

CYP mental health engagement and co-production with Rock FM

October/November 2022



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Introduction

At any one time, one in 10 children and young people have a diagnosable mental health problem, and it is well established that most adolescent and adult mental illness can be traced back to childhood.

Addressing issues early helps individuals and society – that message needs a powerful voice.

The mental wellbeing of children has been a subject of concern over recent years, even more so since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Between 2017 and 2021, rates of probable mental disorder in childhood rose dramatically; for 6-16 year olds the rise was from one in nine to one in six children ([NHS digital 2021](#)). This reinforces the need for sustained efforts to promote good mental wellbeing and reduce inequalities.

Around half of children who will go on to have a mental health difficulty as adults have already begun to experience symptoms by the age of 14. Getting the right help to children early can limit or prevent pain and distress, as well as reducing the need for costly mental health support later in their lives.

With the increase in self harm and suspected youth suicides in Lancashire and South Cumbria (L&SC) the ICB wanted to coproduce a mental health message for young people created by young people.

In October/November of 2022 NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB) held four children and young people workshops with pupils from four local secondary schools, with experience of suicide and mental health issues, to discuss the key questions to refresh the ICB children and young people mental health strategy and campaign. This document aims to summarise the key themes raised by students from Haslingden High School in Rossendale, St Mary's Catholic Academy in Blackpool, Our Lady's Catholic Academy in Lancaster and Coal Clough Academy in Burnley.

Each school attended one session that was facilitated by ICB staff and supported by health care professionals to ensure at all points the young people were supported.

The workshops

The young people who attended were selected by the school, due to having experience in some way of suicide, self-harm and mental health, and with an interest in making a difference. The sessions were small and run from Rock FM headquarters in Preston between 6 October and 1 November with the age ranging from children in year 9-11, with a representation of the children and young people local communities in L&SC.

There were 35 young people that attended the sessions with support from their school pastoral team and primary mental health workers. Before the after support was put in place for each session and schools were offered any follow up support required. All young people taking part had a knowledge of the purpose for the sessions before arriving and all had covered the topics discussed in school PHSE lessons.

Workshop objectives:

1. Understand what “mental health” means to young people and how they cope with adverse mental health.
2. Gaining a children and young people view on service provision and accessibility.
3. Co-production of phase 2 of the children and young people campaign in L&SC.
4. Test and gain feedback on the children and young people campaign assets.
5. Produce relevant campaign suggestions that will shape the next year’s campaign.
6. Produce a radio advert that reflects what children and young people are experiencing in L&SC

Predicted outcomes:

- Gain a better understanding of:
 - What “mental health” means to these young people.
 - What is currently troubling these young people.
 - How young people cope with adverse mental health.
 - Whether or not young people know what support services are out there for them.
 - What are the most popular avenues children and young people use to gain support?
 - Introduce Healthy Young Minds as a resource and referral point for services.
 - Producing a radio ad for Rock FM to air for the autumn/winter campaign.
 - Coproduce the phase 2 children and young people campaign for L&SC.
 - Share overall themes with stakeholders.

Workshop structure:

Part 1 – Mental health, what does it mean to you?

Part 2 – Campaign feedback – focus group session – testing the children and young people campaign assets.

Part 3 – Afternoon session – production of the children and young people mental health radio adverts – facilitated by Rock FM staff with the call to action being ‘visit healthy young minds LSC’.

The session was kept light and impersonal with options for breakaway time and additional support throughout all the sessions.

The radio recordings for all the sessions were firstly shared with the schools and consent from parents and guardians meant we could share the pictures and content with ICB partners. All schools have access and permission to use these adverts within their own environment, social media platforms and lessons.

Key themes

Summary

- Young people are resilient and don't always want to be seen as fragile
- All young people attended wanted to be asked what the problems they were experiencing, not assumed that due to history are where they lived, they had problems.
- Young people want to be involved in things that influence change and see their input making a difference in areas that they needed to see change.
- Young people aren't always shocked by the outside world as adults are. What they see as normal isn't always what adults see.
- Social media platforms are the best way to communicate support to children and young people.
- The call to actions should be on QR codes and a website option.
- Continue to support Online safety bill to help protect young people to be protected from areas they shouldn't be exposed to.
- Advertise on buses, trains, toilet doors and within advertising spaces on social media platforms.
- One source of resources for support at a time – for example targeting anxiety, depression, eating disorders means that people access service relevant instead of generic services that aren't relevant.
- Working with young people to be able to support friends toward support.
- Devise "touch points" for support publications for each person involved.
- Increase positive reporting of mental health services as the reported stories are a barrier to people accessing services when needed.
- Increase schools staff skills and knowledge about mental health services available and how to be mentally healthy.

