

# Emotional Well-being and Mental Health Strategy for Children and Young People

Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole  
2016 - 2020



**Why are we doing this...?**

The emotional well-being and mental health of all children and young people is a really important priority for those involved in supporting them in Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole. This Strategy outlines how Dorset County Council, Bournemouth Borough Council, Borough of Poole, Public Health Dorset and NHS Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group and their partners, including children, young people and their families will make sure that this happens.

The Government also thinks that this is very important and have published a document called "Future in Mind: Promoting, protecting and improving our children and young people's mental health and well-being" which says what all local areas should be doing and recommends ways in which they can do it. This includes the need for all areas to write a Local Transformation Plan. This Strategy will make sure that we achieve this and includes the developments and actions in the current Dorset Local Transformation Plan for Children & Young People's Emotional Well-being & Mental Health.

### **Our Vision**

That children and young people have positive emotional well-being and mental health so that they:

- Achieve positive goals and ambitions.
- Grow up to be confident and resilient and can contribute to society.
- Feel safe and can find the right help easily when they need it and can trust this help.
- Are experts in their care.
- Want to be involved in how services are delivered and developed, not just for themselves, but also for other children young people and their families.
- Receive help that meets their individual needs and is delivered by people that care about what happens to them.
- Whatever their level of need, will get the best possible care, support and treatment when they need it.
- Have both good physical and mental health.

#### *- All involved and responsible*

To achieve our vision we need everyone to work together. Children, young people, parents, carers, family members, friends, professionals, schools/colleges, services and local communities all have a part to play.

This will mean that:

- Children and young people can recognise their mental health needs and can help themselves and their friends
- Families are able to support themselves (both children and parents/carers)
- Children, young people and families are supported by others including professionals and other adults they trust to help them
- Schools/colleges and services support their students and service users
- Everyone will be able to help children, young people and families firstly to stay well and secondly to notice when things are not so good and be part of help and support.

All professionals and services will have the expertise to target and support children and young people who are the most vulnerable and will be able to engage with them in the best way and work with them to achieve the best outcomes.

All support will be built around the child or young person and their family with all services working together at the same time to meet their needs. This will include services bringing together their resources in the best way to make this happen.

### What will we do...?

We will look at our local system to make sure that we have strong families, schools/colleges and communities that can help all children and young people across Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole to do well in life. Most children in Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole do well most of the time but there will be times when they need some extra help and support. We want to make sure that there is a graduated response in place that can identify and support their needs and help them to thrive.

Our approach will be based upon the principles developed in the THRIVE model<sup>1</sup> to promote and improve the emotional well-being and mental health of all children and young people.

Thriving is the state we are all seeking to achieve for children, young people and families. Thriving involves feeling good and functioning well; supporting people to thrive is a positive way of working that focuses more on wellbeing than illness. To help support this, services have a focus on prevention, promotion and awareness raising work in the community. This may include undertaking consultation and training that helps the wider community rather than specific individuals.

We want to make sure that everyone is part of providing the following graduated levels of support to children, young people and their families:

- Coping (Building and Promoting Resilience)
- Getting help (Early Intervention)
- Getting more help (Access to support)
- Getting risk support (Support for those with highly complex support needs and are the most vulnerable)

The model will shape the support available for children, young people and their families and help us to make sure that everyone working with them has the right skills, capabilities and knowledge to help them.



We recognise that children and young people's needs change (both increasing and decreasing) at different times in their life. We will make sure that the right support is available at the right time to

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<sup>1</sup> Developed by the Anna Freud Centre and the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust

meet these changing needs and appreciate that they may experience difficulties that will need different levels of support at the same time.

This approach will also ensure that all people and communities supporting children, young people and families remain involved in their journey at all times. However, this may be to a greater or lesser extent depending upon the level of support needed at any given time.

### **1. Coping / Build and Promote Resilience**

We will make sure that children and young people are able to:

- Live, study and grow in strong supportive families, schools/colleges and communities.
- Have the right building blocks in place to support their emotional well-being so that they can develop life skills which will help them to recognise and manage normal life challenges into adulthood and be able to deal with them throughout their life.
- Develop strong and secure attachment in their early childhood (age 0-5).
- Recognise, develop and utilise strengths within themselves, their families, their schools/colleges and their local communities.
- Manage periods of uncertainty in their life and be able to resist and recover from difficult times. (such as stress, bullying, bereavement and behaviours around substance use and sexual health)
- Understand change as a natural part of life.
- Recognise and avoid pressure from the actions of their peers.
- Develop and maintain self-worth and confidence.
- Recognise the importance of participation in a range of activities.
- Prepare for and move smoothly into adulthood.

