

Issue 8:  
Nov 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 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](mailto:louise.andrews-gee@staffordshire.gov.uk)

## Update: Network Meetings for Senior Mental Health Leads in Schools

Members of the Integrated Care System (ICS) Children and Young People's Mental Health System Improvement Board; including Staffordshire County Council, Stoke-on-Trent City Council, the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), the Midlands Partnerships NHS Foundation Trust, North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust and Action for Children arranged a number of virtual meetings for **Senior Mental Health Leads** (SMHLs) in schools this Autumn term.



Representatives from these organisations and around **40 SMHLs** attended the virtual network meetings for SMHLs in North Staffordshire (including Stoke-on-Trent) and South Staffordshire during September and October.

The virtual network meetings provided the opportunity to meet representatives from the ICS, and for SMHLs to come together and share information, resources and ask questions. The network meetings for SMHLs are building on the success of the Kind Minds newsletter and existing networks, such as the Designated Safeguarding Leads in schools.

With such a lot of information available around children and young people's mental health, the first virtual network meetings looked at Mental Health Support Teams in Schools and the development of a Single Point of Access to mental health services (South Staffordshire). The groups also discussed the Kind Minds newsletter and the [DfE-funded Senior Mental Health](#) training opportunities, currently available.

**The SMHL's who attended the first meetings were universal in agreement that these network meetings will be very useful going forward, so they will be held virtually on a termly basis.**

*If you or a representative would like to receive the latest information about the network meetings for SMHLs, attend future network meetings or to shape content for future for network meetings, please email [louise.andrews-gee@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:louise.andrews-gee@staffordshire.gov.uk) with your name and school setting.*

## Update: South Staffordshire Mental Health Support Teams (MHSTs)

Trainee Education Mental Health Practitioners (EMHPs) within the **Cannock Chase MHST** are now reaching the end of their training and we hope they will be starting the new year as fully qualified EMHPs. The service has now started receiving referrals from all 15 participating schools, which is very exciting. We are also now seeing young people face-to-face in schools, which is working well.

We are working closely with Clinical Commissioning Group and Staffordshire County Council colleagues in developing a new team within the **Stafford and Surrounds** locality, which will be introduced in January 2022. We will be writing to schools and other education establishments with the offer of support and an invitation to sign up to the service. If you are one of the schools we contact, please feel free to get in touch for more information.

## Update: The County 0-19 Families' Health and Wellbeing Service (FHWS, Health Visiting and School Nursing).



The County 0-19 Families' Health and Wellbeing Service (FHWS, Health Visiting and School Nursing) have created a newsletter for parents and our partners. The quarterly newsletter is sent to parents through children's centres, schools, GPs, voluntary/ third sector, early years, social care, Staffordshire Safeguarding Board, Staffordshire libraries and nurseries etc. It is available to view and download through our website [www.mpft.nhs.uk](http://www.mpft.nhs.uk) or click the image on the left to take you directly to the appropriate page.

Our newsletter covers the age ranges of 0-19 years, so there is something in there for every parent and professional. It is full of interesting and informative subjects like:

- Meet the team – focus on Health Visiting and School Nursing.
- Tips for getting ready to start school.
- Why it's important to promote children's health and wellbeing – children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing.
- Introduction to the Calmness Project and how schools can get involved.
- Young people and gender identity.

There's also information about:

- Top tips to keep babies and children safe and well.
- Emotional health during pregnancy and following the birth of your baby.
- Coping with infant crying and an introduction to [ICON](#).
- Tantrums – what to expect and how to cope.
- Healthy Start Vouchers.
- Advice on fussy eating.
- Advice about constipation.

- Physical activity guidelines for children.
- Child safety information and advice.

The FHWS newsletter also contains reminders of how to contact the service and contains a QR code for feedback. This ensures that parents and our partners can let us know what topics they would like to see in future editions of the newsletter, any changes they would like to see and general feedback.

**Feedback received on the two editions so far has been very positive from commissioners, partners and parents.**



*"I think the newsletter is great and really informative for our families and young people. 'Very informative, covered at lot of areas and topics' 'It was extremely informative and told me lots about the different aspects of the service"*

We are hoping to include links to podcasts in future editions, so if you have ideas for topics that you want us to cover please use the QR code, scan it with your phone and let us know what topics you would like us to cover.



