

# Scotland's Mental Health First Aid – Young People

## Year 4 Final Report

## **Rationale**

### **Mental Health Strategy: 2017 - 2027**

Scottish Government has published a 10 year strategy vision (March 2017) to prevent and treat mental health with a variety of interventions and accessible services.

‘Our vision for the Mental Health Strategy is of a Scotland where people can get the right help at the right time, expect recovery, and fully enjoy their rights, free from discrimination and stigma. Over the 10 years of the Strategy, we will work on achieving parity between mental and physical health.’

**‘Education:** Support from teachers and other school staff can be vital in helping ensure the mental wellbeing of children and young people. We will empower and support local services to provide early access to effective supports and interventions at tiers 1 and 2 and to use specialist CAMHS expertise where it will be most effective.’

Schools have an important role to play in promoting mental wellbeing and in identifying and providing initial support for children and young people who are experiencing mental ill-health.

### **Scotland’s Mental Health First Aid: Young People**

As part of this strategy, Scotland’s Mental Health First Aid: Young People “offers basic general information about mental health problems. The knowledge presented and understanding developed in the course helps to remove stigma and fear and to give confidence in approaching a young person in distress.” (<http://youngpeople.smhfa.com/about-smhfa/programme.aspx>)

### **Education Scotland Grant Funding (Year 4)**

A £10,000 (£2000 each) grant fund was available for 5 local authorities during 2017 – March 2018. This funding seeks to tackle inequity between learners by equipping members of school staff with the confidence and skills to give initial support to learners experiencing mental health issues. Scotland’s Mental Health Strategy 2017 – 2027 outlines the vision and intention to roll out improved mental health training for those who support young people in educational settings. <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0051/00516047.pdf>

This project embraces the above philosophy and encourages local authorities and schools to identify members of the school community who are best placed to identify that a pupil might be struggling with a mental health issue. School community members might include the school’s management team, the teaching staff, the support staff (including administration and janitorial staff) or others working to support the school community, e.g. after school care workers or youth workers.

Scotland’s Mental Health: Children & Young People 2013 (NHS) indicates that there is a strong link between area based deprivation and mental health outcomes. They found that children and young people ‘living in more deprived areas had poorer mental health outcomes than those living in less deprived areas’ (p.6). <http://www.scotpho.org.uk/publications/reports-and-papers/1159-Scotlands-mental-health-children-and-young-people-2013> .

### **Links with Curriculum for Excellence and Getting It Right for Every Child**

Curriculum for Excellence identifies some aspects of Health and wellbeing as responsibilities of all: ‘The responsibilities of all include each practitioner’s role in establishing open, positive, supportive relationships across the school community, where children and young people will feel that they are listened to, and where they feel secure in their ability to discuss sensitive aspects of their lives; in promoting a climate in which children and young people feel safe and

secure;... and by being sensitive and responsive to the wellbeing of each child and young person.”

It goes on to state that “members of staff are often best placed to identify even minor changes of mood in a child or young person which could reflect an important emotional, social or mental health issue with which that child or young person needs help or support. It is important that children and young people feel that they can share their anxieties with an appropriate individual who has the skills, rapport, responsibility and the time to listen and to help, or can identify appropriate sources of support.” (Curriculum for Excellence: Principles and Practices: Health and wellbeing across learning paper, p. 2).

Getting It Right for Every Child has the wellbeing of children and young people at its heart. The values and principles of Getting It Right For Every Child reflect the necessity of effective partnership amongst professionals and with families, and call for “a competent workforce to promote children and young people’s wellbeing”.

(<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright/background>)

### **Links with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS):**

Scotland’s Mental Health First Aid: Young People is placed within Tier 1 of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2004/12/20383/48321>

- Local authorities will be able to target this support to the school communities that need it most.
- Identified members of staff within the local authority will develop the knowledge, skills and confidence required to approach and give initial help to children and young people experiencing mental health problems.
- A greater number of pupils experiencing mental health problems will receive support when needed.
- Improved outcomes for learners from the most deprived areas and from particular vulnerable groups.

