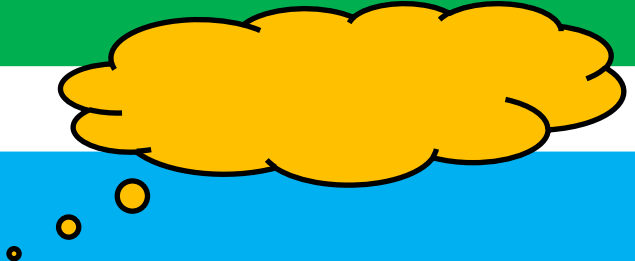


“It needs to be, you need to hear the success rather than the negative and celebrate the good, rather than the bad so we know that we can get through this.”

**Identifying children and young people's views to access and engage in mental health support teams within educational provisions.**

**Mental Health Trailblazer**  
**Doncaster and Rotherham.**

**Background:** Under the NHS transformation programme, the Government published the Green Paper for transforming children and young people's mental health. Within this, identifications of expansion access for mental health support for children and young people were clarified. This included the recognition of mental health support teams providing additional support through schools and colleges. However, it is yet to be understood how children and young people perceive effective ways for services to engage in supporting mental health through educational provisions.



**Aims:** Therefore, this pilot aims to investigate the ways in which mental health support teams and services can most effectively provide support for educational provisions and provide a framework of guidance based on children and young people's views.

**Sample:** The study sample comprised of ninety-one children within the age range of six to seventeen and located within Doncaster and Rotherham.



**Method:** The children participated in one of twelve focus groups. The focus group gathered children and young people's perspective on ways in which the mental health support teams can engage with educational establishments and the most effective way to develop and provide resources. To identify children and young people's views, the data was transcribed guided by Braun & Clarke (2006) thematic analysis framework.



## Findings:

The analysis identified four major themes;

- (1) *Effective engagement based on appearance.*
- (2) *Developing existing practice within schools.*
- (3) *Engagement with mental health support teams.*
- (4) *Ways to find out information.*

# Identified themes

<u>Candidate theme</u>	<u>Sub-ordinate theme</u>
<b>Effective engagement based on appearance.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Bright colours.</li><li>- Images of people, rather than animation.</li><li>- Togetherness.</li></ul>
<b>Developing existing practice.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Sharing experiences is good but this is not enough.</li><li>- Gender equality.</li><li>- To not always approach but to be approached.</li><li>- Greater awareness and understanding at a younger age and support in transition.</li><li>- To hear positive outcomes and not always negative.</li></ul>
<b>Engagement with mental health support teams.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Building positive relationships.</li><li>- Able to identify and accessible if needed.</li></ul>
<b>Ways to find out information.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Social media.</li><li>- Assemblies.</li><li>- Posters but not so much leaflets.</li><li>- Merchandise.</li></ul>

### **Effective engagement based on appearance.**

- Bright colours
- Images of people, rather than animation.
- Togetherness.

### **Engagement with mental health support teams.**

- Building positive relationships.
- Able to identify and accessible if needed.

### **Developing existing practice within schools.**

- Sharing experiences is good but this is not enough.
- Gender equality.
- To not always approach but to be approached.
- Greater understanding and awareness at a younger age and support in transition.
- To hear positive outcomes and not always negative.

### **Ways to find out information**

- Social media.
- Assemblies.
- Merchandise.
- Posters but not so much leaflets.

**Effective  
engagement based  
on appearance –  
extracts.**



# Effective engagement based on appearance.

## Bright colours.

“Bright tones because if someone feels depressed dark colours remind you of how you feel”

*Focus group 2*

“Bright colours make me feel happy”

*Focus group 3*

“Bold bright colours e.g. yellow, turquoise & green”

*Focus group 5*

“Dark colours make people feel sad and like they don’t want help”

*Focus group 3*



# Effective engagement based on appearance.

Images of people, rather than animation.

“Fictional and real pictures get into children and adults eyes”

“In some ways real characters do have a message – fictional can give you a better way to properly explain the message you are getting”

*Focus group 6*

2 prefer cartoon less detail and they like drawing, 7 preferred real people. “Makes it more real.”

*Focus group 12*

Real pictures – “easier to see how people are and their emotions are clearer from the pictures, shows emotions better as to how the girl is sat and her body language”

*Focus group 3*

**Effective engagement based on appearance.**

**Togetherness.**

“Be kind to others, everybody’s mind does matter.”

*Focus group 3*

“Use simple language that ALL teenagers understand”

*Focus group 5*

“Every mind matters because no one feels left out. It’s like a family because everyone cares about each other.”

*Focus group 9*

“Every Mind Matters is good – colours and the message means everyone is being listened to”

*Focus group 7*

**Developing  
existing practice –  
extracts.**

## Developing existing practice.

Sharing experiences is good but  
this is not enough.

“If you did assembly’s, people like us that don’t mind speaking about it, sharing their experiences with others. By doing something like that, will reduce the worry”.

*Focus group 8*

“Learning/peer mentors’ that pupils can talk to but this isn’t enough as it just ‘scratches the surface”.