If you would like to refer someone to our service, please return a referral form (available on the website) to the relevant hub email address:

East Hub (covering East Staffordshire, Cannock, Rugeley, Lichfield and Tamworth) – [fhws.east@nhs.net](mailto:fhws.east@nhs.net) or call 0300 303 3924.

West Hub (covering Staffordshire Moorlands, Newcastle, Seisdon, Stafford and Stone) – [FHWS.west@nhs.net](mailto:FHWS.west@nhs.net) or call 0300 303 3923.

Don't forget about our **ChatHealth text service** available for parents of children aged 0-19 years and for young people aged 11 to 19 years (texts cost of standard rate message) text numbers:



Young people in Staffordshire should text 07520 615721

Parents in Staffordshire should text 07520 615722

## Update: Strengthening process for schools referring to Children and Young People's Autism Service (South Staffordshire)

The Children and Young People's Autism Service has strengthened its referral process to help improve response times for families awaiting assessment.

The service, provided by Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, has **updated its referral form** to streamline the process and reduce the risk of unnecessary delays. The form is available via the service website (under 'Referrals') at [www.mpft.nhs.uk/services/children-and-young-people-autism-service](http://www.mpft.nhs.uk/services/children-and-young-people-autism-service).

Teachers are asked to ensure they thoroughly complete the form and send it to [autism.referrals@mpft.nhs.uk](mailto:autism.referrals@mpft.nhs.uk) as, without this, the service is unable to triage.

Should an incomplete referral be received from another professional, the service will contact the pupil's school and request that a **Teacher Liaison form** be completed to provide any additional information. The service may also request the school complete this form to gather outstanding information to support the outcome of an assessment.

The **Teacher Liaison form** provides helpful guidance and is also available via the 'Referrals' section of the website at [www.mpft.nhs.uk/services/children-and-young-people-autism-service](http://www.mpft.nhs.uk/services/children-and-young-people-autism-service). Teachers contacted by the service with this request are asked to complete the form as soon as possible and return it to [autism.referrals@mpft.nhs.uk](mailto:autism.referrals@mpft.nhs.uk).

The service can be contacted via email at [cypautismservice@mpft.nhs.uk](mailto:cypautismservice@mpft.nhs.uk) or by calling 0300 303 0691 (9am-5pm, Monday to Friday, excluding Bank Holidays).

### Autism in Schools Pilot Project

The Staffordshire Autism Outreach Team are taking part in a pilot project that encompasses joint locality working between the NHS, Parent Carer Forums and Local Authorities. In this jointly funded project, we will also be working closely alongside our neighbouring local authorities (Stoke, Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin) and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) to implement the pilot. Each Local Authority can nominate up to three settings to participate in this small pilot.

The project is aimed at supporting schools to create capable environments for autistic students, it focuses mainly on mainstream schools and is in recognition of the worrying numbers of autistic students facing mental health crisis and admission to in-patient settings. At its core, the project involves participation in a learning programme, direct support from therapy services/ Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) at a school level and the development of parent carer participation also at a school-based level.

The three core elements of the project are:

- Building relationships and networks of support.

- Providing learning opportunities for school's parent carer forums.
- Autism self-awareness and skills development, hearing the voice of young people.

This work was originally developed in the North East Region as part of the Transforming Care Programme and is NHS-funded. There are two evaluation documents of the original project and the links below will provide you with more details:

<https://contact.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Autism-Accelerator-Phase-1-evaluation.pdf>

<https://contact.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Autism-Accelerator-Phase-2.pdf>

The preparation work for this project is well under way, with implementation in the main happening from January 2022 – April 2022. As a service we are very much looking forward to embarking upon this project and hope this multiagency co-ordinated approach makes a real impact on the children, young people and families that we support.

*With thanks to Samantha Turnbull, head of Sensory and Autism Outreach Teams, Staffordshire County Council.*



### **Spotlight on... Peer Ambassadorship Programme at Cheadle Primary School**



A number of years ago Cheadle Primary School identified that in order to 'fix' the whole school improvement agenda, it was inherently critical to 'fix' the most fundamental issues relating to 'how well is our community?'

We knew we had a school, both internally and externally, that was 'crying out' for help. We could no longer continue to keep applying a plaster, but needed to tackle the root causes, head on, and fill in the cracks.

