Mental Health Literacy & Wellbeing in Schools: What Works?

Date 4.07.17

Dr Helen Pote

Why is the mental health of young people important?

Mental health problems are common

- 850,000 children aged 5-16 have mental health problems (1 in 10 children)
- Three children in every classroom have a diagnosable mental health disorder.

We have successful treatments

- Universal approaches
- Targeted support

Child mental Health Problems lead to Adult mental health problems

Of those with mental health problems in adult life

    50% start by the age 14

    75% start by the age of 24

£34bn + £1.4b

Mental health problems link to a range of other difficulties

- Poor school attainment
- Exclusions
- Teenage pregnancy
- Prison sentence
- Drug dependency

Five Year Forward for Mental Health Government Response (2017)

£1.4Billion Investment in Child Mental Health 2017-20

➤ Making mental health first-aid training available to all secondary schools, with the aim of having trained at least one teacher in every secondary school by 2019

➤ Evaluating different approaches which schools can use to prevent mental ill-health

➤ Launching a pilot programme on peer support for young people in schools and online

➤ Possible Care Quality Commission & Ofsted joint inspections on children's mental health and wellbeing.

➤ Publishing a Green Paper on children and young people's mental health later this year

➤ £20 million to Time to Change anti-stigma programme, improving the attitudes of young people towards mental health and reaching 1.75 million young people by 2020

➤ Reporting on the prevalence of mental health conditions in children and young people by 2018

Political 'Push' for Mental Health First Aid?

Government puts £200k behind plan for mental health first-aiders in every secondary

Adi Bloom
27th June 2017, TES

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Seema and her stomach aches…

Stomach aches

Missing lessons and school days

Not eating regularly

Not sleeping and Waking early

What is Mental Health Literacy?

Promotion of wellbeing

Attitudes/stigma towards mental health

Recognition of mental health problems

Knowledge about mental health problems

School Mental Health Interventions

Promotion	**Universal (staff & pupils)** Mental Health Literacy Wellbeing
Prevention	**Indicated (pupils)** At Risk MHP
Treatment	**Targeted (pupils)** MHP clinical levels

What works?
1. A whole school approach

Public Health England (2015)

Implementation is key: SEAL Programme 2007-2010

There are five **S**ocial and **E**motional **A**spects of **L**earning:
social skills · self-awareness · SEAL · managing feelings · empathy · motivation

X social and emotion skills

X mental health difficulties

X pro-social behaviour

X behaviour problems

X school climate (trust, supportiveness, liking school)

X effects did not last

Evaluation
20017-2010
Year 7 Pupils
N=8630

➢ Patchy Implementation of whole school approach
➢ Selective/Tick box approach to components
➢ Sustaining time and effort long-term was difficult

What works?
2. Interventions based on need

How are things?

Date: ☐☐ / ☐☐ / 20☐☐   Time: ☐☐h ☐☐m

Below is a questionnaire which is going to ask you how you feel. There are no right or wrong answers. You should just pick the answer which is best for you. For example, we might ask "I feel happy", and then you will have to mark one of the options that say "Never", "Sometimes" or "Always"

		0	1	2
1	I get very angry	Never	Sometimes	Always
2	I lose my temper	Never	Sometimes	Always
3	I hit out when I am angry	Never	Sometimes	Always
4	I do things to hurt people	Never	Sometimes	Always
5	I am calm*	Always	Sometimes	Never
6	I break things on purpose	Never	Sometimes	Always
7	I bully others	Never	Sometimes	Always

Resilience = successful adaptation in the presence of adversity. Bouncing back. An ongoing, interactive process.

- **UK Resilience Project** from 2007 (Challen, Noden, West & Machin, 2011).

- Year 7 pupils universal (N=2000)

- 18 hour manualised programme of resilience workshops

- Delivered by teachers

- Controlled comparison

✓ depression symptom scores

✓ school attendance rates

✓ academic attainment in English.