Further information on the aims and outcomes of Scotland’s Mental Health First Aid for Children and Young People can be found here: <http://youngpeople.smhfa.com/about-smhfa/programme.aspx>

### **Year 1: The Pilot Project**

Five Local Authorities were identified as being in most need of immediate support, based on the Scottish Index Of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) and on figures provided by NHS on the number of professionals trained in ‘Scotland’s Mental Health First Aid: Young People’ within the Authority:

- West Dunbartonshire
- North Ayrshire
- Renfrewshire
- Clackmannanshire
- North Lanarkshire

Each Local Authority was awarded a grant of £2400 to target support and training to school communities in most need, thus improving outcomes for learners in the most deprived areas or from particular vulnerable groups. Spending & evaluation available on request.

## **Year 2**

In Year 2 a further 5 local authorities were identified to take part in the next phase of funding. They were identified as being in most need of immediate support, based on the Scottish Index Of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD), suicide rates and on figures provided by NHS on the number of professionals trained in 'Scotland's Mental Health First Aid: Young People' (SMHFA: YP) within the Authority;

- Shetland
- Highland
- Argyll & Bute
- Dumfries & Galloway
- Scottish Borders

Each Local Authority was awarded a grant of £2400 to target support and training to school communities in most need, thus improving outcomes for learners in the most deprived areas or from particular vulnerable groups. Spending & evaluation available on request.

## **Year 3**

In Year 3, a further 3 local authorities were identified to take part in the next phase of funding. Again, they were identified as being in most need of immediate support, based on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD), suicide rates.

- Dundee City Council
- South Lanarkshire Council
- Inverclyde Council

Each Local Authority was awarded a reduced grant of £2000 to target support and training to school communities in most need, thus improving outcomes for learners in the most deprived areas or from particular vulnerable groups. Spending & evaluation available on request.

## **Year 4**

In Year 4, 5 local authorities were identified to take part in this year's funding, based on SIMD and suicide rates:

- East Ayrshire
- East Lothian
- Fife
- Glasgow
- Inverclyde\*
- Stirling

Each Local Authority was awarded a grant of £2000 to target support and training to school communities in most need, thus improving outcomes for learners in the most deprived areas or from particular vulnerable groups.

\*Inverclyde were included for a second year due to them being unable to spend the grant due to difficulties securing training providers.

## Year 4: Implementation and Impact

The Local Authorities were asked to provide a summary of the implementation and an brief evaluation of the initial impact of project:

Authority	Implementation	Initial Impact and next steps
East Ayrshire	<p>[redacted], [redacted] &amp; [redacted] attended SMHFA: YP training in November 2017 and delivered training sessions.</p> <p>As a result of the funding, <b>67</b> staff have been trained in SMHFA: YP during this session.</p> <p>4 staff in the authority are trained as Young People (YP) trainers.</p> <p>Staff are from the following sector – Secondary school, Council, NHS and Voluntary Sector.</p> <p>Their roles range from: Teachers, classroom assistants, librarians, pupil support teachers, home link workers, NHS, Centrestage, social workers, health promotion, residential children homes workers, Alcohol and Drugs Committee representatives.</p> <p>Information regarding the course was circulated and staff volunteered to take part.</p> <p><b>Breakdown of spend</b>            Course catering and room hire            £140.00      £140.00            Change and Loss training and hotel accommodation            (bereavement training for SMHFA: YP trainer)            £122.00            ICE Pack            £350.00            (to show participants at the course and to allow schools to pilot the resource prior to purchasing)            Children 1st pack            £50.00            (mental wellbeing resource and 5 training slots, after the training the pack will be piloted in a Primary and a Secondary school).</p>	<p><b>Initial Impact</b>            Increased confidence in discussing mental health and signposting to appropriate help services. Access to the ICE Pack materials and Children 1st pack. Further staff training opportunities for Children 1st pack and Growth Mindset/Resilience.</p> <p>Sharing practice with colleagues. Increased confidence in discussing mental health and signposting to appropriate help services</p> <p>More informed adults, an identified person to speak to and reducing stigma. Additional resources in schools to assist the development of a robust mental wellbeing curriculum.</p> <p>As a result of attending the course staff had increased their knowledge, understanding, skills and confidence in this area.</p> <p><b>Next Steps</b>  <b>SMHFA: YP training</b> - two additional sessions are already planned prior to the school summer holidays September 2018.  <b>Starting a conversation</b> twilight training and staff support materials – Plan to provide taster sessions to support staff throughout the authority and to progress the targets outlined in EAC Cooperate Parenting Action Plan.  <b>Children 1st pack</b> - 5 training slots agreed with the company and after the training we will pilot the pack in a Primary and a Secondary school.  <b>Growth Mindset T for T</b> - Staff attending the training have agreed to work with the SMHFA: YP trainers to create an authority resilience and growth mindset pupil resource and staff training programme.</p>