It soon became obvious that the fast-paced requirements dictated by the 'Ofsted wheels' were clouding our judgements and in prioritising academia over wellbeing, we were undeniably neglecting the real issues at hand. The simple fact that unhappy children do not make for positive and successful learners, with high academic attainments, was evident to all. In the process of striving for improving academic outcomes, it had in fact had the opposite effect and indeed stunted our progress. Whilst wellbeing was not at the forefront of our thinking, it was obvious that we were setting children up to fail and those outstanding outcomes would be forever beyond our grasp, if we didn't tackle wellbeing, head on!

We therefore embarked upon a journey to develop the holistic wellbeing of all within our community. Our mental health guru Julie Lawton (Family Support Worker) brilliantly led a team of like-minded souls and we established a well-coordinated team, focussed on developing our school's holistic approach. We discovered that in giving the children a voice, we were also freeing their minds to understand and shape not only their own individual

understanding of evolving circumstances, but that of others'. Hence the Peer Ambassadorship programme was introduced.

Children were invited to apply for positions as Peer Ambassadors, with 'job advertisements' providing the obligations and requirements of the role. Interest in the new roles and the innumerable questions asked meant that children were intrigued with the responsibility attached and eager to achieve any kudos that may result.

Applications to become Peer Ambassadors were considered, shortlisting took place, and successful applicants were recruited to the team. A rigorous training programme took place with the children. We could see the children's self-confidence grow before our very eyes and the immediate respect, and the approval that the children received across the school, placed this new school development in the very highest regard!

The training of our Peer Ambassadors allowed children to enter into discussions that helped re-build the whole school ethos. Children soon found themselves more comfortable talking to someone their own age, who they felt understood their concerns and appreciated their issues from a child's perspective.

It was clear to all children, whether Ambassadors or not, that they could learn to listen to others' points of view, and accept differences of opinions, knowing that it was ok to disagree and move forward with their understanding. The Ambassadors and other children recognised they had the power to resolve conflicts; that it was achievable, conflict could be resolved, and that they had the self-awareness and skill set required to do it.

The process of investing in children has developed a wonderfully purposeful sense of community and co-operation. Our school and our classrooms have become more peaceful, allowing positive teaching, and learning to take place. Our children seem happier, our staff are less 'called upon' during unstructured times of the day and the wider impact of enhanced positivity and praise has ultimately led to accelerated progress and healthier data-sets all-round!

In working with children to improve the basic skills of communication and learning how to manage conflict resolution, we have built resilience and developed the kind of coping strategies that children will need outside and beyond school.

We believe that children who are trained as Peer Ambassadors develop additional skills in communication, negotiation, understanding, and problem solving. In their role as mediators, they help to promote young people's emotional and social skills and build self-esteem and confidence.

Peer Ambassadors are certainly alive and well at Cheadle Primary School and whilst things have had to look a little different this year (with restrictive bubble management), the overarching success of our older pupils has enabled younger children to be aspirational and want to support their own 'bubble' communities.

You can find out more by visiting [www.cheadle-primary.staffs.sch.uk/home](http://www.cheadle-primary.staffs.sch.uk/home) or contacting [dsatongar@cheadle-primary.staffs.sch.uk](mailto:dsatongar@cheadle-primary.staffs.sch.uk)

*With thanks to Debbie Satongar, Senior Mental Health Lead and SENCO, Cheadle Primary School.*



## International Stress Awareness Week 1 – 5 November 2021, and, National Stress Awareness Day on 3 November 2021

International Stress Awareness Week was created in 2018 to raise awareness about stress prevention, and this year marks 23 years since the establishment of Stress Awareness Day, the highlight of the week, in 1998.

We all know what it is like to feel stressed and being under pressure is a normal part of life. But becoming overwhelmed by stress can lead to mental health problems or make existing problems worse.

Millions of people around the UK experience [stress](#), and it is damaging to our health and wellbeing. For example, at some point in the last year, 74% of us have felt so stressed we have felt unable to cope ([Mental Health Foundation, 2021](#)). Recent research showed that almost a third of 8-15 year olds said they were feeling more stressed now than they did before the pandemic ([Barnardos, 2021](#)).

