



[Home](#) > [Transforming children and young people's mental health provision: a green paper](#)



Department
for Education



Department
of Health

Contents

- [1. About the green paper](#)
- [2. Plans for schools and the NHS](#)
- [3. Improving understanding of mental health](#)

1. About the green paper

This green paper is about what we want to do to help children and young people with their mental health. A green paper is a document where the government states what it wants to do, so that people can tell the government what they think.

In this quick read version of the children and young people's mental health green paper we explain what changes we want to make. The changes will affect:

- pupils, students and staff at schools and colleges
- specialist mental health services
- families and communities

2. Plans for schools and the NHS

2.1 A mental health lead in every school and college

We want every school and college to have a designated lead in mental health by 2025. The designated lead will be a trained member of staff who is responsible for the school's approach to mental health.

This designated lead will:

- oversee the help the school gives to pupils with mental health problems
- help staff to spot pupils who show signs of mental health problems
- offer advice to staff about mental health
- refer children to specialist services if they need to

The designated leads will be offered training to develop their skills in leading mental health work. We will use the Teaching and Leadership Innovation Fund to look at developing training to build the skills of the designated leads and support them in delivering whole school approaches.

We also plan to ask for people's views on how children and young people should learn about mental health in school.

2.2 Mental health support teams working with schools and colleges

Mental health support teams will be trained staff linked to groups of schools and colleges. They will offer individual and group help to young people with mild to moderate mental health issues including anxiety, low mood and behavioural difficulties.

The support teams will work with the designated mental health leads and provide a link with more specialist mental health services. This will mean that schools and colleges will find it much easier to contact and work with mental health services.

Mental health support teams will be the link between the NHS and schools. They will work alongside other people who provide mental health support including:

- school nurses
- educational psychologists
- school counsellors
- voluntary and community organisations
- social workers

2.3 Shorter waiting times

The government wants to reduce the time it takes to get treatment from children and young people's mental health services. Some of the areas with new mental health support teams will try out ways of bringing this time to 4 weeks (quicker for young people who need very urgent help).

2.4 Mental health of 16- to 25-year-olds

We will set up a new national partnership to improve mental health services for young people aged 16 to

25. The partnership will start by deciding which areas to focus on. This might be student mental health, and looking at how universities, colleges, local authorities and health services work together.

3. Improving understanding of mental health

3.1 Internet and social media

We will work with the Children's Commissioner to explore how social media affects the health of children and young people.

The Chief Medical Officer will produce a report in 2018 on the impact that technology has on children and young people's mental health.

3.2 Researching how to support families

We want to know how we can give the best support to families who need more help. We will gather information to look at:

- how parents and carers can bond better with their children, which helps their mental health
- how we can support families where parents or their children have a higher risk of developing a mental health problem

We will use the results of our research to create guidance for local areas about the best parenting programmes. This will help local areas improve the support they give to families and get value for money.

3.3 Researching how to prevent mental health problems

We will bring different mental health experts together to look at how mental health problems can be prevented.

The group of experts will consider the best evidence and look at where we need to do more research on how to prevent mental health problems.

Read the full version of the green paper to find out more about:

- why we need to improve children and young people's mental health
- what we have already started to do about it
- the research and evidence we have used to back up our plans

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