	<p>Growth Mindset T for T and resources for 25 staff £1,200.00 for T for T for 25 staff provided by Cazbro. Catering £100.00 Staff attending the training have agreed to work with the SMHFA: YP trainers to create an authority resilience and growth mindset pupil resource and staff training programme.</p>	<p><b>3-18 Mental Wellbeing Curricular Framework</b> – Depending on the outcome of the Children 1st and Growth Mindset pilots these resources will be added to the authorities Mental Wellbeing Curricular Framework. <b>Mental Wellbeing Notice Board</b> – HWB DO to continue to visit school parents' night sessions with the notice board and resources to enhance parental knowledge and awareness.</p> <p><b>Future Needs:</b> Funding to facilitate additional courses. Ability to deliver T for T SMHFA: YP training to boost the number of trainers.</p> <p><b>Potential Barriers:</b> Funding and staff availability. Officers secondments will end in Feb/Aug 2019 therefore cannot accommodate training when back in school.</p>
East Lothian	<p>All <b>9</b> members of the Educational Psychology Service (EPS) have been trained in SMHFA: YP</p> <p><b>One</b> Educational Psychologist (EP) attended SMHFA: YP T4T plans in place for this to increase to 3</p> <p>The training delivered in various ways – colleagues in Edinburgh EPS; NHS staff and a health company</p> <p><b>Spend</b></p> <p>£175 to send one EP on level 1 course £500 on recommended books/resources for trainers £500 on recommended resources to be given to staff who attend the training £150 on room booking for training to take place The additional money was added to other funds to purchase a mental health app (mindyourheadapp.com) for all ELC secondary schools and provide 12-months subscription for all schools and pupils</p>	<p><b>Initial Impact</b> The authority report that there has been a significant impact on the EPS service who are now more confident in the support they provide schools. There is a consistency across the service and this is being delivered in school consultations and advice.</p> <p>The delivery of training to school staff has been slow on the update as a result of working time agreements however, 2 training days have been arranged for schools in August and there is a commitment from the Head of Education that this training will be delivered in all 6 secondary schools in session 18/19.</p> <p>The involvement of the EPS in this training has allowed increased multi-agency working in the area of mental health and led to the development of the mental health app and roll out to all schools.</p> <p><b>Next Steps</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental Health Working Group in place</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mental Health Action Plan – April 18</li><li>• SMHFA training to all secondary schools and Children’s Units</li><li>• Universal Support increased</li><li>• Roll out of mental health app across all 6 secondary schools</li></ul> <p>No future training needs at present just need time and commitment to take this forward. In the long term we need to consider earlier intervention for primary schools.</p> <p><b>Barriers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Multiagency work</li><li>- Lack of training days in schools</li><li>- Workload of guidance staff</li><li>- CAMHS demands</li><li>- EPS staffing</li></ul> <p>The additional funding allowed the EPS to develop their skills and confidence in this area and kicked started our involvement in this area. The authority have indicated their commitment to taking this forward.</p>				
Fife	<p><b>Awaiting report</b></p> <p>However, in the proposed plan for Fife, they were progressing with a multi-agency ‘Minds Matter’ project with bespoke training created with CAMHS to deliver to named person staff. This is a two day residential training course during holidays, which has received excellent feedback. This will eventually be rolled out to all senior managers and guidance staff.</p> <p>The HWB representative for Fife had planned to use this grant to train Active Schools staff delivering sessions at the end of the school day and during the holiday sessions.</p>	<p><b>Initial Impact</b></p> <p>Fife are currently completing their progress report and will email in due course.</p>				
Glasgow	<p><b>37</b> Staff were trained in SMHFA:YP from secondary schools across the City. 44 places were offered however due to staffing issues and illness some people were unable to attend.</p> <table><tr><td>Bannerman High</td></tr><tr><td>Eastbank Academy</td></tr><tr><td>Lochend CHS</td></tr><tr><td>Rosshall Academy</td></tr></table>	Bannerman High	Eastbank Academy	Lochend CHS	Rosshall Academy	<p><b>Initial Impact</b></p> <p>The anticipated impact is that young people’s mental health needs will be better addressed through the knowledge and understanding of staff within schools.</p>
Bannerman High						
Eastbank Academy						
Lochend CHS						
Rosshall Academy						