X Anxiety, Behaviour, Maths and Life Satisfaction

✓ Weekly workshops showed a larger impact than those timetabled fortnightly'

✓ 'At risk' Pupils showed more improvements which lasted longer

Resilience

Recognise signs of Mental Health Problems

Understand Child Development Attachment

Manage own stress and wellbeing

Knowledge Mental Health Problems

Refer Appropriately

Evidence Based Resources for Staff Training Families & Older Pupils

1. **Recognition of Mental Health Problems: Validated screening tools**

-   **Strengths & Difficulties Questionnaire/ Me & My Feelings**
    http://www.corc.uk.net/

-   **MHL Survey**

2. **Knowledge of Mental Health Problems:** www.MindEd.org.uk online training sessions for staff and pupils on common mental health problems

3. **Child Development & Attachment Theory**: Solihull Approach Training: The School Years (Douglas, 2011). Child and Adolescent Mental Health, including risk and preventative factors and the early identification of mental health difficulties.

4. **Refer on:** New Thrive model of assessing and managing need http://www.annafreud.org/service-improvement/service-improvement-resources/thrive/

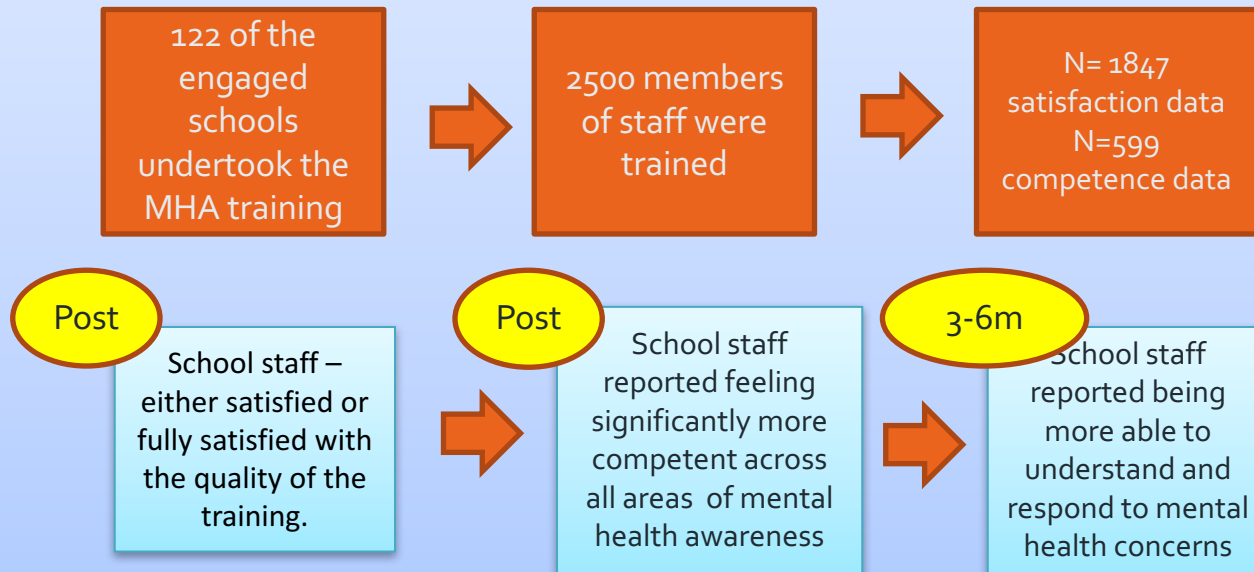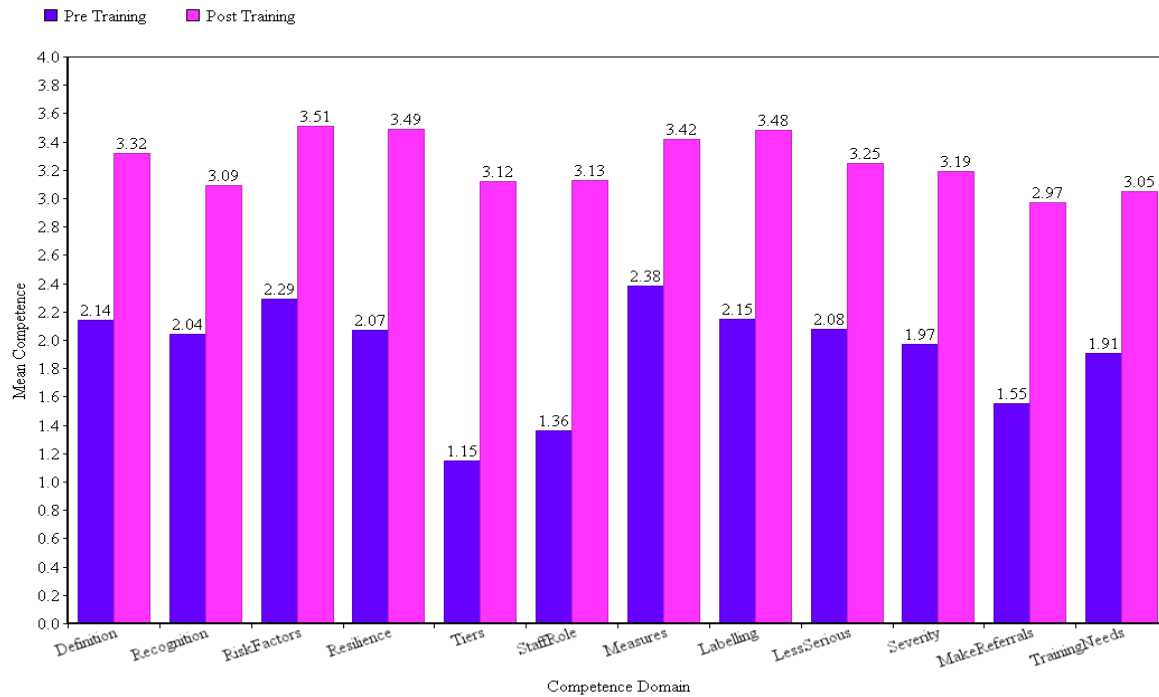5. **Managing own stress and wellbeing**: Mindfulness (Weare, 2014).

