

Kirklees
KeepinMind

NHS

South West
Yorkshire Partnership
NHS Foundation Trust

MHST research project

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With **all of us** in mind.



**Children &
Young People**
Focus Groups



Background

All MHST schools were contacted to see if they could support with holding a focus group. The figures below indicate the number of pupils involved in the focus groups.

North	South	Total
Secondary 25	Secondary 61	86
Primary 24	Primary 30	54

- Total number of students involved in focus groups- 140.
- Areas that specifically stand out as requiring a line of enquiry are WF17 and WF12 due to a higher-than-average BAME population.
- 17.86% of pupils involved attended a school in WF12/WF17
- 25% of schools involved in the focus groups were in WF12/WF17
- 25% of schools involved in the focus groups were located in WF13 whose cohort includes pupils who live in WF12

What do you think would be the best way to inform students in your school of the MHST service?



Primary

- Visitors talking about the service e.g. in a lesson or assembly.
- Leaflets and posters to put on information boards - students identified various places in school where they could be displayed for maximum impact, e.g. above the sinks in the toilets, the hall, library, doors to lunch hall, displays, corridors, classrooms, school nurture room, front gates.
- Reminding students during PSHCE or sessions of mindfulness/ yoga/ meditation.

Additional ideas from Secondary school pupils

- Students identified the importance of social media and platforms such as Instagram.
- Some secondary school students thought you would be more likely to access the service if you were told about it by a teacher that you respect.
- At one school they thought there should be more emphasis on mental health through the PSE curriculum and that what it did currently cover was rather dark with an emphasis on suicide and self-harm. They didn't think it really helped students with dealing with the 'small' things.

Potential suggestions for service development

- Develop a standard pack of promotional resources to display around school with new name and logo
- Support staff in having standard signposting to MHST service/website during certain PSHE lessons
- Support schools with developing their PSE curriculum on topics relating to mental health



How would you want an intervention to be delivered?



Primary

- Most primary school students said they would prefer intervention to be face-to-face to build trust.
- Some students said they would prefer intervention over teams but didn't explain why they would prefer this.
- One student identified that she would prefer to speak to someone over the telephone as she felt embarrassed speaking to someone face to face.
- Young people talked about the importance of consistency and seeing the same person throughout.

Additional ideas from Secondary school pupils

- Most students would still prefer intervention face to face. They felt that the best time for them would be form or break time but they did not want an intervention that went into lunch time as they felt that having some time to be social with their friends was important for their mental health.
- Y11 students did not want to be taken out of lessons for intervention as it would add increased pressure regarding missing content for exams.
- One student said that he had previously accessed support from Northorpe Hall but said that he have found it much better if they had come out to him.

Potential suggestions for service development

- Review data for DNA/DNE appointments. Have the different needs of the young person been taken into consideration when arranging appointments?
- Although interventions should be carried out in school where possible, explore alternative locations that intervention could be delivered that may be more accessible to some CYP and reduce any DNA/DNE appointments.



What do you think the positives or using the MHST service might be?



Primary

- Good to have 1-1 time with someone and space where you can focus, express your feelings and take on board everything that the other person is saying.
- Helps you to let go of feelings and emotions as sometimes it may be too much to handle.
- Easier speaking to someone outside of the family.
- When someone has helped you, you could share these strategies with others and help them.
- Makes you feel better knowing that someone can help you.
- Increased confidence.
- “Stop bad emotions as sometimes if you get angry you can hurt others, and this can cause them to be sad. It helps you try and be good.”
- Calms you down.
- You know you are going to feel better as you are not keeping it bottled up.
- Once you start talking, it is good for your mental health.
- It stops you panicking as you know it is all going to get sorted.

Potential suggestions for service development

- Clear age-appropriate resources on our website giving CYP guidance on how to have mental health conversations with their parents/carers/staff in school and develop workshops to be delivered in school to support this.
- Use anonymous quotes from service users in our promotional material/website
- Resources to reinforce positive coping mechanisms



What do you think the positives or using the MHST service might be?