Part 1 – mental health, what does it mean to you?

The five ways to wellbeing have been used to theme the feedback the workshop discussions [5 Ways to Wellbeing | Lancashire Mind](#)

Connect – identifying the support available

We used a video to help facilitate the discussion around mental health and stigma leading to the young people talking about support services they would use.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nvRD4ymj2iq>

- Pastoral support in school is approachable
- Mentors in school
- Cultural awareness
- Parents
- CASHER
- CAMSH
- Trusted adults

- Kooth
- Papyrus
- Childline

There was a large consensus for support to be offered face to face as they appreciate contact with others and be able to see who they are talking to. They voiced caution regarding submitting details to online services due to the thought of getting in trouble or others finding out where they lived.

The young people were wary of using QR as they think that services will track them, and they will receive lots of advertising regarding services. The young people were very culturally and ethnically aware but didn't have any services that would meet the need of friends within these areas to signpost too. The need for more information regarding key "touch point" services for all areas was evident as a lot didn't know where to look outside of the school setting. They wanted to make sure that all people in the process could signpost people appropriately so parents, teachers, friends, doctors, nurses and community services.

Keep learning – things that worry young people

- Exam stress
- Pressure from home
- Bullying
- Banter that goes too far
- Financial pressures
- Restriction from all angles
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Self-harm
- Eating disorders
- Social isolation
- Loss of friendships
- Loss of family
- Body dysmorphia
- Not having the same money as others
- Not having the same things as other
- Jealousy of others
- Scared of being different
- ADHD and lack of knowledge and support
- Having to look at certain way
- Being overweight
- Other people's expectations
- Keeping up with trends
- How they see their body
- Fault confidence
- Harmful comments
- Feeling as if you can't wear something because only skinny people wear them
- Not being pretty
- Being seen as soft or weak
- Going against your friends' group
- Childhood trauma
- Revisiting that trauma
- Starting the conversation – how do you
- Men talk to girls not to each other's
- Discrimination
- People trying to get into your head
- Comparing lifestyles
- Misplaced banter
- Ethnic differences
- Alcoholism
- Drug use
- Gambling
- Divorce
- Social media
- Sleep deprivations
- Parents mental health issues
- Not being listened to
- Workloads and pressures
- Sexuality

The overall opinion of being overwhelmed and continuously attached to the world was the norm for the young people. They know how much time to spend on their phones, tablets, games and computers but they feel a need to be connected. The majority of the young people had hobbies and interests which took them outside but still the average phone usage for the young people attending the sessions was 9 hours day on phones during a normal school day and there were some extremes to that figure.

Peer support seemed to be the biggest area that affected the young people during school hours as most of the young people said that misplaced banter and people just trying to get in your head and mess with you, was the biggest effect on their Mental health, closely followed by academic pressures, unhealthy friendships, anxiety and self-harm.

The perception was that girls suffer from depression and boys suffer from anxiety came through all the sessions. The opinion is still boys do not talk about their issues and wouldn't feel comfortable if people talked about it. On the whole the boys said they learnt how to deal with situations from male role models in their lives and that Mental health still had a strong stigma attached to it, that would stop young people speaking up until they needed too.