We recognise that periods of transition may be particularly difficult for children and young people so we will make sure that extra support is put in place to plan for and help during these times to prevent problems from occurring.

### **2. Getting Help / Identify Problems Early**

We will make sure that:

- Children, young people and the people around them are able to recognise:
  - Things that are happening to them that may affect their emotional well-being and the effect they could have.
  - When they are finding things difficult.
- When things are not going so well, children, young people and the people around them are able to:
  - Easily find out where and how to access information to support themselves.
  - Put strategies in place to help manage these difficulties including how they can take care of themselves as well as being given help.
  - Share and develop coping strategies to help now but that can also be used again in the future.
  - Understand and communicate what support will work best for them as an individual and their family.
  - Recognise how by improving their physical health they can help their emotional health.
- Our Early Help approaches will work well to see where children, young people and their families may need help and make sure that the right help is in place at the right time to improve well-being.

- Everyone in all organisations and services is clear about their role and responsibilities, is able to recognise when problems may or are occurring, and works together as one big whole support system.
- The first person that a child or young person goes to for help has the skills, expertise and knowledge to provide the right advice and support.
- Support, or access to support, is provided where we think problems may occur and more help is needed such as:
  - Children aged 8 to 11 have the skills and support in place to help when problems arise e.g. when entering adolescence.
  - Children, young people and their family are involved in preparation for any periods of change so that problems do not increase e.g. moving schools or services.

### **3. Getting More Help / Improve Access to Effective Support**

*- Support is available at the right time, in the right place, and is the right offer for the individual child or young person.*

We will make sure that:

- Children, young people and their families are able to find reliable information and advice, and guided help to be able to help themselves in the first instance.
- Children, young people and their families can access evidence based support and interventions when they need them
- The first person that children and young people or their families choose to speak to, can provide appropriate practical help, advice and support- including access to additional support.
- People who provide support help as much as they can and get advice, instruction and guidance for themselves to be able to provide more support to the child / young person.
- If additional help and support is needed from other professionals and specialist services, the first person is able to contact them via clear pathways and the child/young person and their family know what is going to happen and when.
- Children, young people and families will have knowledge and information about self-help skills and tools so that they can successfully manage their difficulties.
- Any input from more specialist services will be time focused to meet specific and identified needs.
- While specialist services are working with a child or young person, the other people around them will continue to provide support as well.
- Once any specialist treatment has been completed, on-going support will be continued by people who are close to the child or young person including family and friends.
- There is an appropriate response by services when things change or get worse.
- Look at how services can ask the same questions and share the answers with other services so that children and young people only have to tell their story once.
- Make sure that services and professionals are proactive to identify and support emerging needs of children, young people and their families.
- Make sure that support is located in the right places at the right time and provided in the right way so that children and young people will want to use it.
- Make sure that children and young people have knowledge and opportunities to provide support to each other and learn from their experiences.

- That support includes approaches and tools that will help the young person and their family as they prepare for adulthood.

#### **4. Getting Risk Support / Care for those with the Most Complex Needs or are the Most Vulnerable<sup>2</sup>**

We will:

- Fully understand our local population to make sure that we know are most likely to need help and make sure that they do not slip through gaps.
- Make sure that services work together to help those that find it hardest to access support can do so and that they do not experience additional stigma or labelling because of their needs.
- Develop specific approaches to make sure that services are able to develop relationships to help engage children and young people to support them fully such as:
  - Make sure that children and young people are supported to be ready for the treatment that they need. This will mean that people who are already supporting them and know them will share their knowledge about the best approaches for other services to use.
  - All services will assertively follow up all children and young people who do not engage and utilise alternative and innovative approaches to re-engage them.
  - Services will work together to assertively engage with and support families to ensure that interventions with their children are effective. This includes active follow up and consideration of different approaches if they are finding it hard to engage.
- Have services that are flexible in their approach to support and make sure that the child or young person's needs are at the centre of all they do.
- Look for opportunities to develop integrated pathways and ways of working across all services to improve emotional well-being and mental health.
- Make sure that there is equality of access to support based upon the level of need and risk to the individual child or young person.
- Make sure that the support provided has been proven to work for children and young people with more specific needs. Where there are gaps in recommendations of support we will test and evaluate potential new innovative approaches so that children and young people do not have to leave the local area to access support.
- Make sure that we link to all of our other local targeted workstream and strategies for children and young people with specific needs e.g. for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).
- Ensure that effective planning and support processes are in place for those that will have on-going support needs into adulthood, and that these fully involve young people and their families.

