



Mid and South Essex Mental Health Support Team

Newsletter

Introduction



Welcome to the second edition of the Mid and South Essex Mental Health Support Teams (MHSTs) newsletter. We recognise this period continues to be a challenging time as we adjust to schools returning and routines being re-established. The effects of the pandemic and recovery will take some time but mental health and emotional wellbeing remains a high priority for children and young people in Mid and South Essex.

We would like to thank all those who have continued to support MHSTs and worked closely with us to implement teams across Mid and South Essex.

MHSTs is a newly designed service being jointly delivered by NHS England and Department for Education. Mid and South Essex Health and Care Partnership partner with NELFT to provide MHSTs and implementation has been undertaken with a collaborative approach, working together with stakeholders to design and deliver MHSTs across Mid and South Essex.

This newsletter provides further information on the progress and development Mid and South Essex MHSTs. To find out more about MHSTs please visit [Mid and South Essex Partnership website](#).

Helen Farmer, Interim Children's & Young People Director, Mid and South Essex Health and Care Partnership

Mid and South Essex MHST Updates

Wave 1

We have three MHSTs teams working with 25 education settings in: Further Education, Thurrock and Southend.

Wave 4

With continued support to expand, further implementation of MHSTs has been successful. We have three MHSTs based

across Basildon, Braintree and Maldon (as part of Wave 4 2020/21 National NHS England programme). The EMHPS are currently in training at Reading University and working in placement schools. These teams are due to 'go live' in January 2022 and will be working across 33 primary and secondary schools.

New Teams – Wave 5, 7-9

We are pleased to have had confirmation by NHSE of an additional 7 MHSTs for Essex over the next three years (between 2022 and 2025). The first two of these MHSTs will join in January 2022 with these new teams being based in Canvey Island, Castle Point and Rochford.

Partnership Working

Benefits of multi-agency work

Mental Health Support Teams work with pupils, parents and staff across schools. However, we are not the only agency supporting schools. This means we often have to link in with other agencies in order to find out what service support is most appropriate.

Ways that our team have been working with other agencies include:

- Liaising with them about individual cases
- Sending on referrals if their support is more appropriate
- Joint working on individual cases or whole school approach work, like school assemblies

One recent example of multi-agency working was a parent coffee morning hosted by Benyon Primary School. This welcomed new parents to the school and introduced them to different services in the school and local community. This included two of our own practitioners, the School Wellbeing Service, School Health Service, Community Builders, the speech and language therapist and school SENCO.



The session was very successful as it introduced new parents to one another and the school. It also helped parents see what support is available. Additionally, it allowed services to get to know one other and find out more about what support they offer. The assistant headteacher was very proud of the session and will be hosting another one to engage even more parents. It was a great example of how beneficial it can be to meet other services and work together to support parents.

We always find ways to meet other services as we know working together is a great way to find the best support for our families and young people.

Hannah Clayton, Assistant Psychologist

Whole School Approaches

Looking after Staff Wellbeing

There has been a recent focus in schools on staff wellbeing. Working and living in uncertain times has impacted personal health and happiness. It's been more difficult to connect with others or attend our usual leisure activities due to COVID restrictions. School and MHST staff have had to work in ways that they've never had to before and be open to all these changes. It is important that staff wellbeing is considered so they feel happy, supported and appreciated at work. This can also contribute to their overall productivity.

MHSTs have supported schools with putting this into practice. We helped one school in Thurrock create a wellbeing board in their staff room. To do this, we gathered colourful and informative material that the school now uses for their display board. This included daily mindfulness challenges, top tips for looking after your wellbeing, positive affirmations and self-care tips. This is just one way that schools have started to embed staff wellbeing in their workplace.

The Five Ways to Wellbeing

The Five Ways to Wellbeing are a set of practical actions aimed to improve our mental health and wellbeing. Evidence shows that positive experiences can influence how we think and behave, enhancing our emotional resilience.

The Five Ways to Wellbeing are simple and achievable for everyone. Our team encourages children, young people, parents and school staff to apply them to their day to day lives.

We have included some examples from this staff board below, as we have found these are useful for both school staff and staff in our own team, to remind us that our wellbeing is important too:

- "If you're only kind to yourself when you think you deserve it, it's a bit like only watering a plant when it flowers. You can't flourish without it".
- Remember to connect with others, this may be through talking or doing an activity with someone.
- Keep active and get plenty of rest.
- Eat well.
- Set boundaries.
- Take a break and focus on your own self-care.
- "Taking care of myself doesn't mean 'me first',

*Melissa Amato,
EMHP, Thurrock MHST*



MHSTs have been supporting schools and colleges to develop a **Wellbeing Action Plan** based upon the 5 Ways to Wellbeing.