**Stress is the feeling of being under too much mental or emotional pressure. When you are stressed, your body releases stress hormones such as adrenaline and cortisol.**

A small amount of stress can be useful. It can motivate you to take action and get tasks completed. It can also make you feel alive and excited. But too much stress can cause negative effects such as a change in your mood, your body and relationship issues.

The **Anna Freud** National Centre for Children and Families' [Mentally Healthy Schools](#) has developed resources to support schools with International Stress Awareness Week. There are activities and resources for education staff available, including the 'ABC model to manage teacher stress', 'Interactive stress container tool for staff', 'example risk assessment on work-related stress' and '5 steps: staff support structure'.



Please visit <https://mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/resources/mental-health-and-wellbeing-calendar-autumn-term-2021/> to access these resources.



The **Office for Health Improvement and Disparities** (previously known as [Public Health England](#)) in support of National Stress Awareness Day, have launched new self-care resources for teachers on the School Zone. There is new self-care teaching resources, information about the NHS approved Every Mind Matters personalised wellbeing tool for adults and an opportunity to win an online wellness workshop for your school with Mind (closes 30/11/2021).

Please visit:

<https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/resources/campaigns/111/resources/5935> to access resources (log-in required – FREE).

### Who are we?

We are an established in-school counselling service for pupils who require support. Our team is made up of friendly and fully qualified counsellors who have experience of working with children and young people.

### What we do.

We provide in-school counselling for pupils of primary and secondary school age. We work closely with school link workers to make sure we work collaboratively, and we can refer onto other agencies if a higher level of support is required. We work with a range of issues including anger, anxiety, self-harm and suicidal thoughts.

We also offer supervision and counselling for school staff at an additional cost.

### What are the benefits?

- One to one and group sessions.
- Our counsellors are fully qualified and DBS-checked.
- Termly and yearly reports.
- In-school counselling reduces time pupils spend away from the classroom and fosters a close working relationship between the counsellor and school staff.
- Discounts on training and/ or workshops ran by North Staffs Mind.

### Commissions

Most schools commission us on a yearly basis for either one or two days per week (term time only). Please enquire for a price. Available to all schools across Staffordshire.

### Testimonials

*"This service is a lifeline to us, our children and parents".*

*"We are very happy with the service provided...it is invaluable!"*

*"[Counsellor] is able to work with children for a vast range of difficulties that are otherwise difficult to access support for. The children love working with[counsellor] and never want the sessions to end! We're also grateful for all of the additional support and advice provided alongside the sessions with the children"*

*"[Counsellor] has been great, as always, in providing support for our students. Students are happy and comfortable to go and talk to him"*

### For further information please email:

[Schools@nsmind.org.uk](mailto:Schools@nsmind.org.uk) or call 01782 262100.







## North Staffs Mind – Services for Children and Young People

**MaccasZone** – Support group – a free, confidential and informal drop-in service supporting young people aged 14-18 years who are interested in developing their emotional wellbeing. Runs every other Tuesday 6pm-7.30pm via Zoom.

We hope to resume our face-to-face drop in once restrictions allow. Drop in service will be based in Hanley, venue to be confirmed.

More details can be found at: <https://nsmind.org.uk/how-we-can-help/maccas-zone/>

**Stay Well** (in partnership with the Dove Service and Changes) – a counselling service provided by NSMind, for young people aged 8-18 years. Self-refer by calling 01782 418 518 or refer through your GP.

StayWell's other services can be found at: <https://www.changes.org.uk/stay-well-cyp/>

## Training Opportunities



Department  
for Education

### Senior Mental Health Lead Training

The Department for Education (DfE) is offering a senior member of school or college staff the opportunity to get a grant for training to develop the knowledge and skills to implement an effective whole school or college approach to mental health and wellbeing in their settings.

Training can be for headteachers, deputy headteachers, members of senior leadership teams (SLT), other appropriate members of staff.

Grants will be offered to around a third of all state schools and colleges between September 2021 and March 2022. The grant is a contribution to the cost of training and the hiring of supply staff whilst leads are engaged in training.

Sign up NOW at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/senior-mental-health-lead-training>



### Managing Mental Health and Stress

Future Learn and Coventry University are offering this free course to support your mental health during the coronavirus outbreak.