<table><tr><td>Whitehill Secondary</td></tr><tr><td>Parkhill Secondary (ASL)</td></tr><tr><td>Hillpark Secondary</td></tr><tr><td>Holyrood Secondary</td></tr><tr><td>King's Park Secondary</td></tr><tr><td>Lourdes Secondary</td></tr><tr><td>Shawlands Academy</td></tr><tr><td>St Margaret Mary's Secondary</td></tr><tr><td>St Paul's RC High</td></tr><tr><td>Hollybrook Academy (ASL)</td></tr><tr><td>Cleveden Secondary</td></tr><tr><td>Hyndland Secondary</td></tr><tr><td>John Paul Academy</td></tr><tr><td>Knightswood Secondary</td></tr><tr><td>Notre Dame High</td></tr><tr><td>Abercorn Secondary (ASL)</td></tr><tr><td>EVIP</td></tr><tr><td>Westmuir High (ASL)</td></tr><tr><td>GDSS</td></tr></table>	Whitehill Secondary	Parkhill Secondary (ASL)	Hillpark Secondary	Holyrood Secondary	King's Park Secondary	Lourdes Secondary	Shawlands Academy	St Margaret Mary's Secondary	St Paul's RC High	Hollybrook Academy (ASL)	Cleveden Secondary	Hyndland Secondary	John Paul Academy	Knightswood Secondary	Notre Dame High	Abercorn Secondary (ASL)	EVIP	Westmuir High (ASL)	GDSS	<p>Feedback from reflective learning practice shows greater staff awareness and confidence.</p> <p><b>Next Steps</b></p> <p>Glasgow are in the process of finalising a Mental Health Strategy and Action Plan for Glasgow Education Services.</p> <p>They are developing a template for schools to help them develop a mental health policy for their establishments.</p> <p>Schools have been encouraged to access more training in SMHFA:YP using their own funds and accessing training through the trainer or through Health Improvement colleagues. The authority looking at training 3 educational psychologists as What's The Harm Trainers to allow them to train staff as trainers in secondary schools using a cascading model.</p> <p>The main barrier is allowing staff out of school to attend the wide range of training on offer. Staff cover is the main issue as it is very difficult to obtain replacement staff to allow other to attend high quality training</p>
Whitehill Secondary																				
Parkhill Secondary (ASL)																				
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<p>Staff ranged from Depute Head Teachers (Pupil Support) to Principal Teachers (Pastoral Care) and Faculty Heads.</p> <p>Training was delivered by an independent trainer (see below), co-ordinated by Glasgow Psychological Service.</p> <p>4 secondary schools were used as venues and refreshments /catering was funded by Education Services through EdIS.</p> <p>Each school was contacted and asked to send one or more staff who expressed an interest in the SMHFA:YP Programme.</p> <p><b>Spend</b></p> <p>Used to pay trainer, 4 training courses of up to 12 staff each day at £500 per course.</p>																				



