



CONTACT US:

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MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT TEAM (MHST) IN SCHOOLS

N E W S L E T T E R



The purpose of this newsletter is to keep you updated on significant developments in the MHST in schools project as well as facilitate regular communication between participating schools and other agencies who may become more actively involved with the team in the future, including local groups and services such as Dorset MIND, Parent Carer Groups and the Educational Psychology service.

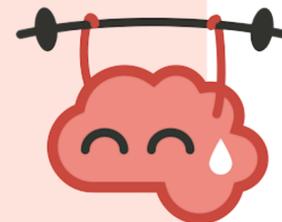
WELCOME TO MHST IN SCHOOLS!

Welcome to the first newsletter of Dorset Mental Health Support (MHST) in Schools which has been funded by NHS England. The MHST in Schools is currently a 2 year pilot project although we hope it will become embedded across Dorset education and healthcare. This new service aims to develop and deliver a collaborative, system-wide approach to support the emotional wellbeing of children and young people within the educational environment.

You can find further information about the MHST in Schools project at the link below:

['Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision – a Green Paper'](#)

MHST BELIEVE IN
SUPPORTING
MENTAL FITNESS
AND WELLBEING!



WHAT ARE THE MHST IN SCHOOLS?

We currently have three teams across Dorset: the North Dorset Team, the Weymouth and Portland Team and the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP) Team. Each MHST in Schools team comprises of multidisciplinary specialists, including Education Mental Health Practitioners (EMHPs). These EMHPs deliver evidence-based, low intensity cognitive behaviour therapy to effectively support children and young people across each locality who may have low to moderate emotional well-being difficulties. EMHPs will work directly with young people in 1:1 sessions, or as part of a group, as well as with families and carers or as part of a whole-school approach to mental fitness and well-being. At the current time, our EMHPs are completing their training at the University of Exeter. The MHST is also able to offer consultancy to schools to advise and signpost young people to alternative services if we feel we are not the appropriate service to help at that time.

PLEASE NOTE: All referrals must be made through the Request for Support Form and sent to each local team's email which can be found at the top of this newsletter.

UNIVERSITY OF
EXETER



PROGRESS SO FAR

- The Dorset MHST in Schools has over 50 schools taking part in the trailblazer in total this year. This is likely to increase as our service develops over time.
- In each locality, three EMHPs were appointed in January 2020 to start their initial training. For the past 6 months, they have been undertaking their university course through the University of Exeter. Despite the complex challenges around COVID-19, they have been learning how to use evidence-based therapeutic interventions within education settings online and face-to-face.
- We have made contact with each of the pilot schools in our localities and share our resources, survey information, and our initial provision packages – this included the criteria for making referrals, as well as leaflets about MHST in Schools which could be shared with children, young people and families/carers.
- Despite the COVID-19 lockdown, MHST Supervisors have started to process and allocate initial referrals to EMHPs.
- EMHPs have been in contact with children, young people and their families/carers to arrange assessment and therapy which we have been able to do either through socially distanced face to face sessions, or through online sessions.

Please continue to make appropriate referrals using the criteria information we have sent out.



DIGITAL DEVELOPMENTS

We have been busy producing innovative resources for both primary and secondary students. The video resource is similar to a book, with different 'chapters' focusing on a variety of topics. Chapter One included advice on the foundations on wellbeing, and getting ready for returning to school, whilst Chapter Two looked at some of the worries young people may feel whilst getting to school. Although the video-style resources are mostly aimed at primary-aged children returning to school following the lockdown period, many of the strategies and ideas are useful for anybody who may be struggling due to this difficult COVID-19 period. We are excited about our bonus chapter: Moving to Secondary School which is coming out soon, as well as Chapter Three: The School Day and Chapter Four: People at School which will come out in the next few weeks. Due to the unprecedented challenge of COVID-19, we have had to develop our online therapeutic approaches for meeting young people. Fortunately, with the number of young people being able to access a phone, laptop, or tablet, we have been able to utilise digital platforms for our online assessment or intervention sessions. The feedback has, so far, been positive, increasing accessibility for young people, parents/carers and our EMHP trainees too!

Watch our most recent chapter '[Getting to School](#)' on Youtube

The MHST in Schools are rapidly producing new digital and school resources to be used for individuals as part of interventions, the whole-school approach and general mental-wellbeing support. You can access these via our webpage: [Mental Health Support Teams in Schools \(MHSTs\)](#).



NEXT STEPS

The MHST in Schools have lots of exciting 'next steps' as our service continues to develop:

- The Weymouth and Portland Team have found a home! Their base can be found at the Park Centre in Weymouth. The bases for both the North Team and BCP Team are yet to be confirmed.
- We are becoming more actively involved within the community and with different agencies and professionals including Children's Social Care, Core-CAMHs and the local Educational Psychology service.
- We are continuing to take on new referrals in each locality; our capacity remains limited to some degree until our EMHP trainees complete their university training in January/February 2021 (dependent on COVID-19).

The Dorset MHST in Schools are very excited for the next stages of development of the service! Please continue to make appropriate referrals to your local team and do get in contact if you have any queries.