Secondary

- It can help you distance yourself from a situation.
- You can just talk to someone and be able to rant.
- You can get comfort from seeing someone .
- You won't feel judged.
- You know you are in a safe place.
- Many said they wouldn't want to talk about mental health issues with their parents.
- It would enable you to try some healthy coping mechanisms as many coping mechanisms are negative.



Potential suggestions for service development

- Clear age-appropriate resources on our website giving CYP guidance on how to have mental health conversations with their parents/carers/staff in school and develop workshops to be delivered in school to support this.
- Use anonymous quotes from service users in our promotional material/website
- Resources to reinforce positive coping mechanisms



Why do you think some young people may not want to access our services?



Primary

- They don't know who they are speaking to or what they are going to talk about. "They are waiting for you to talk to them when you don't want to. "
- Other people may know that you are speaking to someone. -don't want to have to leave the class as people will ask why when leaving/returning and they are concerned about privacy.
- You might not be given enough time to process your feelings after a session.
- They may not be in the right mood to talk to someone or be embarrassed upset or scared.
- They have issues that they don't know how to control, or they may blame themselves.
- They are scared about what the other person or teachers might say/do or that information may be shared with parents
- Don't think they have taken it to the right place and spoken to the right person -worried that it is not that big- just a little worry so not worth doing anything about.
- That by speaking to someone you could make things worse or cause problems .
- Don't like talking to people of the opposite gender.

Potential suggestions for service development

- A well being champions programme has been developed for KS2 and the team are currently working on developing the secondary programme
- Address students concerns/worries on frequently asked questions on our website



Why do you think some young people may not want to access our services?

Secondary

- There was an emphasis on concerns about being seen as weak
- Some people said that they didn't think it would have a positive outcome.
- One said that you might feel you have to lie to the person that you are speaking to hide your sadness if you are having intrusive thoughts. Another identified that you may have been burying away your thoughts and feelings for so long that it could be quite painful to bring them back to the surface.
- There were also concerns about what had been shared could be used against them in the future, for example having to disclose mental health issues on a job or college application.
- Many concerns were raised by older students about school telling your parents things and this may cause them to hold back.
- Many students wanted to get support from their friends first and not from teachers, which reinforces the idea of well-being champions.
- They felt they were viewed as being too young to have a mental health condition and therefore not taken seriously. There were also concerns that they would be removed from their parents care as they thought people would see that their parents/carers as being unable to deal with their needs.
- Some of the young people felt that mental health problems were caused more by society in general as there were unfair standards regarding how you should look and how you should act, which put unnecessary pressure on people.



Potential suggestions for service development

- Look at ways where people might be able to get to know the practitioner before their first one-to-one session. This could involve some basic information about the practitioner – such as a picture and basis likes/dislikes or a short introductory video on the website. Website has been developed with this in mind
- Staff training has been developed on self-harm that is delivered in schools by our Band 6 practitioners



How could we make CYP more comfortable in accessing the service?

Primary

- Students identified the importance of having a quiet place that is private and free from distractions. Some students suggested speaking to someone outside would be relaxing, on a bench in the school garden.
- It was key that the practitioner took the time to introduce themselves and explain that they were a trusted visitor. It was suggested that both parties fill in an information sheet so that they could find out more about each other before the sessions started.
- It is important that the person used positive language, was happy, smiled at them and was talkative to help put them at ease. It was also suggested that they could play a game with them to put them at ease. They wanted that person to be kind, gentle, listen and focus.
- They wouldn't want them to talk over them.
- It was also important that a key person was identified who they could speak to if needed between their sessions.
- Some young people suggested that they could have a friend with them in the session for support, this may just be for the first session or part of a session until the young person felt more comfortable with the person who they were talking to or for some they would like parents there.
- Timing -being taken out of a lesson part way through or returning to a lesson sometimes added to anxiety and stress as other people might start to ask questions.
- They didn't want to be rushed during a session
- Regular checks ins and multiple strategies to try in case one doesn't work.