Inverclyde	<p><b>22</b> staff have been trained in SMHFA: YP this session</p> <p>Inverclyde submitted the name of someone who wished to become a trainer however, their application was unsuccessful, they would hope to take this forward in the future on another T4T course</p> <p>In terms of staff selection, this was e-mailed out to Head Teachers, who circulated this to staff and they signed up in the normal way. Neither course was over-subscribed so all who wished to go could be accommodated. 2 training session took place</p> <p><b>Spend</b></p> <p>Staff cover/ resources Cover for 10 teaching staff. Downloaded the remaining Grant to secondary schools, Craigmarloch School and Lomond View Academy to put towards resources on mental health in their own particular school</p> <p>14<sup>th</sup> February 2018</p> <table> <tr> <td>ASN Auxiliary</td> <td>Inverclyde Academy</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Outreach Worker</td> <td>CLD Community</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Learning &amp; Development ASN Auxiliary</td> <td>Inverclyde Academy</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Librarian</td> <td>St Columba's High School</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ASN Auxiliary</td> <td>St Columba's High School</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Health &amp; Wellbeing/Education Services/ Business Coordinator</td> <td>Clydeview Academy</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Clerical Assistant</td> <td>Inverclyde Academy</td> </tr> </table> <p>7<sup>th</sup> March 2018</p> <table> <tr> <td>Principal Teacher</td> <td>Inverclyde Academy</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Inverclyde Academy</td> </tr> </table>	ASN Auxiliary	Inverclyde Academy	Outreach Worker	CLD Community	Learning & Development ASN Auxiliary	Inverclyde Academy	Librarian	St Columba's High School	ASN Auxiliary	St Columba's High School	Health & Wellbeing/Education Services/ Business Coordinator	Clydeview Academy	Clerical Assistant	Inverclyde Academy	Principal Teacher	Inverclyde Academy		Inverclyde Academy	<p><b>Initial Impact</b></p> <p>From feedback received from both sessions, staff found this CLPL very helpful and it has given them the confidence in how to support young people more effectively and to sign post them to receive support.</p> <p>For the session for non-teaching staff, there were a lot of classroom assistants who attended, along with staff from our Active School. These staff come into direct, often 1:1, contact with vulnerable young people. This CPD has allowed them the opportunity to know the signs to look out for with young people and how to support them. The CLPL took place in March of this year, so the impact is not known as yet, other than to confirm that participants felt more confident in their understanding and knowledge of mental health and how this can manifest than they did before the training.</p> <p><b>Next Steps</b></p> <p>The authority would be keen to run this training again, both for teaching and non-teaching staff. The size of the groups being trained allow everyone the chance to actively participate in the course and the materials provided are of very high quality. The training being split into 3 parts also ensures that participants are required to use the knowledge learned to complete the training and produce an essay on what they have learned and how they would take forward ALGEE. It would also be useful to look at whether staff in schools prefer coming to an external venue or whether it may be better looking at individual schools being training or clusters.</p> <p>The authority would also be keen to have a T4T trainer. This would take the pressure off the one trainer that the authority has, so would be looking to have their application considered in the future.</p>
ASN Auxiliary	Inverclyde Academy																			
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	<p>Teacher All Saints Communication &amp; Language Active Schools Coordinator x 2 Principal Teacher Clydeview Academy Teacher Clydeview Academy Teacher Clydeview Academy Principal Teacher Clydeview Academy Teacher Clydeview Academy Teacher Clydeview Academy Principal Teacher Clydeview Academy Teacher Corporate Parenting Principal Teacher St Stephen's High Classroom Assistant St Stephen's High Teacher Clydeview Academy</p>	<p>The authority do not foresee any barriers to holding the training in terms of the organisation of the course, the issue could be releasing teaching staff to attend, as securing cover is currently an issue.</p>
Stirling	<p><b>41</b> staff have been trained this session in SMHFA: YP</p> <p>2 educational psychologists were trained as SMHFA: YP T4T</p> <p>Education staff were from all 7 secondary schools. 3 staff were from the centre (including educational psychology service). DHTs, PT Pastoral Care, Teachers, Educational Psychologists, Health and Wellbeing coordinator Paul Burnside Staff were nominated by each school but we emphasised the staff we would like to have trained ie in key positions within the school and the authority</p> <p><b>Spend</b></p> <p>All of the £2000.00 on a trainer and catering.</p> <p>3 training courses provided by an external trainer - £600 per course = £1800.</p>	<p><b>Initial Impact</b></p> <p>From training evaluations, there is a clear increase in staff knowledge and confidence in relation to young people's mental health. It's clear however that the training needs to be part of a wider implementation plan to support the sustainability of the knowledge and to ensure that there is an impact on young people. Since the training only took place in February and March the authority do not yet have any data about the impact on young people or the longer term impact on the day to day practice of staff.</p> <p><b>Next Steps</b></p> <p>Improving mental health and emotional wellbeing for children and young people is a key priority for Stirling Council. A Children's Service action plan has been drafted with key actions to be taken forward over the next year such as the training of staff</p>

