

## Mental Health Support Teams in Schools

### Monthly Newsletter – February 2024



We have had a busy February, our MHST team have been working with parents in our schools with 1-2-1 interventions for child anxiety or challenging behaviour. The team have been having fun with the children delivering Brain Buddies and Emotion Explorers to year groups. The children have produced some lovely work. Peer mentoring, friendship groups and bespoke sessions have also been taking place.

Children's Mental Health Week was also in February and we held some coffee mornings, promoting the message "Your Voice Matters". We held assemblies and joined various parent groups in the schools during the week. On Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup>, our MHST teams hosted an afternoon event in Saffron Walden, Stansted, Dunmow and Harlow, inviting families to attend and take part in conversations with each other. We provided conversation starters and encouraged families to take some time to chat with each other and listen to what each other had to say.

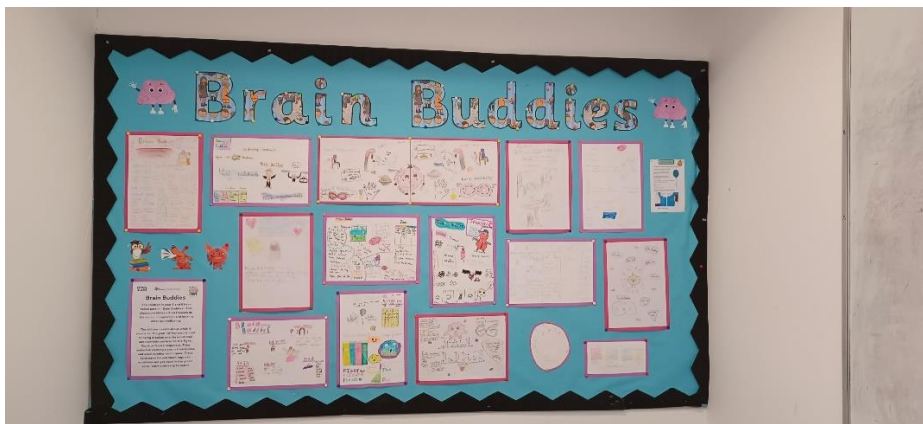
Time to Talk was also an initiative that linked nicely into Childrens Mental Health Week, and questionnaires were sent out to children in our schools, asking them to tell us the things that gave them anxieties. Mike and Gaye from the MHST team, with the help of Craig, recorded a podcast where they answered the questions put forward in the questionnaires and gave advice.

Three online parent groups have started this month. Challenging Behaviour at Home, Helping your Child Manage their Fears and Worries, and Supporting Teenager Emotion Wellbeing are all booked to capacity and are underway.

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**CLAVERING BRAIN BUDDIES BOARD**  
*Charlotte has been working with the children at Clavering and has been able to display the lovely work they have produced.*

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*Roseacres Yr 3 class also have participated in Brain Buddies with Emma. They made these beautiful "calm boxes" which are filled with their favourite things that can help calm them if they feel anxious.*

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**Exams will be starting in May and many students are revising already. Understandably, this can be a stressful time for students (and parents!), Here are some simple ideas that can be used to help manage the stress/anxiety/worry.**

1. Having some level of stress/anxiety is useful! Stress/anxiety is our fight/flight/freeze! response. When we experience this at a low level our thinking process is speeded up and our hand/eye coordination works better meaning we can plan answers and write more quickly. However, if the stress/anxiety gets too much then we struggle to think and write anything.
2. Key to managing is to accept that a low level of stress/anxiety is helpful. This way we don't try and stop feeling like this. Using calming breathing helps to keep the stress/anxiety manageable. Take a couple of deep breaths initially, but then try 4-6 breathing. Breathe in normally for a count of four and out for a count of six (or 5-5). Repeat until feeling an okay level of stress/anxiety.
3. Recognise that the only big uncertainty are the exam questions, everything else you have some control over, so 'Control what you can control, let go of what you can't'.
4. You have control over when, what and how you revise.
5. Revise in small chunks such as 25 minutes, then a 5-minute break or 50 minutes and a 10-minute break. Limit to about four hours when you have a full day, otherwise you'll be taking in so much information that it will be a struggle to remember everything.
6. Make sure to have time for fun/social/exercise.
7. Eat little and often and hardly any high sugar foods and drinks. You want to aim for keeping your blood sugar/energy levels as constant as possible. High sugar foods and drinks (sweets/fizzy drinks) give a good energy burst, but not for long and then we crave more which nags away at us and is distracting.
8. Sleep – make time for sleep, revising and exams are tiring. BUT...don't worry if you have disturbed sleep as you'll still be okay and be able to do your best.
9. Good enough is good enough, you only need the grades required to get to the next level. Find out what you need so you know what to work towards.
10. Don't put off revising. It's not usually the most fun thing to do, but you'll reduce stress/anxiety by starting in good time.
11. Ask for help if needed! This is your time, put the work in for you, and ask for whatever help you need.