Potential suggestions for service development

- Creation of some preparatory work students could do before intervention. Things to think about, apps to look at, questions they might have etc
- Review the best way for a member of staff to introduce themselves during their first session



How could we make CYP more comfortable in accessing the service?

Secondary

- 'Human first, mental health practitioner second.'
- Students reinforced the idea of consistency in terms of the person they spoke to and being able to speak to someone in a place where there was no chance of being seen or heard.
- They also wanted to be treated like an adult.
- They also wanted staff to share if they had similar issues and explain what things were like for them at their age and really wanted staff to show empathy towards their situation.
- Some young people said they wanted the chance to meet and speak to the person first, before they started sharing their problems with them. This was to build up trust.
- Some said they wanted to be able to listen to music during a session as this may help to calm them down if they thought it was getting too much and this might stop them from walking out.
- Preparation for a session was seen to be crucial to reduce anxiety and it was felt it would be beneficial to be given some apps first that they could look at before hand which would be a good starting point for conversations.
- It was important that the session is set at the pace that the young person feels comfortable with.
- SEN students also felt that it was important that workers were aware of their needs and these were taken into consideration when planning intervention.



Potential suggestions for service development

- Review of where intervention takes place at schools. Are there still issues with schools not providing a room where students feel they are not seen or heard by others?
- Review of how that first session is conducted. Does it take the young person's preferences and needs into consideration?



What do you think would make groups more accessible to CYP?

Primary

- 'All students said they would be prepared to work in a group, but this very much depended on who else was in the group and what the issue was.
- Some said that it would be difficult to talk openly in front of people if you didn't know them properly.
- They said if it was a very personal issue, they wouldn't want to speak about it with their peers as they would be worried about issues regarding confidentiality.
- If people were to work with others in a group, it was also seen important that people had the same issues so that they would be able to offer support to each other.
- The main issue focused on having to build up trust when working with others who you don't know.
- They talked about the important of any group work being directed by an adult as they felt adults were less likely to share what had been said.



Potential suggestions for service development

- Careful consideration and planning to take into consideration the concerns of the young people when conducting groups
- Clear and concise ground rules that young people are aware of and can follow when being involved in group work. School being aware of these and dealing with any related issues, accordingly, making sure these are fed back to the group leader



What do you think would make groups more accessible to CYP?



Additional information from secondary schools

- There were similar concerns regarding who else was in the group, confidentiality, and embarrassment. However, it was identified that you might not feel as isolated if you knew there were other people with the same issue as you.
- 'Mental health is competitive'- people want to be worse or suffering more than someone else.' This raises concerns with group work at secondary schools as some students felt that it could cause competition and make some members of the group worse.
- There were concerns from secondary students as they were concerned, they would have a fear of talking out of term/saying something wrong/being laughed at when participating in group work.

Potential suggestions for service development

- Careful consideration and planning to take into consideration the concerns of the young people when doing any sort of group
- Clear and concise ground rules that young people are aware of and can follow when being involved in group work. School being aware of these and dealing with any related issues, accordingly, making sure these are fed back to the group leader



Intervention is usual once a week over 6-8 weeks – how do you think it would be best to measure the impact?

Primary and secondary

- Students that it was important that teachers were aware of the strategies they had been taught so that they could direct them and help them implement the strategies.
- They felt that people who saw them every day were best placed to decide if any strategies had had an impact, such as parents/carers, friends and teachers.
- It was also felt that the young person would know themselves if there was a positive change and they may want a way of recording this in a safe space.
- They also thought that they themselves would be best placed to measure impact by charting different strategies they had used and rating which ones they had used the most. They also said they could chart their days- My day today was.... and share this with a trusted person. It was suggested that they could keep a record of activity and thoughts each week.
- They felt that it was important that there was a space and time allocated in school so that pupils could do this. One student also suggested a worry tally, that you monitor and see if this increased or minimised over time.



Potential suggestions for service development

- Create a range of resources to trial with young people to measure impact and share these on our website
- Develop processes to share strategies discussed with staff/parents/carers to reinforce positive coping mechanisms for the young person



What would encourage you to work with the MHST and apply the skills covered?



