



HeadStart



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Improving the mental health and wellbeing of young people



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HeadStart Newham

HeadStart

HeadStart is a five-year National Lottery funded programme set up by the Big Lottery Fund, the largest funder of community activity in the UK.

Working in six diverse communities across England, it aims to explore and test ways to improve young people's mental health and wellbeing.

It is one of five major programmes set up by the Big Lottery Fund to trial new approaches to service design, which aim to make people's lives healthier and happier, from babies and very young children through to those in later life.

Big Lottery Fund believes that strong communities are built by those who live in them, and that people with first-hand experience of living with an issue are best-placed to identify and shape potential solutions. Young people, who identified mental health as a key issue in their lives, were at the heart of designing HeadStart.

From 2016 to 2021, six local authority led HeadStart partnerships will be working in Blackpool, Cornwall, Hull, Kent, Newham and Wolverhampton.

“I always thought no one really noticed me but now I am involved in so many things in HeadStart and I have a voice and opinion that is heard and actually considered.”

HeadStart student

Why we're investing

Pre and early teen years can be a vulnerable time in young people's lives and there is evidence that indicates an association between mental ill-health in childhood and adolescence, and mental ill-health in adulthood¹.

Research shows that:

- 10% of children and young people have a clinically diagnosable mental health problem²
- Significant numbers of 14-year-olds report depressive symptoms: 24% of girls and 9% of boys³
- In 2016, 90% of school leaders reported an increase in students experiencing anxiety and stress over the last five years⁴

What HeadStart is doing

HeadStart looks at how young people's mental wellbeing is affected by their experiences at school, their ability to access the community services they need, their home life and relationship with family members, and their interaction with digital technology.

Working in schools, and with families, charities, community and public services, the HeadStart partnerships are designing, testing and implementing different approaches to:

- build young people's emotional resilience
- respond to the early signs of common mental health problems
- provide additional joined-up support when and where it is needed.

By raising awareness of young people's mental wellbeing, the HeadStart partnerships also support adults to know how to spot the early signs of problems, know what they can do themselves to provide support, and where to go to get more specialised help.

By sharing evidence and learning about what works and what doesn't, the Big Lottery Fund aims to inform future approaches to designing and funding services which are focused on prevention and early intervention.

“HeadStart really makes me think about my resilience in different things I do. I'm trying to use all the skills I'm learning in different things such as homework but especially with my attitude towards learning.”

HeadStart student

Learning and evaluation

To evaluate HeadStart and share learning, the Big Lottery Fund has commissioned an expert team led by the Evidence Based Practice Unit, a collaboration between University College London and the Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families. The partners in this learning team include Common Room, The University of Manchester, the Child Outcomes Research Consortium and London School of Economics and Political Science.

The learning programme uses quantitative and qualitative methods to evaluate HeadStart and findings will be shared throughout the course of the programme. A core element of the evaluation is the Wellbeing Measurement Framework, an annual survey on wellbeing completed by young people in HeadStart schools.

Co-designed by the learning team, HeadStart partnerships and the Big Lottery Fund, this is the largest survey of children and young people's mental wellbeing in England. It will help us to understand the impact the programme is having and provide insights into the resilience and mental wellbeing of young people in HeadStart schools.

In 2017, more than 30,000 young people in Year 7 (aged 11 to 12) and Year 9 (aged 13 to 14) completed the survey, across 114 schools. The Year 7s will repeat the survey annually until they are in Year 11 and data will be collected from young people in Year 9 every year.

Partnerships

Between 2016 and 2021, the six HeadStart partnerships will design, test and deliver tailored programmes of support which respond to the local context, environment and needs of young people.

This includes peer mentoring, mental health first aid training, staying safe online, tackling social media bullying and special resilience lessons. They also provide targeted support to young people who are showing risk factors such as repeated absences and disruptive behaviour, and to particularly vulnerable groups, including young people in care or who have experienced domestic violence.

HeadStart Blackpool (£10.4 million)

Driven by local young people, HeadStart Blackpool is building a Resilience Revolution across the town to align with the local authority's priority to create stronger communities through social action. Their revolution is bringing to life what resilience means to local people and is creating opportunities for everyone who lives or works in Blackpool to learn new skills.

HeadStart Blackpool is working alongside young people, parents/carers, schools, health services, local authority services, police and the voluntary and charitable sector to embed a new way of working that focuses on resilience and uses language that is understood by all. The partnership is also using digital technology to find new and innovative ways of working.