This course lasts 2 weeks, with 6 hours of study in total and is FREE.  
<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/managing-mental-health-and-stress>



## Young People and Their Mental Health

What are the most common mental health problems, what can you do about them and how do you improve your mental health? As many as 1 out of 5 teenagers are dealing with mental health problems.

This course lasts 5 weeks, with 10 hours study in total and is FREE.

<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/young-people-mental-health>



## Understanding Autism

Understand more about autism, including diagnosis, the autistic spectrum, and life with autism with this CPD-certified course.



This course lasts 4 weeks, with 12 hours study in total, is FREE and CPD-certified.



Please visit: <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/autism>

## How to support young people living with parental mental illness



Discover how parental mental illness impacts children's development and learn skills and strategies to help young people affected.

This course lasts 4 weeks, with 8 hours study in total, and is FREE.

Please visit:

<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/how-to-support-young-people-living-with-parental-mental-illness>



## Psychological First Aid: Supporting Children and Young People

Get Psychological First Aid training to support children and young people's mental health during emergency and crisis situations.

On this 3-week course you will explore the technique of psychological first aid (PFA), the globally recommended training for supporting people during emergencies. You'll focus on children and young people's mental health, and what you can do to help them cope and access the support they need during and after emergencies and crisis situations.

The course lasts 3 weeks, with 3 hours study time in total and is FREE.

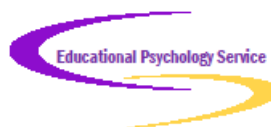
<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/psychological-first-aid-for-children-and-young-people>



## Emotional Literacy Support Assistant

The ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) intervention was originally developed within Southampton, then Hampshire, by Sheila Burton, Educational Psychologist. It was designed to build the capacity of schools to support the emotional needs of their pupils from within their own resources. This is achieved by training teaching assistants to develop and deliver individualised support programmes to meet the emotional needs of children and teenagers in their care. It recognises that children learn better and are happier in school if their emotional needs are also addressed ([ELSA Network, 2021](#)).

### Emotional Literacy Support Assistant Training (ELSA)



CHILDREN LEARN BETTER AND ARE HAPPIER IN SCHOOL  
WHEN THEIR EMOTIONAL NEEDS ARE MET

#### What is an ELSA?

The ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) project was originally designed by Sheila Burton, Educational Psychologist to build the capacity of schools to support the emotional needs of their pupils from **within their own resources**.

ELSAs are trained to **plan and deliver individual or group programmes of support to pupils** in their school who are experiencing temporary or longer-term emotional needs. ELSAs receive supervision from Educational Psychologists but they are line-managed from within their own schools.

#### How would an ELSA benefit your school?

A 2009 study involving 21 ELSAs interviewed from 14 schools reported that the majority of Head Teachers and ELSAs consider ELSA work is having a positive impact on individuals in terms of behaviour, emotional well-being, and improving relationships. Just under half of the Head Teachers also reported positive impact on attendance, reducing bullying and academic achievement for individual children (Bravery, K., & Harris, L. (2009)

*Data generated can be used as part of the Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle or during inspection.*

#### COME AND FIND OUT MORE!

Information-give only – No commitment required

Wednesday November 17<sup>th</sup> 1:30pm- 2:30pm via MS TEAMS

Email: [jenna.lee@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:jenna.lee@staffordshire.gov.uk) for a link to the meeting.

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

0-19 Families' Health and Wellbeing Service (FHWS, Health Visiting and School Nursing).	CYP and families with children age 0-19. Contact the 0-19 FHWS, health visiting and school nursing team via the Hubs.
ChatHealth text messaging service	C&YP aged 11 -19 years old and parents. Available Monday-Friday 9am-5pm, including school holidays but excluding bank holidays. Messages outside of these hours will receive an automated message in return; texts are responded to within one working day. Texts are charged to patients at caller's normal network rate.
Children and Young People's Autism Service (South Staffordshire)	CYP up to the age of 18. Referrals can be made by a professional who has met with the child and family, and referrals triaged by an NHS practitioner.
North Staffs Mind School Counselling Service	CYP of primary and secondary school age. Price available upon request.
North Staffs Mind – Maccas Zone	Support group for CYP aged 14-8, currently available on Zoom.
North Staffs Mind – Stay Well	Counselling service for CYP aged 8-18 years.