	The remaining £200 was spent on catering for the 3 days.	<p>and partners. SMHFA-YP training will be rolled out further as part of a training pathway.</p> <p>There are two trainers for SMHFA: YP who can help to support the roll out of the training.</p> <p><b>Barriers</b></p> <p>Stirling reported the time required to support staff with enrolment for the online aspect and the organisation of the training itself.</p>
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#### Year 4: summary of impact

As can be seen by the figures above, the numbers of people trained in Year 4 of the project is high at 176 practitioners across the 5 local authorities. In addition, 5 staff attended the SMHFA: T4T training which will provide sustainability for the training across the secondary schools in these local authorities.

Each local authority has used the funds bespoke to their own needs and requirements and having the fund has allowed staff from almost all secondary schools across the 5 local authorities.

Local Authority	Number of secondary Schools	Number of secondary schools with staff trained in SMHFA: YP
East Ayrshire	9	9
East Lothian	6	6
Fife	21	21*
Inverclyde	6	6
Glasgow	37	27
Stirling	7	7

\*Fife has developed an innovative and multi agency approach, called Our Minds Matter. A good practice exemplar of this approach is currently being edited for the National Improvement Hub. Senior managers in all schools have undergone this training, delivered by CAHMS & Educational Psychologists.

Their plans were to use funds to train Active Schools staff / after school staff in SMHFA :YP. I am still waiting on a progress update in relation to this.

Three Training for Trainers sessions were held this year, one in Glasgow, one in Edinburgh and one in Stirling. As a result of the T4T in Glasgow in November 2017, a new T4T Glasgow City & Clyde network has been set up for trainers, allowing local networking, the sharing of good practice & resources along with sharing any challenges with delivery.

This feedback is very positive. It is clear the Local Authorities have identified mental health and wellbeing as an issue for young people and thus an area of development for staff. All the authorities have used the funding to complete the training for targeted staff in areas of need. Staff evaluations appear to be positive with a growth in knowledge, understanding and confidence. The objective of the project to support staff training, especially in areas of deprivation has been met in all five Local Authorities.

The fourth year of this project has met its hoped for outcomes related to targeting staff in secondary school communities, especially in areas of need with many identifying how to sustain this training and see it have a wider roll out across the authorities.

It will take time to achieve the aim of supporting more young people, to embed these practices across secondary school communities. More needs to be done in this area as mental health continues to be identified as an area of need, with regards to training for staff and young people's general health and wellbeing. This project tackles these issues locally, with a view to having an impact nationally over the coming years and will hopefully help support the priorities on new Mental Health Strategy.