Primary

- In some schools some techniques such as mindfulness are encouraged in class and sometimes visitors come in and do this with the students. Although students enjoyed these, they said that they sometimes found it difficult to focus on these strategies when they were lots of other people around as there were too many distractions.
- If they knew that they had worked for other people, young people said they were more likely to use certain strategies and seeing others use the techniques would give them reassurance.
- They also wanted to feel safe to ask questions and get reassurance when needed, so they could continue to apply the skills covered.
- Once they had proof that something worked, it is more likely that they would keep up with something. For example, if they could see an improvement by charting their emotions, it is likely that they would continue applying the skills covered.
- At some schools, young people were encouraged to use the zones of regulation and they said this would be able to identify if there were any improvements and reinforce applications of the skills.
- They were more likely to apply the skills covered if they were given a specific time to complete something by and a booklet to complete, which encouraged them to write things down.

Potential suggestions for service development

- Develop a range of resources to explain strategies/record use of them that are age appropriate and accessible to young people in terms of the language used.



What would encourage you to work with the MHST and apply the skills covered?



Primary continued

- Students who had access to a mobile phone said they would set up reminders on them, take pictures on their phones of what they needed to do or record themselves doing it on their phone as an active reminder to do it.
- Young people felt that they should practice strategies first thing in the morning when their mind was still fresh, have visual reminders in places where they would see them and keep saying what they needed to do- positive reinforcement.
- They also said it was important to let your teachers and parents know what you needed to do so that they could remind you.

Additional information from secondary

- Some identified the importance of having a clear target at the end of the intervention, whether this was metaphorical or physical. There was also an emphasis on starting off with very small steps and although a target gives you something to aim towards, making sure that it was explained it was no big deal if you didn't hit your target as it may make you feel worse.
- Some students thought that they should be entered into a prize draw for attending all their intervention sessions and extra tickets would be available for completing any activities set.

Potential suggestions for service development

- Think about including appropriate target setting to build self-confidence and include this in resources, so a target-based option is available if required
- Explore a reward system whether this is with individual schools or across areas to reward engagement and completion of activities set during sessions



What changes would you like to see in school to support your wellbeing?

Primary

- Students felt that everyone should have some mental health support where they could talk about their worries with someone in school.
- They wanted to have the opportunity to spend some time in a quiet space in school such as the nurture room. They felt this level support was only offered to those who were already struggling or who had SEND.
- All students felt that there needed to be more adults in school who could help support with their mental health and well-being and who were available at key times when there could be conflict or upset, such as break and lunch time.
- They wanted workshops and clubs based on emotions and how to process feelings which should include some of the things that have helped other people of a similar age.
- They would also like more opportunities to get outside more into nature which could include things such as walking in the woods and kicking leaves.
- They encouraged the idea of having a worry box in each classroom so that students could post their worries and they could be discussed at a later point. Some also mentioned having a favourite toy or fidget toy.
- The issue of homework was raised as some pupils said they simply felt that it lowered self-esteem and caused extra anxiety and pressure at home.



Potential suggestions for service development

- Develop workshops based on worry strategies with the creation of something that could be used to store or reflect on worries- journal, worry box, worry bag. A KS1 worry monster workshop has already been developed.



What changes would you like to see in school to support your wellbeing?



Secondary

- They felt that it was important that there was a nice safe room for each year group to go to.
- They wanted specific guidance to resources on how to deal with certain mental health issues. They wanted to be able to get this information directly without having to do a lot of searching on the internet.
- Reassurance.
- FAQs.
- Somewhere where you could send 1-1 messages.
- How to start a conversation about mental health.
- They were concerned about talking to teachers about their mental health issues as they didn't want to place any additional burden on them.
- It was seen at some schools that they focused too much on behaviour and punishment and didn't really explore the reasons behind the behaviour by asking you what was going on.
- Like at primary school, some students thought there was an emphasis on SEND students and those who struggled with behaviour, meaning others didn't have an opportunity to discuss their problems.
- The issue of therapy animals was also raised by two schools who thought access to them would be beneficial for secondary school pupils.

