eagerly await their final report in the autumn of this year and hope that this might begin to outline how this work could become embedded in the future.

With thanks to Danny Mulligan (VMHL) and Sarah Newton (Commissioning Officer), Staffordshire County Council.

April is Stress Awareness Month

Stress is something we will all experience in our lives. At the moment in particular, as we welcome pupils back to school, we are all acutely aware of its impact on our lives.



There are any number of reasons why we may feel under pressure at different times. This pressure can sometimes be helpful, keeping us focussed and helping us complete tasks. However, stress becomes a problem when we are unable to cope with these pressures and become overwhelmed.

April is Stress Awareness Month, and [Mentally Healthy Schools](#) have put together a toolkit with a number of resources for pupils and staff, to help teachers, children and young people to cope when stress becomes overwhelming.

Download the Stress Awareness Month toolkit from Mentally Healthy Schools, here: [Stress Awareness Month toolkit : Mentally Healthy Schools](#)



Read, Talk, Share: Supporting mental health during Covid-19 recovery

The Reading Agency's new [Read, Talk, Share campaign](#) is promoting wellbeing the proven power of reading during the Covid-19 pandemic.

This campaign expands The Reading Agency's successful [Reading Well](#) and [Reading Friends](#) programmes, with the charity's work to tackle loneliness and support mental health and wellbeing including a roll-out of books from our reading lists to support [adult](#), [young people](#) and [children's](#) mental health.

[Reading Well](#) provides helpful reading to support health and wellbeing for readers for all ages. The books are selected and recommended by leading health bodies and people living with the conditions covered.

You can borrow books from the Reading Well collections as e-books and audiobooks, **free** of charge from your local library. You can find your local library at the [Staffordshire County Council](#) website and access the books electronically.



Public Health England

PHE School Zone Resources: New bite-sized wellbeing resources

It is important that young people know how to deal with different emotions, which is why [PHE School Zone](#) have created two new bite-sized curriculum-linked activities to support 11-16 year-olds in dealing with worry and unhelpful thoughts.

These short, flexible resources are underpinned by the **five ways to wellbeing** and cover the mental wellbeing strand in **Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education**.

These resources include:

- Two new bite-sized curriculum-linked activities to support young people to deal with [worry](#) and [unhelpful thoughts](#).
- New resources help young people to build and maintain good connections, at a time when they need it most.
- A [Mind Plan](#) for teachers to look after their own wellbeing.



Anna Freud
National Centre for
Children and Families

Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families: Mentally Healthy Schools: NEW WEBSITE

A new website, [Mentally Healthy Schools](#), has been developed so that everyone working in schools and further education settings can find resources they need to promote mental health, including:

- [Lesson plans](#), [assembly plans](#) and other useful resources
- [Advice](#) on how to encourage children and young people to speak openly about mental health
- Top tips on understanding and responding to [mental health needs](#)
- Information in potential [risks](#) to children and young people's mental health
- Guidance and tools for developing a [whole-school approach](#) to mental health, including staff wellbeing.

All information, guidance and resources on [Mentally Healthy Schools](#) has been quality assured by experts, meaning that all the resources you need are at your fingertips, and you know you can trust them.

Please visit www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk.

Training Opportunities

Supportive courses and family learning (learn with your child)



[Acorn Training](#) offer courses including 'big confidence little anxiety', 'supporting your children to catch up in school', 'creative craft and play with your children' and 'baby massage'. There are also employability courses and help with finding work.

Find out more and view the adult spring and summer courses 2021 catalogue at www.acorntraining.co.uk

Staffordshire Community Learning Service



[Staffordshire Community Learning Service](#) has a range of adult learning courses available throughout 2021. The courses are available for Staffordshire residents aged 19 or over. There are a range of easy to access online courses. There are courses available to support health and wellbeing, family learning, and digital skills including internet safety.

Visit the website at <https://staffordshirecommunitylearning.org.uk>

Coping with Changes: Social-Emotional Learning Through Play



Learn how to provide playful and engaging social emotional learning (SEL) support to children affected by Covid-19 disruption.

The LEGO Foundation

This programme will introduce you to mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) and SEL strategies, explore stress management strategies that will support children and consider the potential long-term effects of crises on a child's social, emotional and cognitive development.

It is free, takes about nine weeks to complete, with two hours study per week (the learner can complete this at their own pace), and no previous qualifications are required. Visit <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/coping-with-changes> for more information and to enrol.

Psychological First Aid: Supporting Children and Young People



[Public Health England](#) has launched a new Psychological First Aid e-learning on supporting children and young people in emergency and crisis situations via the [Future Learn](#) platform. This programme is aimed at professionals (including education staff), volunteers and members of the public interested in supporting the psychological wellbeing of children and young people during and after the pandemic and other potentially traumatic or stressful incidents.

It is free, takes about three hours to complete (split into three sessions that the learner can complete at their own pace) and no previous qualifications are required. Visit <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/psychological-first-aid-for-children-and-young-people> for more information and to enrol.

Young People and Their Mental Health

[Future Learn](#) offer an introductory course, designed for young people aged 14+, introducing the concept of mental health and discussing why young people are more vulnerable to mental health concerns.



Learn about a range of mental health concerns, including depression, anxiety, eating disorders, autism, ADHD, substance abuse, antisocial behaviour and psychosis.

It is free, takes about ten hours to complete (split into five sessions that the learner can complete at their own pace) and no previous qualifications are required. Visit <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/young-people-mental-health> for more information and to enrol.

Feeling confused? Below is a summary of who can access which service (of those featured above):

CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health support)	C&YP up to the age of 18. Self-referrals may be made by C&YP and parents / carers (where available) or by GPs, school nurses, schools and teachers, local support teams and counselling services.
Emotional Health & Wellbeing Service (Action for Children)	C&YP with mild to moderate emotional / behavioural difficulties around emotional wellbeing C&YP aged 5-18 (up to 25 for those with EHCPs / 'looked after' within Staffordshire, excl. Stoke-on-Trent)
Reading Well and Shelf Help – local libraries	Reading Well is for any child aged 7-11 years. Shelf Help is for any C&YP aged 13-18 years. Available at libraries within Staffordshire.