*Focus group 6*

“I probably wouldn’t watch it unless I knew who the person was or someone I looked up to, it would be a thing like this person knows how it feels”

*Focus group 4*

## Developing existing practice.

### Gender equality.

“Is it an issue as the mentors at our school are female? It might encourage boys to speak if there was a male mentor.”

*Focus group 11*

“A lot of the campaigns are supported to female, more focus of equality and male support.”

*Focus group 8*

## Developing existing practice.

To not always approach but to be approached.

“Sometimes I don’t like sharing my feelings.”

*Focus group 9*

“I feel younger students need help when communicating with adults; she felt maybe the use of animals (i.e. service dogs) would be beneficial.”

*Focus group 1*

“Well when your being approached rather than doing the approaching, sometimes you don’t want to go out of your way you want to feel like you’re still expected to be a child but still expected to be an adult in some respect it seems like you’ve got to be mature enough to be able to deal with it yourself.”

*Focus group 8*

## Developing existing practice.

Greater understanding at a younger age and support in transition.

Representative: Do you know what mental health is?

“Does it mean like when doctors help you when you’ve got a rash or something?”

*Focus group 9*

“I feel like the transition period from being young to becoming an adult is a struggle. When I was turned 18, I was discharged from camhs, I was not really given the option. I didn’t really know what it was. I was just discharged but I could have done with the reassurance to know I could still access support if needed.”

*Focus group 8*

## Developing existing practice.

To hear positive outcomes and not always negative.

“Sometimes it’s OK to be sad”

*Focus group 3*

“If you are going to project something to Doncaster and Rotherham, it needs to be, you need to hear the success rather than the negative and celebrate the good, rather than the bad so we know that we can get through this.”

*Focus group 8*

“In my class I’ve got like this poster and in my class it says everyone matters so no one is thinking I am daft.”

*Focus group 9*

“Percentages tells us what percentage are unhappy and shows there are other people like you that experience similar emotions.”

*Focus group 7*



**Engagement with  
mental health  
support teams.**

# Engagement with mental health support teams.

## Building positive relationships.

“Students suffering with MH issues need someone to talk to that they can develop a trusting relationship with, someone they can fully express their thoughts and feelings to.”

*Focus group 1*

“Would like to see someone they know as it’s more comfortable”

*Focus group 11*

“Have a safe place to find out reliable information”

*Focus group 6*

# Engagement with mental health support teams.

Able to identify and access if needed.

“Would like the people to wear a top so we can recognise who the support teams are with a rainbow on. Each colour of the rainbow shows a different emotion.”

*Focus group 9*

“She had an anxiety attack and even though one teacher was aware and let her leave the classroom, another teacher told her to go back in, this highlighted the lack of communication between staff.”

*Focus group 1*

“It should be arranged maybe a meeting in the start when you begin the provision regardless to your mental state and have one every 3 months, just something to check up on students no matter what grades.”

*Focus group 8*

**Ways to find out  
information -  
extracts.**

# Ways to find out information.

## Social media.

“App on a website this is something that cannot be lost or broken”

*Focus group 2*

“Create an App to ask questions”

*Focus group 5*

“Most of it is on social media, if I am on Facebook or something and a link pops up I will click on it, a poster if you are around school you wouldn't normally stop to look at them, but if on your phone something with bright colours appears then I will most likely click on it and remember it.”

*Focus group 4*

All students agreed Instagram would be the best form of social media communication but also Facebook.

*Focus group 1*

# Ways to find out information.

## Assemblies.

“An assembly in school as there will be more explanation than a poster.”

*Focus group 12*

“If someone from mental health services came to school to talk in an assembly? To discuss emotions, behaviours and the stigma.”

*Focus group 11*

“If you did assembly’s, people like us that don’t mind speaking about it, sharing their experiences with others. By doing something like that, will reduce the worry.”

*Focus group 8*

# Ways to find out information.

## Merchandise.

“Wrist bands, a lot of people wear them and use banner pens”

*Focus group 6*

“My friend has a worry monster, who eats the worry. 8 out of 8 would like a worry monster.

7 out of 8 said yes for a stress reliever. Flip Wristband: red means you are happy and green means you are sad. 7 out of 8 would like that.”

*Focus group 9*

“I would prefer a wristband that you can flip to highlight whether I’m ok or not.”

*Focus group 8*

“Banner pens that hold lots of information on the pull-out section” (this was well received).

“I like stuff that sounds calm – like if you are fidgeting and it has a feel like it’s nice, I don’t know how to explain it”

*Focus group 4*

# Ways to find out information.

Posters but not so much leaflets.

“He commented that leaflets are quite difficult to carry around and not exactly discreet.”

*Focus group 4*

“Leaflet is small needs to have more information on them and are quite easy to lose.”

“We have posters in school but would not want to stand in corridor so others could see me”

*Focus group 3*

They agreed any poster needs to be eye catching and colourful.

*Focus group 11*



## Conclusion.

- Children and young people's views have identified ways in which services can maximise engagement and support for mental health within education.
- These findings and identification of themes provide a framework for supporting mental health through education, with guidance to account for effective ways of engagement.
- Such findings should encourage services to listen to the voices of children and young people when promoting engagement for mental health support and not just hear it.