Potential suggestions for service development

- Explore developing links regarding therapy animals visiting school settings
- 'Emotions' club. Develop a programme that was offered after school for a short time, focusing on different emotions and wellbeing opportunities, including outdoor activities





**Parents
& Carers
Focus Groups**



Background

- A total of 23 parents/carers were spoken to in total- 22 identified as female and 1 as male
- 9 (all female) identified as belonging to the BAME community 39% of the cohort
- 3 agreed to speak to me after a discussion with an educational mental health practitioner
- 2 agreed to speak to me after a discussion with a parent and community worker
- 18 were recruited by myself at school events
- Parents were initially contacted and a convenient time was arranged to go through some questions with them over the telephone for approximately 30 minutes
- Parents/carers were provided with a £10 love to shop voucher for their contributions

What words come to mind when you hear the term mental health



- Early findings indicated that the initial response was always negative when asked for words associated with mental health, so the question was changed to ask about positive words associated with mental health. Some parents still struggled with this and talked about the stigma attached to the term.



Potential suggestions for service development

- We are already changing the name of the service to 'Kirklees Keep in Mind' to move away from the stigma that some associate with the term mental health.
- Development of sessions to support parents with talking about mental health in a positive manner- PCWs to work with our early years practitioner/early years teacher to develop this.
- Link with other services to look at ways we could promote positive language regarding mental health from an early age with both children and parents.
- Looking to offer selected schools the myHappyMind programme which also which also has a parents app.

What do you think would be the best way to inform parents in your school of the MHST service?

- Some parents would prefer a letter or leaflet explaining the service, whilst others said they thought letters didn't work as aren't always read- particularly at secondary school.
- Some schools have the technology available to send out messages directly to parents such as ping and class dojo which people generally seemed to respond well to. For some parents, they liked to see things on social media and receive emails about things, but others acknowledged they were easily forgotten unless it was something that related directly to them at that time.
- Many thought that making students aware of the MHST in class or assembly was a good way of letting parents know as younger children (especially KS1) are more likely to talk about what they did at school when they returned home.

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Potential suggestions for service development



- Standard leaflet/template for a text/ping/class dojo message to go home with students after they have had an assembly/workshop explaining what they have been talking about and ways that parents could talk to them about this topic (support them).
- New website being developed with resources.
- Develop the idea of the well-being walking group with the school that has expressed an interest. This is something that could be developed across a number of different schools if there is an interest.

What do you think would be the best way to inform parents in your school of the MHST service?

- Parents value seeing someone in person. They felt it was important to have the service represented at parents evenings and other school events and having a person there that they could relate to.
- Parents felt that the service needs to be promoted more by school and any events such as coffee mornings need to have a clear purpose.
- It is important to note that most of the parents that I spoke to, I had met in person at school events, so they were already confident in going into the school and engaging with staff. We need to be mindful of this and look at ways we can encourage those parents who don't regularly engage with school or attend out of school events.



Potential suggestions for service development

- Using quotes from parents to promote the service to other parents. What did they access and how did this help them? This could be promoted on our website as well as coffee mornings, one to ones and school events.
- Request school calendars at the start of the year with key events in such as parents evenings, open evenings, transition events



What resources do you need/want to support your family's mental health journey?

- Low awareness of available services – parents do not know where to go.
- Need for clear signposting in times of crisis.
- They said that any website needs to be very simple, with information given in clear straight to the point language and bullet points.
- Parents need support and guidance on how to speak to young people about mental health and how to start conversations including areas such as knowing correct terminology e.g relating to transgender and acknowledge that they also need to build their own knowledge
- Parents also wanted resources to support with behaviour of their children, starting school, how to have more one-to-one time with children, transition, lack of confidence and bullying.



Potential suggestions for service development

- Ongoing website development giving clear guidance on how to talk to young people about mental health including guidance on the use of terminology
- Workshops being developed for young people and parents on how to start conversations on mental health that are age appropriate/relate to certain topics



What resources do you need/want to support your family's mental health journey?