Here are two creative groups being run for parents and children to enjoy in our Community Space at Saffron Walden.

Children should be 12yrs & over (must be accompanied by an adult)



**Tuesdays 5:45pm-7:15pm**

## **Creative Minds**

**Creative writing for improved mental wellbeing.**

A new weekly group which offers you the space to explore your creative writing interest and potential within a supportive environment. You will be encouraged to participate in a range of activities, exploring various forms and genres, with the opportunity to share and develop your work in a non-judgemental setting. This group is suitable for beginners and beyond with an aim to help participants experience the positive effects of engaging in creative writing practice and the personal growth that can develop as a result.

**Sign up here**



**2 Bakehouse Court  
19 High Street  
Saffron Walden  
CB10 1AT**

 **mind in West Essex**



# Creative Minds

(Weekly) Wednesdays  
7-8.30pm



## Collage Class

2 Bakehouse Court  
19 High Street  
Saffron Walden  
CB10 1AT

With the artistic  
Ed French - Class facilitator

**Free classes - all materials provided!**

Sign up here



 mind  
in West Essex

**one of the Team**

Sally Cowan – our newest recruit!  
CYP MH Support Administrator



FAVOURITE TV:

Anything Medical

& I love Gladiators !

YUK.....

Any type of olive



Eating the last Malteser in the  
box makes me sad .....

**YAY TO**

Family and friends

I'm Happy When:

I am watching my daughters play  
netball



### **Supporting Teenagers Emotional Wellbeing Course**

This course is designed to give parent/carers an understanding of the pressures that teenagers are under and how that may affect their mental health. Content includes common mental health problems, self-harm and suicide and some straightforward and effective ways to help them, and you, make changes that can make tricky times easier.

### **Early Years Parenting Course**

This course is designed to give parents an idea of the various factors affecting child development. The role parents can play both positive and negative and possibly to get parents talking about their ideals of raising a child.

Explore infant/toddler/child emotional development and how parents can positively influence toddler/child behaviour and relationships.



### **Eating Disorders and Mental Health**

This course is designed to look at the different types of eating disorders and what can cause them. It investigates how to get a diagnosis and where to get treatment and includes sessions on supporting someone with an eating disorder as well as self-care.

Eating disorders are complex mental illnesses and are rarely just about food – focusing on food can be a coping mechanism for difficult situations or painful feelings.

This course is not a replacement for professional help for someone in crisis, nor is it a therapy



course.

## Other Mind in West Essex News: Fundraising

At Mind in West Essex, we believe that nobody should face a mental health problem alone.

**Although affiliated to the charity Mind, we are a local, independent charity.**

Nationally, Mind campaigns to improve services and raises awareness of mental health. We are one of 111 Local Minds, that work across England and Wales to provide services to their respective communities.

If you would like to raise much appreciated funds for the charity Mind in West Essex, please let Kerry know and she will put you in touch with the appropriate team.

### Virtual bucket collection

We've set up this virtual bucket collection as part of our winter campaign. We want to be able to support more people during the colder months to access the correct emotional support through the format for counselling sessions.

This is our version of a Christmas appeal and we would appreciate you getting behind this and sharing as much as you can to really get the message out. The campaign went live on the 1st December. Please feel free to share with your staff, friends and families.

<https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/mindinwestessexvirtualbucketcollection>





# Keeping Myself Safe

## Non-Emergency Support

- **SHOUT**  
Text SHOUT to 85258 (free, anonymous text crisis messenger, 24/7)

**shout**  
**85258**

- **Kooth.com**  
www.kooth.com for free, safe, anonymous online mental health support and counselling (age 10-25, 7 days a week until 10pm)

**kooth**  
The Mix

Telephone support 3pm-12pm everyday  
0800 808 4994

Text crisis messenger 24/7 to 85258  
Webchat support [www.themix.org.uk/get-support/speak-to-our-team](http://www.themix.org.uk/get-support/speak-to-our-team)

**THE MIX**  
Essential support for under 25s

**ChildLine**  
0800 1111 

**Childline**  
1:1 telephone counselling 9am-midnight  
everyday 0800 11 11

  
**Switchboard**  
LGBT+ helpline

**Switchboard**  
Confidential service available 10am – 10pm,  
every day 365  
days a year. Service provides a safe space  
listening service via  
telephone, email or online chat.