Give – what you can give for others

- Stigma of mental health was the main reason why young people wouldn't seek help, with lack of access being a close second. Young people listen to messages they hear on the news and from others they know, to form decisions.
- The young people talked about girls talking about things but not always helping each other and sometimes making the problem worse
- Both boys and girls prefer to find a good friend or family member they trust to test out subjects that are worrying them to see if they can cope with the discussion before offloading problems.
- The boys talked about not looking soft or weak in their friend's groups and how information you talked about being used to take the mickey at a later date.
- All the young people that attended said they had a trusted adult that they felt they would approach if they needed both inside school and outside.
- The young people had a touch point in the school that they would talk to and felt comfortable with difficult subjects.
- The young people felt comfortable with friends and teachers approaching them about any concerns but didn't know if they would always know where to signpost you to or how to deal with the problems.
- Concern about using QR code due to tracking phones and being able to find you
- Getting into trouble for accessing support sites.
- The boys discussed learning how to deal with things from males in their lives – on the whole men don't talk about their feelings as it shows you're soft.

Through the discussion it was clear that the young people wanted the knowledge but didn't always feel that they would be able to direct people to support and wanted clear indication of a responsible adult to signpost to – not to pass the book, but to make sure the information was correct and that they were able to maintain relationships that would be a positive influence in their lives.

It came across that if young people had a school trusted adult that they felt confident to confide in and the same at outside of school they would feel more comfortable to discuss most matters that worry them.

The young people felt there is a lot of information out there and they would be afraid of getting it wrong.

Be active – things that break the cycle of poor mental health

- Talking to people
- Distraction yourself
- Going on your phone and see what's new
- Laughing at TikTok videos
- Getting away from stressful situation
- Crying

- Shouting
- Screaming
- Listening to music
- Going for a walk
- Cooking
- Gaming
- Exercise
- Playing a musical instrument
- Reading a book
- Going for a ride on your bike
- Going to the gym

Mindfulness – positive ways of moving forward

- The young people identified that their family unit is still a strong influence in their lives.
- Hobbies and interests are a good way of adapting messages and relating to young people regardless of people's background or cultural needs.
- young people said that trust is a two-way street and can be fragile and broken if people aren't trustful.
- Using hobbies and interests such as biking, skating, gaming and music to promote support services.

There were some great suggestions of strategies that the young people use to destress and deal with situations such as loud music, chatting online, playing instruments, talking to family/friends, making plans with people and they like when professionals make this suggestion but feel that the strategy needs to be appropriate to the incident and come from a personal place not from a tick list.

Even though the young people had suggestions of what they would do to manage their own Mental health, they didn't always know about other ways if they stopped working. We discussed developing a toolbox of tricks and tips for things that worked for them and reflected on the five ways of wellbeing to help identify their coping strategies, but this seemed like an area the young people could do with some more relatable ideas.

Part 2 – campaign assets feedback

Headlines

- Keep messages simple.
- Not too wordy.
- With campaigns having realistic imagery to depict the audience you are targeting.
- Website and QR code for signposting as both are used by children and young people.
- Relative to the audience – Know who you are aiming it towards as one size doesn't fit all.
- Target through music download sites, email adverts, YouTube adverts and adverts on gaming sites.
- Use Facebook and Instagram to support parents.



An image that showed that stresses seem to keep on coming in and there is no release.

Effective channels to reach young people

- School social media platforms
- Through hobbies and interests
- YouTube advertise as young people don't pay for premium
- Facebook marketplace as that where young people look for bargains
- Spotify as advert must be watched
- Snapchat
- Instagram
- Be real
- TikTok
- Read apps – such as Wattpad
- We duck – for parents
- Twitter pages with target short messages with responses for people concerns
- School newsletter
- PHSE lessons
- YouTube shorts
- Side of buses
- Hospital or doctors waiting rooms
- Taxi waiting rooms
- Changing rooms in gyms
- Billboards
- The back of toilet doors
- Youth clubs
- Swimming clubs
- Athletic club

Concepts feedback

All the young people were asked question regarding each concept to prompt feedback

- Do you like the images?
- Do you like the colour of the wording?
- Do you like the way the message is delivered?
- Overall comments?
- What message would you like to see, that would get to connect if needed?