- There were many parents who said they needed reassurance 'what is normal and what is something to be worried about?.'
- Some parents felt that there was a lot of support for SEND students regarding transition, but that this level of support needed to be offered to all young people to help them to cope with such a significant change.
- There were a wide range of issues that the parents felt that they needed support with to improve their mental health including isolation, looking after a disabled child, physical health issues, divorce/separation, time management, sleep, bereavement support, coping strategies and preventing burn out due to the general fast pace of life.
- Some parents acknowledged that they felt they just had to carry on and get on with things and if they acknowledged they were unable to do so they were worried they would be seen as weak. The concept of 'mothers' guilt' was also mentioned.



Potential suggestions for service development

- Review the parental workshop offer and how schools are booking in. What is the structure of the session? What is working best and where? (PCWs)
- Ongoing review of the PCW offer in terms of resources and workshops available.
- Review transition offer – particularly post transition.



What resources do you need/want to support your family's mental health journey?



- Some parents really appreciate those schools who had a regular coffee session with a set format. The parents at Beaumont appreciated that there was a session every two weeks at the same time, so they knew they could speak to someone at that time if there was an issue. They appreciated that there were different visitors there from different agencies such as DWP, MHST and domestic violence services, so if they had an issue there was always someone they could chat with away from the group. If they didn't have an issue the parents and professionals would just chat as a group, making it easier to speak to the professionals if they had an issue in the future as they felt they knew them already.
- Some parents wanted more emphasis on things that they could do with their families that would improve the mental health of both adults and children, which would be fun but also low cost. They suggested activities where the kids could play, and the adults could chat.
- It was seen that childcare is a barrier to parental engagement sessions making people hesitant to attend but parents acknowledged that it is important that they get a moment to themselves.

Potential suggestions for service development

- Explore holding events which cover a number of different schools/settings based on location.
- Consider joint parent/CYP events.



What would be your preference in terms of intervention location and delivery?

- Many parents said they would like to attend sessions with their children, so they were able to support them and reinforce any messages given at home.
- Some were happy for sessions to take place in school, at a community centre or some of the old sure start centres that some areas are now using for community purposes.
- Many felt that intervention at school was the best option as for most children and parents it was a place that was close, familiar and that they were used to going to.
- They felt that on-line over teams was not the best method to build up a positive relationship.
- However, some parents felt that school simply didn't understand their needs and having anything happening at school that had any association with mental health would mean that people wouldn't come. Some parents said they felt more comfortable in attending events in community settings such as the Al Hikma Centre for a Harmony Group which focused on women's mental health and well-being.



Potential suggestions for service development

- Explore whether there are any other community areas that we can use for sessions e.g local community centres, libraries, sure start centres
- Who am I leaflets/information on the website– Availability of staff profiles to help with relationship building



What would be your preference in terms of intervention location and delivery?

- It was identified that people wanted there to be more support in the wider community and not just through school, but that people needed an easy to access way of finding out about all the different things that were going on.
- One parent also talked about being scared- fearing the change in how you think, as it a huge part of your identity and sense of self. This change in mindset and a person's acceptance of this is crucial when looking at successful strategies to improve mental health and wellbeing.
- Parents liked the idea of someone ringing to introduce themselves before they met as they felt this made people feel more comfortable.
- For students, parents suggested that intervention is done in school and made to feel as if it is part of the curriculum.
- One parent talked about their experience of doing some sessions at school in a small group of only three people, which still felt quite personal. They liked the fact that they were given a code at the start of the session so that they could message a question privately.



Potential suggestions for service development

- Encourage parents/carers to become wellbeing champions for their community
- Explore the use of technology to encourage parents to ask questions.
- Development of workshops/sessions focused on a change in thought patterns linked to self-identity



What is the most effective way for you to receive updates/information about the MHST?

- Some parents felt that information sessions in schools that both parents and children could attend were useful as that would also encourage parents and their children to talk about mental health.
- It was important that the service is seen and presence in the school playground and word of mouth about the service were other ways that parents felt they would get information about the service.
- Most parents were happy to receive updates by text and emails as they said this was the way that most other companies/services provided updates. Social media was also mentioned
- Others thought the updates should come through school, as they were more likely to be read. They needed to be short and snappy.
- Coffee mornings didn't always work as they tended to be at the same time every week and therefore excluded people who worked full time or had a changing shift pattern.
- It was thought events would be more engaging if translators were present or people were able to take a friend with them.