## Free Apps



Guided exercises using CBT principles to help manage physical, thought-based and emotional or behaviour changing elements of anxiety.

Helps reduce urges to self-harm and manage emotions in more positive way.



CLEAR FEAR

## In an emergency

Call 999 or attend A&E



Samaritans

- Telephone support 24/7 on 116 123
- Email support [jo@samaritans](mailto:jo@samaritans) (24hr response time)

# STANSTED YOUTH CLUB

FOR AGES 11+

LOTS OF FUN  
ACTIVITIES

FREE ENTRY

SUPPORTED BY  
STANSTED PARISH  
COUNCIL, UDC,  
AND ECC

FAIRYCROFT HOUSE

FOR MORE DETAILS CONTACT:  
[INFO@FAIRCROFTHOUSECIC.ORG](mailto:info@fairycrofthousecic.org)

MONDAY, TUESDAY, AND WEDNESDAY  
STARTING 12TH FEBRUARY 2024  
PETER KIRK CENTRE, ST JOHNS ROAD,  
STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET, CM24 8JP



## Night Owls Info

# West Essex Night Owls!

**A telephone emotional support service**



Open between 5-11pm, 7 days a week

 mind in West Essex

Night Owls is an emotional wellbeing service which anyone can access (aged 18+) by self-referring via our website or scanning the QR code below.

[www.mindinwestessex.org.uk/services/west-essex-night-owls-support-line](http://www.mindinwestessex.org.uk/services/west-essex-night-owls-support-line)





Once registered our staff will call the service user within 24 hours and then give them a direct line to call between 5pm and 11pm. These are roughly 30-minute calls where we can discuss anything of interest, offer reassurance, support, and listen.

They can also use this number to check if one of our sites has space for them to pop in one evening to visit us.

Our sites are: Harlow, Saffron Walden, Stansted Touch Point or Loughton Seabed Centre.

If you need any further information, please feel free to contact our Sanctuary Manager on 07935059477

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MONDAY, TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY, FRIDAY, SATURDAY, SUNDAY 5PM-11PM

Wellbeing Centre

10-11 Corner House

Bushfair

Harlow

CM18 6NZ

Telephone: 01279 421308

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THURSDAY 5PM-11PM

1 & 2 Bakehouse Court

19 High Street

Saffron Walden

Essex

CB10 1AT

Telephone: 01799 400049

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TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, SATURDAY 5PM-11PM

The Loughton Seedbed Centre

Langston Road

Loughton

Essex

IG10 3TQ

Telephone: 020 3906 2851

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FRIDAY 5PM-11PM

Touch Point Stansted

Crafton Green House

72 Chapel Hill

Mountfitchet

Stansted Mountfitchet

CM24 8AQ



JOIN THE  
**MHST**  
Mental Health Support Team  
**BOOK CLUB**

Reading with your child not only strengthens the parent-child bond but also helps children to develop empathy and emotional awareness, teaching children that it is okay to feel emotions and how to cope with their feelings in healthy ways.

Each term receive our MHST bookclub newsletter with 4 wellbeing book recommendations, as well as, prompts and questions to think through and/or discuss with your child. Book recommendations will be made for these age groups:

- 5-8 years old
- 9-12 years old
- 12-14 years old
- 15-19 years old



To sign up to the newsletter  
scan this QR code or email your area's administrator

## Meet your Uttlesford Schools Team



Mike Ellen  
CYP MHST Team  
Manager



Supervisor/Practitioner



Helen Bird  
Supervisor/Practitioner



Our Mental Health Practitioners  
Emma, Charley, Abigail & Charlotte



Sally - CYP MHST Administrator



If you would like to contact us with any queries, please call Sally Cowan on 07935 064728 or email on [mhsuttlesford@mindinwestessex.org.uk](mailto:mhsuttlesford@mindinwestessex.org.uk) or [scowan@mindinwestessex.org.uk](mailto:scowan@mindinwestessex.org.uk)



Herts & West Essex  
Mental Health Support Teams