Concept 1



Comments		
Okay for parents	It looks like an academic open day poster	Less wordy, too busy
Feels like you are mocking YOUNG PEOPLE	If you are going for the personal issue use "are you" affected as seeking help is personal	"Speak out", "reach out" "Stop the thoughts"
Help is available makes me feel as though I'm sick	Not realistic – all girls?	Social media focus
"Here to help"	Keep it short and direct	Sad people don't depict mental health in children and young people
"Need help"	Stay away from sad people	Have a specific aim – to children and young people or parent

“Help”	Make it familiar to the situations YOUNG PEOPLE are going through such as body dysmorphia, self-harm, bullying – make it specific	Red is hard to read
Popular people with speech bubbles about real thoughts and situations	For advertise outside it has to be direct and to the point as when our passing you can’t read that much, that quickly	Come at it from a friend’s point of view
We all struggle from time to time	Maybe not the instruction just the phase and an organisation	Target the issue direct – are you experiencing bullying, help is here

Concept 2



Comment		Recommendations
I like that she is smiling	Picture does fit	Support to a twitter page
Like the pattern but maybe less of it	Feels like a university open day	Could be a Spotify ad
The message stands out	Overwhelming to look at	Catchy words not images for general campaigns
Message is clearer and targeted at specific audience	Recognising signs?	On social media posts keep wording smaller as it makes you read if you’re interested
Could be seen to target only certain groups of people	Additional links to support – we won’t do	Sometimes it’s more than a joke
Like the concept of starting conversation but how?	‘stuck’ read more on HYM	Prefer real people to animations

Concept 3



Comments		Recommendations
Looks like a school advert	Animation could be seen as young	Tell your friend your always there for help
Doesn't catch your eye	Don't always focus on young people being on phones	Writing to be funky
Better quote	I like the cartoon style for serious topics	I like the animation but not the message needs to be relatable
Boring	Needs colour	Only focused on the negative

Concept 4



Comments		Recommendations
Try with different colours	Flashing billboards- "broken" call to action ???	Make the message stay on longer so they have to stay longer
Eye catching	Direct and to the point great for capturing people eye	Use a population shows style to catch people's eye with the first image and message behind
Good for bus stops	Good for Instagram ads	Help is there
Catchy for game apps – pulls you out of the game	On roundabout – quick message needs to be snappy	Stay alive concept – catchy tune, simple message

Recommendations

- The young people's view varied but they were clear about some relevant points that they felt would make a campaign more appealing to young people when talking about mental health.
- Ads to have a clear audience that focuses on one topic not all of them as once.
- Adverts to have a clear message of help, with a call to action that offers a range of help both digital and face to face services.
- Make the advert relevant and familiar to your target audience
- Certain styles will work in specific areas such as animated images in schools and realistic images in the community
- Snappy adverts with "here to help" messages.
- To continue to ask the questions about what children and young people want and how to reach them regularly.
- Look at more youth related platforms to put promotional material on as well as the normal places.

Part three – producing the radio adverts

Great images from the sessions of the (fictitious) young people we made mentally healthy by the end of the day.



Radio adverts can be found [Children and Young People :: NHS works with Rock FM and high school pupils to develop mental health campaign \(healthyyoungmindsLsc.co.uk\)](http://Children and Young People :: NHS works with Rock FM and high school pupils to develop mental health campaign (healthyyoungmindsLsc.co.uk))

The adverts were broadcast daily on Rock FM throughout the whole of November, while the ICB's campaign will launch in the next few months. Helen Parry, one of NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria ICB's suicide prevention leads, said: "Supporting young people to better look after their mental health and wellbeing is a priority for us.

"But to reach young people with our campaign, we know we need to work with them to make sure we're hitting the right note.

"For them to have created their own radio adverts is truly fantastic. Because the adverts are in their words and their voices, we're confident they'll truly resonate with other young people."

Nathaniel Eatwell, designated safeguarding lead at Coal Clough Academy, said: "This has been such a worthwhile and positive experience for our pupils. We know our young people are facing pressures at home, at school, and online, which can negatively affect their mental health.

"We're proud to be part of something which is hopefully going to make a real difference to young people across Lancashire and South Cumbria. Seeing our pupils make such positive contributions during the workshop has been fantastic and I think it will be a day that they'll remember for a long time to come."

Laura Hughes, account manager at Bauer Media Group, said: "Working with the schools on this project has been a total pleasure, and something we're very lucky to be able to do. "The mental health insights we gain from the pupils is invaluable and enabling them to create their own adverts is inspiring and extremely positive."

For any further information or discussions about this piece of work please contact Helen.Parry17@nhs.net