Potential suggestions for service development

- Develop a social media presence so that parents/carers can be updated on events concerning mental health
- Review location of PCW support. Are there any other places in the community that we would be able to access for drop ins or gain access/support from translators who may be working with other services?



What do you think are the barriers for parents working with the MHST?

- Many mentioned the stigma and taboo that is still attached to the term “mental health” and the work that needs to be done regarding normalisation of conversations regarding mental health.
- One parent also stated that for men it was clearly signposted where they could go for support in terms of the well-publicised Andy Man’s Club but she didn’t think that one this one point of call for women who were concerned about their mental health.
- Time constraints were deemed to be a key factor in accessing support, especially for single parents. Childcare was identified by many parents as an issue.
- Many mentioned their husbands or partners and the stigma that was still strong with men and mental health, struggling to admit when they are worried or depressed. They were concerned about this pattern of behaviour being passed onto their sons as being the norm.
- The importance of finding the right person for you or your child, someone that they are comfortable with and that you are happy speaking to was mentioned as a barrier.



Potential suggestions for service development

- Clear signposting for women’s mental health groups (could relate to specific times of life-postnatal/menopausal) advertised by both PCWs and clearly identified on our website
- Develop links with other services who can identify key workers who can support with language barriers within specific communities



What do you think are the barriers for parents working with the MHST?

- A lack of knowledge was identified as a key barrier, if parents didn't know what services were available how could they use them. Onward signposting if a service couldn't meet their needs is required.
- Language was identified by many parents as a barrier that related to other parents in the community. For some people, their English may be good enough to understand a conversation but their level of reading of either English or their first language may not enable them to access resources.
- In some communities, having the permission of a partner was also something that was identified as a barrier. By asking for help it could be seen by some in the community that they were failing as a mother.
- There is an association between mental health and being vulnerable which encourages people to keep things to themselves and not to share. There is also a sense of embarrassment when asking for help.
- People might struggle as their children become older and would like the ability to be able to chat to staff about concerns on a more informal basis at secondary school.



Potential suggestions for service development

- Clear signposting for women's mental health groups (could relate to specific times of life-postnatal/menopausal) advertised by both PCWs and clearly identified on our website
- Develop links with other services who can identify key workers who can support with language barriers within specific communities



What are the main concerns that you have regarding your child's needs?

- Support with additional needs
- How to cope when your young person has a phone- awareness of social media and the impact that it can have on young people
- Transition to secondary school,. Parents want to deal with this separately to their children as they don't want to alarm them by showing they are also worried about this change
- Self-confidence and the emphasis from school and society on academic ability
- Anxiety
- Sleep/night terrors
- Worry over medical conditions
- Support for young carers
- Behaviour and the feelings of failing as a parent when your child misbehaves at school
- Exam pressure
- Children meeting the correct developmental stages
- That children are encouraged to share their feelings with teachers and are appropriately supported
- Dealing with puberty
- Supporting children with separation/divorce
- Impact of covid on child development/socialisation



Potential suggestions for service development

- Regularly review and develop the workshop offer and resources on the website to make sure that they reflect the current needs of parents. This could include a frequently asked questions section on the website that is regularly updated.



What does good support look like to you?

- Most parents really appreciate the one-to-one support, they wanted someone who could get to know them and their children.
- Someone who was consistent and a good listener.
- Someone who was confident and knowledgeable on services available and the procedures to access these services.
- Many said that for support to be effective they would appreciate it over a longer period, but they would need clear signposting as to where they could access additional or further support once their allocated time was up.
- If they were to have support in a group, it would need to be a small group with perhaps only two or three people.
- Some parents thought schools needed to do some more work regarding mental health and more opportunities for parents to discuss concerns.
- It was acknowledged that sometimes it is easier to access support from professionals as getting support from family and friends may sometimes result in bias or judgements.
- One parent also talked about the transition between primary and secondary school and the limited information that is passed on between the schools.