This plan includes a mood scale for the beginning of each week, followed by a combination of the Five Ways to Wellbeing, ending with re-rating mood on the scale at the end of each week. It also includes wellbeing apps and support line phone numbers.

The idea behind the Wellbeing Action Plan is to promote independence, self-

management, and resilience. This is to help reduce the strain within schools' pastoral teams and support a positive whole school approach to wellbeing.

Amy Loughlin, SMHP, Southend MHST.



Delivering Workshops

We have been delivering the 'My Emotions' workshop to Year 3 pupils at Great Bradfords Junior School. We have introduced emotions, how they affect our thoughts, physical, emotional sensations and feelings and what the children can do to manage these feelings using the Zones of Regulation.



The children have been very engaged and shown great enthusiasm throughout the workshop, with staff and class teacher modelling the techniques and language to the children in class. Parents receive weekly updates of the session content through children's reading logs and the class are creating a display board of the

workshop and Zones of Regulations to continue with their learning process.

The staff are now introducing the Zones of Regulation to the whole school, to provide a Whole School Approach to well-being.

It has been great pleasure working with this school and we will continue to liaise with them in plans of delivering the workshop to the other year 3 classes.

Alice Miller and Cansu Yilmaz, Trainee EMHPS, Braintree MHST



Co-Production with Enable East

The Assurance Group commissioned the co-production of materials to promote the development of MHSTs. This included the development of this newsletter template which we are distributing termly to help highlight the work MHSTs are doing.

We also created short animated films for primary schools, [MHST Primary schools animation - YouTube](#) secondary schools [MHST Secondary schools animation - YouTube](#) and colleges [MHST College animation - YouTube](#) The films and links can be put onto school/college websites to help explain to pupils and parents about MHSTs.



We also co-designed a service charter outlining the pledges that young people and their families would like the service to achieve, which can also be displayed in schools or on school websites.

The MHST's 10 Promises

- 

1. We'll be **confidential, friendly, safe and trustworthy**
- 

2. We'll be **flexible** and try our best to meet with you at a **suitable time and place that you choose**
- 

3. You'll meet the same person each time and you can rely on them to meet you when they said they would and to be **supportive and well prepared**
- 

4. Our sessions with you will be **specially organised for you**
- 

5. We'll agree at the beginning **what things you want to work on** and we'll check each week to see how things are developing or changing for you, then again at the end of the sessions
- 

6. Our aim will be to **help you help yourself** and feel more able to do all the things you want to
- 

7. We'll have lots of different ideas and suggestions for how you can **support yourself and make helpful changes**
- 

8. We'll be **positive, encouraging and reliable**
- 

9. If you contact us we'll always give you an answer **as quickly as we can**
- 

10. If we aren't the right place for you to get help for your mental health, **we'll be able to suggest where we think might be right for you**

Feedback

"We have welcomed the introduction of the MHST in school, they are a great asset to the school and provide invaluable support for both our learners and for our staff. They have been confidently delivering 1-1 and small group interventions to improve the mental health and wellbeing of our learners. They are all very approachable and always have a smile on their faces, which has a positive impact on the learners and staff who meet with them." (*Honywood school, Braintree*)

"Thank you so much, we don't know what we would have done if we could not have been seen, this has made such a difference." (*Parent*)

"I am now confident and understand my emotions, I know better ways to deal with them." (*YP*)

"I would like to add that both EMHPs have been a pleasure to work with and the service is proving invaluable. To date, they have provided highly professional, friendly support for many of our children and families through 1:1 sessions, and whole class and small group workshops." (*Great Bradfords School, Braintree*)

"The communication has been excellent as they keep us informed every step of the process, from referrals to final letters. We are genuinely grateful for their support and have been really impressed with the work they have undertaken so far. We look forward to continuing working together in the future." (*Great Bradfords School, Braintree*)

Useful Links and Resources for Education

Anna Freud Websites includes:

- [Mentally Healthy Schools and Colleges](#)
- [Schools and Colleges page](#)

Every mind matters

- [Looking after children and young people during the C19 pandemic](#)

Place 2 Be:

- [Mental Health Resources for Schools](#)

