

HeadStart Hull – Workforce Development

HeadStart Hull's ['Emotional health and wellbeing training plan for organisations working with children, young people and families in Hull'](#) is designed to help implement an embedded, multi-layered community-wide mental health offer to children and young people in Hull, making mental health 'everybody's business'. This framework is part of a whole organisation approach to improving wellbeing in Hull and recognises that effective mental and emotional wellbeing in children and young people depends upon improved awareness & understanding of mental health in those professionals surrounding children, young people and families. It recognises that many children and young people in Hull are growing up in poverty and in areas with high levels of multiple deprivation, and promotes an understanding, amongst professionals, of the risk and protective factors that can, and do, affect their emotional and mental wellbeing.

This training and workforce development plan aims to spread awareness and equip professionals to confidently adopt an evidence-based approach across child, family, social and health services. It acknowledges and responds to different levels of knowledge, skill and awareness that these professionals already have in mental and emotional wellbeing and views relationships between young people and trusted professionals as opportunities to promote young people's mental and emotional wellbeing.

It recognises that frontline workers and non-mental health trained professionals can nevertheless be instrumental in improving the mental health and wellbeing of young people, protecting them from harm and acting upon emerging concerns. It is not designed to equip professionals with the skills to treat diagnosable mental health conditions, but to recognise early signs and symptoms of need and what to do about them; and to promote mental and emotional wellbeing within the scope of their professional capacity. The

Development Plan has different levels of training designed to equip professionals with different skills. These are as follows:

Respond: This provides skills and knowledge to non-pastoral frontline staff (such as admin staff, lunchtime supervisors and care takers) to respond appropriately if a young person raises or discloses an issue, or displays signs of an emotional or mental difficulty. Courses at this level include Youth Mental Health First Aid Awareness, Supporting Family Wellbeing and Having Conversations Around Mental Health.

Initiate: This role trains staff who work with children and young people in less-structured contexts, such as youth workers and teaching assistants. These professionals are trained to use basic intervention skills and techniques to help young people take action against emerging emotional and mental health difficulties. Courses at this level include Self-Harm Awareness, Introduction to Adverse Childhood Experience and Understanding Sleep.

Intervene: These professionals, who already work in a specific role in relation to mental health or wellbeing, are trained to deliver low-level interventions to children and young people individually or in groups. They are trained to use appropriate techniques to support young people in managing and maintaining positive change. Courses at this level include Applied Suicide Intervention Skills, CBT Skills for Staff Supporting Young People with Anxiety and Self-Harm Response.

Influence: These roles are aimed at professionals who already provide support, training and education to others and who are able to influence policy and/or practice around young people's mental and emotional health & wellbeing. This may be in roles working directly with children and young people or management (e.g. designated lead for mental health). They can be involved in promoting new approaches, networking with other organisations and supporting colleagues to develop practice in the respond, initiate and intervene

levels. Courses at this level include Developing a Whole Organisational Approach to Mental Health, Development Programme for School Mental Health Leads and Developing your School's Mental Health Policy.

This plan is currently active and aims to equip staff in a range of capacities to help ensure 'the right person, with the right skills to be in the right place'¹ to identify, support and refer children, young people, families and communities around emotional wellbeing and mental health.

In doing so, it is hoped to support services to improve lifestyles among a significant group of young people and to alleviate pressure from clinical and specialist services by embedding preventative and social support strategies in the systems already designed for and used by young people and is a fluid programme, which recognises that organisations have staff trained at different levels. The Plan is designed to enhance the capacity of the children and young people's workforce in supporting mental health needs and it responds to, rather than changes, the roles and capacities of professionals already working with young people, therefore promoting an embedded and organic mental health culture in young people's provision in Hull.

¹ Emotional Health and Wellbeing Training plan for organisations working with Children, Young People and Families in Hull