Core Offer

1. Mental Health Awareness Training for all school staff (3 hours)

2. Staff consultations and in school support from Primary Mental Health Workers

3. Attachment Training for all school staff (1.5 hours)

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

camhs
Surrey Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

Royal Holloway
University of London

Babcock 4S

385 schools in Surrey →122 Schools Trained

| 122 of the engaged schools undertook the MHA training | → | 2500 members of staff were trained | → | N= 1847 satisfaction data N=599 competence data |

Post

| School staff – either satisfied or fully satisfied with the quality of the training. | → | School staff reported feeling significantly more competent across all areas of mental health awareness | → | School staff reported being more able to understand and respond to mental health concerns |

Post

3-6m

Staff Competence Improvements

Mindfulness involves learning to direct our attention to our experience as it is unfolding, moment by moment, with open-minded curiosity and acceptance (Kabat-Zinn 1996).

Meditation - paying close attention to inner states such as thoughts, emotions and physical sensations, as well as to what is happening in the outside world. Present focussed acceptance of emotional states.

www.mindfulnessinschools.org

www.headspace.com

Mind Full, or Mindful?

Conclusions for schools for MHL and Wellbeing

Changes in Pupil outcomes are usually small for Universal approaches but have real life impacts

Maximise effectiveness :

➤ Take a whole school approach

➤ Design Interventions Based on Need

➤ Thorough Implementation is key over time

➤ Teach Staff and Pupils Actively in small groups

➤ Evaluate Impact (with comparison groups if possible)

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