[@HSBlackpool](https://www.facebook.com/HSBlackpool)
[@HSBlackpool](https://www.facebook.com/HSBlackpool)

HeadStart Kernow (£8.9 million)

HeadStart Kernow aims to create a shared understanding of young people's mental wellbeing across the whole of Cornwall, so no matter where a young person lives in the county, they can access the support they need.

Underpinning this is the neuroscience behind young people's brain development, emotional attachment to a care giver, the importance of play and the impact of adverse childhood experiences. The training looks at how protective factors can be used to support young people. It aims to give the wider community and school staff who work with them the right skills to identify the needs that may underlie behaviours that interrupt a child's learning and development.

[@HeadStartKernow](https://www.facebook.com/HeadStartKernow)

HeadStart Hull (£7.8 million)

HeadStart Hull is building a scaffold of support for young people so they can identify trusted adults in school, in the community, in their family and are able to talk about their worries and access support at the earliest opportunity.

Working to develop a whole system approach, HeadStart Hull is implementing an emotional wellbeing programme across primary and secondary schools, as well as providing a comprehensive workforce development programme for staff working across the partnership. There are also open access drop-ins in all secondary schools, reducing the stigma of talking about or experiencing mental health issues.

There are services for young people and parents who need additional support that include peer mentoring as well as counselling for young people.

[@HullHeadStart](https://www.facebook.com/HullHeadStart)



HeadStart Kent (£10 million)

HeadStart Kent is championing prevention and early intervention when young people are at risk of their emotional wellbeing being impacted by trauma such as domestic abuse. Schools are notified through a number of channels about domestic abuse incidents so that they are more aware, informed and better prepared to offer support to young people who may need it. Training is taking place for people working in schools and local communities so they can identify and support young people more effectively. Bespoke, one-to-one support from a trained practitioner is also offered to young people and their families, to build their resilience, recover from trauma and improve their emotional health and wellbeing.

@HeadStartKent
headstartkent.org.uk

HeadStart Newham (£9.7 million)

HeadStart Newham is supporting young people with emerging mental ill health through peer mentoring, social action projects and a behaviour change course facilitated by youth workers. The young people are encouraged to take part in a range of creative and sports activities in the community.

The partnership is also coaching and supporting the borough's schools to develop and implement wellbeing strategies so that they are better able to support pupils. Young people are guided to self-refer to the programme and are nominated by their teachers and other professionals.

A peer parenting programme with specialist training is also offered to parents.

Wolverhampton (£9.5 million)

HeadStart Wolverhampton is trialling a new, city-wide approach to supporting young people's mental health that is driven by innovative digital approaches, awareness raising and anti-stigma campaigns. In addition, personalised support and activities for young people facing specific challenges is delivered through four HeadStart community bases. Each base has a Community Development Coordinator, School Support Coordinator, Young Person Engagement Coordinator, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services Link Worker (funded by the local clinical commissioning group) and Police Liaison Officer (funded by West Midlands Police). By co-locating services in this way, HeadStart Wolverhampton is testing how services in the city can be better connected to provide tailored support.

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Endnotes

1. Kessler, R.C., Berglund, P., Demler, O., Jin, R., Merikangas, K.R., Walters, E.E. (2005). Lifetime prevalence and age of-onset distributions of DSM-IV disorders in the National Comorbidity Survey Replication. *Archives of General Psychiatry*, 62(6), 593–602. and Kim-Cohen, J., Caspi, A., Moffitt, T.T., Harrington, H.L., Milne, B.J., Poulton, R. (2003). Prior Juvenile Diagnoses in Adults With Mental Disorder Developmental Follow-Back of a Prospective-Longitudinal Cohort. *Arch Gen Psychiatry*. 60(7):709–717.
2. Department of Health and the Scottish Executive. (2005). *Mental health of children and young people in Great Britain, 2004*.
3. Patalay P & Fitzsimons E. (2017) *Mental ill-health among children of the new century: trends across childhood with a focus on age 14*.
4. Association of School and College Leaders [ASCL] and National Children's Bureau [NCB] (2016) *Keeping young people in mind: findings from a survey of schools across England*.



For more information call
Big Advice – 0345 4 10 20 30
or visit biglotteryfund.org.uk





HeadStart Hull



Building resilience and mental wellbeing for children and young people



EBPU Evidence Based Practice Unit

A partnership of



MANCHESTER 1824
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