

Safeguarding Theme of the Month: August 2019 – Mental Health in Young People

Young people and mental health

As well as physical changes to the body and hormones from about age 11, they also experience significant behavioural and emotional changes. There are alterations to the functioning and make up of brain tissue, which is known as brain maturation. This continues until about the age of 30.

The greatest barrier to accessing services is fear of stigma and discrimination.

- Three quarters of adults with mental health problems are not receiving treatment.
- 526,000 workers suffering from work-related stress, depression or anxiety (new or long-standing) in 2017/18
- Working days lost, 2017/18. Stress, depression or anxiety accounted for the majority of days lost due to work-related ill-health, 15.4 million. On average, each person suffering took around 16.5 days off work.
- The main workplace factors causing work related stress anxiety or depressions are: workload pressures, including tight deadlines and too much responsibility and lack of managerial support.
- Suicide rates in Liverpool have doubled since 2008

Suicide and self-harm

Suicide and self-harm are not mental health problems themselves, but they are linked with mental distress. Self-harm is not necessarily linked with suicide, but can increase the risk of suicide. In contrast to statistics on the prevalence of mental health problems, suicide statistics are collected systematically across the UK through coroners' reports. We therefore have a much clearer picture of the number of people who die by suicide than of those affected by mental health problems.

- According to the Office for National Statistics (ONS), in 2016, a total of 6,122 suicides were recorded in the UK for people aged 10 and older (10.8 deaths per 100,000 population). This equates to approximately one death every two hours – a 2% decrease from 2015. Of these, 75.6% were male and 24.4% were female.

Discriminatory language and mental health

Language related to mental health and mental health problems can lead to reinforcing stereotypes and myths about people with mental health problems. It may result in individuals and groups feeling isolated. People with mental health problems can be disadvantaged through the attitudes expressed by people through the language they use. The anti-stigma campaign Time to Change identifies some common phrases that can cause offence and are inaccurate in their description of mental health problems and it suggests possible alternatives for them.

Helplines and support networks

For those in distress or who need to talk someone, the [NHS Choices](#) website lists the following helplines and support networks:

[Samaritans](#) operates a 24-hour service on available every day of the year by calling 116 123, and an email service is available at jo@samaritans.org.

[Childline](#), on 0800 1111, runs a helpline for children and young people in the UK. Calls are free and the number do not show up in the phone bill.

[PAPYRUS](#), 0800 068 4141, is a voluntary organisation supporting teenagers and young adults who are feeling suicidal.

[Depression Alliance](#) is a charity for people with depression. It does not have a helpline, but offers resources and links to other relevant information.

[Students Against Depression](#) is a website for students who are depressed, have a low mood or are having suicidal thoughts.

[Bullying UK](#) is a website for both children and adults affected by bullying