## **Recommendations**

In order to ensure parity across the local authorities, it is proposed that the remaining 14 local authorities receive £2000 to undertake mental health training projects targeted at secondary school staff.

### **Northern Alliance**

Aberdeen City  
Aberdeenshire  
Western Isles

Moray  
Orkney

### **Tayside**

Angus  
Perth & Kinross

### **The West Partnership**

East Dunbartonshire  
East Renfrewshire

### **South East Alliance**

Edinburgh  
Midlothian  
West Lothian

### **Forth Valley & West Lothian**

Falkirk

### **South West Collaborative**

South Ayrshire

The preferred option would be to spread the funding over two years in order to ensure the projects are appropriately monitored and supported.

## **Year 5 (2018 / 2019)**

Based on the locality of the local authorities within Regional Improvement Collaboratives (RIC), the following group is suggested for session 2018 / 2019;

### **The West Partnership**

East Dunbartonshire  
East Renfrewshire

### **South East Alliance**

Edinburgh  
Midlothian  
West Lothian

### **Forth Valley & West Lothian**

Falkirk  
**South West Collaborative**  
South Ayrshire  
**Year 6 2019 / 2020**

**Northern Alliance**

Aberdeen City  
Aberdeenshire  
Western Isles

Moray

Orkney

**Tayside**

Angus  
Perth & Kinross

**Feedback from participants**

Since partaking in the First Aid Mental Health training programme, I have made use of the “ALGEE” approach when dealing with young people’s mental health. I had to use ALGEE twice last week as I believe that at this time of year there is a lot of stress and anxiety with the senior pupils, and this sometimes shows through breakdowns which Pastoral Care teachers have to deal with.

Last week, one of my senior girls approached me wanting to talk. She appeared very anxious and on the verge of tears. I took her in to a quiet room and we discussed what was wrong. She went on to explain that she isn’t enjoying school anymore and although she is a 5 higher pupil, she has been struggling to keep motivated. We talked at depth to try and figure out why this would be as she wasn’t aware why her attitude to work had changed. We discussed family life and she opened up to me about her older brother who has a battle of mental health issues since he was younger and also spent some time in hospital to help with these. We talked about the impact that this has had on her life and she was extremely upset and felt she “didn’t know who she was anymore” and “was losing her mind”. I kept calm and remembered the advice I was given in the First Aid course and then began to think about ALGEE and used this as an aid to battle the situation in front of me. As she was talking a lot about her brother trying to commit suicide, it naturally allowed me to assess the situation and ask about her thoughts on suicide. She went on to say that she would never dream of doing something “stupid” as she saw what he brothers actions did to her mother. We then talked a bit more about suicide and her thoughts around this. I listened to everything she was saying in a non-judgemental way and kept my opinions separate from hers. I went on to discuss the support and help the school have for young people feeling the way she is at the moment. We talked about counselling and she agreed to take part in the Life Links programme we have in school as she feel she would really benefit from talking about things with a professional. I explained that I was here for her throughout this stressful time and we talked about the possibility of joining a gym to allow her to exercise and feel good about herself and aid her anxieties around school.

After talking with her I spoke to mum who said she will speak to her regarding her stress, mum was extremely supportive. She came the next day and thanked me for listening to her and for getting her help and support. I believe that the use of ALGEE gives me a guide when dealing with the mental health of young people, which I deal with on a daily basis. Following these steps allowed me to deal with this situation in the most effective way and fills me with more confidence in dealing with issues such as this in the future.

Reflecting upon the Scottish Mental Health First Aid for Young Adults course (SMHFA: YP) I found a number of areas very interesting. One of which was the definition of what mental health is:  
“....a state of (complete) physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” The World Health Organisation

I, like so many others, thought mental health related solely to a person's mental health problem and did not consider how a person's physical, social and mental wellbeing play such a large part of their mental health. There are so many pressures on young people today that it is important to recognise the signs of mental health problems such as Depression, Anxiety, Suicide, Self-harm, Eating disorders, Alcohol/ Drug misuse we have a duty to provide help to prevent the problem developing into a more serious state.