Potential suggestions for service development

- Feedback views of parents/carers to staff and incorporate what good support looks like into induction programmes/staff training
- Identify key staff that parents could speak to about our service/mental health issues on display boards when we attend a parents evenings/school events
- Attend open evenings for new parents at secondary schools



How would you like to refer to the service?

- Parents felt they needed to be able to have a mechanism to refer themselves but liked having the support of school to confirm that they too thought there was an issue that needed further support.
- A self-referral process was identified as being empowering to parents as they felt they had an element of control over the situation.
- They thought that it was important that parents and schools worked together to meet the needs of the child.
- Some parents felt that referring through school felt as if there was an element of judgement on them.
- Although some parents would be happy to do a self-referral via a website, they did not think that this would be a viable option for some of the parents in their community.
- Some parents really appreciated when they had been referred by school to a parenting course offered by our service as they said they would have not known that these things were available to them.
- For any referral, parents identified that the route needs to clear, what can the service offer you, when and how will they contact you and what are the time frames involved. It was important for parents for services to be open and transparent with regards to time frames and waiting lists.



Potential suggestions for service development

- Make sure that the process is clear to schools and parents/carers and well communicated to all
- Clear signposting and information about the different things that can be offered by the service that reflects current staffing capacity
- Regularly revisit and review the need for self-referral mechanism



How do you think we could further engage parents with our service?

- Mental health is still seen by many as a taboo topic by some effecting engagement with some families.
- People need reassurance that it is ok to talk about mental health and this takes times as well as involvement of several different services with a consistent and positive message concerning mental health.
- Some parents said that the name of our service was a barrier.
- Parents identified that we needed to make them regularly aware of our service by having a presence at school events and parents' evenings. It was thought that if they had an issue and saw someone there who they thought might be able to help them, they would be more likely to talk about it. A case of being in the right place at the right time.
- It was also seen that we need greater publicity of our services
- To engage more parents, it was seen to be important to engage the children. It was suggested that we could subsidise events at play gyms and discuss our services with parents there.



Potential suggestions for service development

- Review of schools who have been part of the My Happy Minds project- impact and use of the app by parents.
- Explore cost of hiring out community settings for service introduction sessions involving parents and children
- Develop links with other services so they can promote our offer to parents/communities that they engage with



How do you think we could further engage parents with our service?

- Some parents still appreciated having information on a leaflet in book bags for primary school children.
- For secondary school, parents suggested posters advertising our services as they thought that students there were more likely to look at them.
- Having a website was seen as crucial by several parents so they could see details of our service and have a 'one stop shop' for everything they needed regarding their child's mental health.
- The routes for early support need to be clearly identified and explained. School websites need to have links to our services and perhaps an introductory video about what it is exactly that we do.
- Translated materials and services are needed to increase accessibility.



Potential suggestions for service development

- Make sure that the process is clear to schools and parents/carers and well communicated to all
- Regularly revisit and review the need for self-referral mechanism
- Ensure resources as accessible e.g. translators and translated materials.
- Create an introductory video



Where do you think would be a good place to hold an engagement event for parents in Kirklees? What would encourage you to attend and what sort of facilities would you want it to have?



- It needs to be somewhere local to parents where they don't have to travel. It is also important that it is accessible for prams and wheelchairs.
- Some parents said that these events needed to be held in a local school as for many this was already a place where they felt comfortable. Having to go somewhere outside of their comfort zone would put people off. For others, they would prefer their local community centre or hub.
- There would also need to be childcare available with children able to play nearby so parents were able to engage properly.
- Numerous smaller shorter sessions based on specific topics as opposed to just one long one.
- It was acknowledged by parents how difficult it was to get people to attend these sorts of things and how it was very community specific.
- The town hall in Dewsbury was suggested as a suitable place for such an event. The Al-Hikma centre in Batley was also identified as a suitable place.

Thank you

**For further information, please contact
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