I found the 'Continuum Diagram' adapted by K Tudor interesting as it demonstrates that a young person's mental health is changeable in the way that different events, times and factors affect a person's mental health and that a person with a diagnosis of a serious mental health problem can prosper in life, with effective coping strategies, support and positive mental wellbeing.

Another part of the SMHFA: YP course that I found interesting were the statistics on how common mental health issues affect young people e.g.

- One in ten children between the ages of one and fifteen years has a mental health problem.
- Research suggests 20% of children have a mental health problem in any given year, and about 10% at any one time
- Mental health problems among children increase as they reach adolescence
- The peak age range for the onset of mental health problems in young people is 12-18 years.
- Half of all cases of mental health problems will begin by age 14.

These stats not only go to show how common mental health is among young people, but also demonstrate how a young person's development and mental health problems are interrelated. As a secondary school teacher I need to be aware of these issues as the research shows this is a critical time in a young person's psychological development.

Working in a deprived area of the city where unemployment is high and drug/ alcohol misuse is common, I found it apparent that young people exposed to this environment are more vulnerable to mental health problems. This is not to say that young people from loving, financially well-off and supportive backgrounds can also develop mental health problems. I found it interesting that inequalities in life have such an effect on a young person's mental health and wellbeing.

Working with young people from deprived backgrounds, many of whom are LAAC, puts me in a position to identify and help some of the most vulnerable young people in our society. This is why the SMHFA: YP course and the ALGEE training is so important. It has given me the knowledge to recognise the signs of mental health problems, the confidence to ask about mental distress and the skills to provide initial support and guide them towards professional help. I intend to use ALGEE to Assess a young person's situation and ask about suicide, Listen to them non-judgementally and Give support, information and guidance. I will encourage them to seek professional help if it is appropriate or provide other agency support available in the local community.

During the SMHFA: YP course I found the chance to speak to other professionals from various backgrounds very useful as it allowed us to share experiences and different real life scenarios. It also gave a platform for everyone to share resources and discuss professional agencies and how they helped. Discussions with these colleagues the training and the materials distributed during the SMHFA: YP course has put me in a better position to help support the pupils in my school and the young people of Scotland.

Has helped me feel more confident about dealing with young people's mental health.

I am far more confident and motivated in discussing these issues in my role. I have used the ALGEE approach with a young person and I am confident that I would do so again if it felt necessary.

I know feel that I have a more in-depth understanding of mental health and some of the common issues linked to it. I also feel supported through ALGEE and am aware of how to implement strategies and refer to appropriate professional help. I feel more confident that I can help tackle stigma around mental health and also I feel more comfortable to talk to young

people about their mental health. I know where to get appropriate advice, support and information to pass on to any young people in need.
This training has impacted the way I approach my conversations about mental health with young people. The ALGEE technique has proved useful during recent conversations with the young people I work with. I have gone on to share this strategy with my colleagues.
The training has provided me with knowledge and strategies to help the young people in the school.
Around 30% of the young people/parents I see have some degree of mental health illness. The strategies embedded in the course are now very much a core part of my daily practice.
Extremely useful. Mental health needs to be addressed and supported. Raising awareness and removing the stigma are the next steps.
This training was really good. I will use information from this to support colleagues. I will also encourage colleagues to sign up for a Mental Health First Aid Course. A number of <u>individual participants</u> gave feedback in summer 2016 through Survey Monkey, covering three of the Local Authorities.

This feedback is very positive. It is clear the Local Authorities have identified mental health and wellbeing as an issue for young people and thus an area of development for staff. All the authorities have used the funding to complete the training for targeted staff in areas of need. Staff evaluations appear to be positive with a growth in knowledge, understanding and confidence. The objective of the project to support staff training, especially in areas of deprivation has been met in four of the five Local Authorities.

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