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<sup>2</sup> By "Vulnerable Groups" we mean for example, Looked After Children (LAC), Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Other (LGBT) or those with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) among other groups.

## What else will help us to achieve this...?

### People who work with Children, Young People and Families - *Everyone can; capable and confident*

We will make sure that:

- Every single person who meets a child, young person or a family has the skills and the confidence to promote emotional well-being and to identify issues and provide appropriate information, advice and access to support.
- We have a workforce that has the skills to be able to work with all children and young people and to identify and support all levels of needs.
- We have a workforce that is confident and competent around their role to make sure that there are no unnecessary referrals to specialist services.
- Children, young people, their families and communities have the skills and knowledge to support themselves and each other.

To achieve this we will:

- Have a comprehensive workforce development plan across all organisations, including schools and colleges, for all professionals who support children and young people at all levels of support.
- This will be based upon the different levels of need in the THRIVE model and include at each level of support
  - The skills and capabilities needed
  - The advice, guidance and interventions to be provided
  - The resources available, including use of technology and social media.
  - Sources of support and guidance for professionals from other services
  - Further support available that can be referred or signposted to (and how to do so)
  - Training available to individuals and services.
- Drive a caring culture that is passionate about supporting children, young people and their families in the best way possible to achieve the best outcomes.
- Professionals are resilient, are aware of their own emotional well-being needs, and can support themselves and each other.
- Make sure that professionals have the skills to engage, communicate and listen to children and young people and to work with them as equals in their care.
- Have a workforce that is flexible and can work in different places and in different ways that will help the child or young person the most.
- Make sure that professionals work together to help each other provide the best support in the best ways for the child or young person.
- Embed a culture of co-production with children and young people both to make sure we have the right workforce with the right skills but also to drive service development and person centred support.
- Make sure that we have strong leaders of services and that professionals are fully supported in their own development.
- Make sure that professionals working with children and young people understand the value of and access high quality reflective supervision.
- Make sure that professionals are able to keep up to date with any changes in guidance or services.
- Plan for the future to make sure we have the right type and number of professionals with the right skills and experience to meet our local needs.

- Develop our use of technology and social media to increase options of support and embed this within everyday practices.

## **Supporting Families**

We will:

- Ensure that parents/carers and families are able to understand what is normal development and be able to identify issues if they start to emerge.
- Effectively support families who are experiencing difficulties so that they can help themselves and their children and manage any risks resulting from parental behaviours so that they do not negatively affect the mental health of their children.

## **Make sure all organisations are accountable and transparent**

To make sure that we improve levels and standards of local support to achieve the best outcomes for children, young people, their families and their communities for now and in the future and use our resources in the best way we will make sure that:

- This agenda is part of the priorities and strategic work plans of all local organisations.
- We have lead commissioning arrangements in place across organisations supported by shared financial budgets.
- We work with NHS England to co-commissioning community mental health and inpatient care so that there are smooth care pathways to prevent inappropriate admissions and support safe and timely discharge.
- Local commissioning decisions and provision is informed by Quality Standards from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) as well as relevant evidence, best practice and guidance.
- All commissioning and service decisions are made to meet priorities drawn from an assessment of local needs (Joint Strategic Needs Assessment).
- We support the roll out of the Department of Health's new prevalence survey for children and young people's mental health and wellbeing.
- We fully participate in the new Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services dataset.
- We collect data and information to monitor access to services, waiting times and outcomes so that we can compare ourselves with other areas to check how well we are doing.
- We are transparent about what is spent locally on services and how this investment is used.
- We are clear about who is working with vulnerable children and young people and have safe processes in place to be able to share information about them between different organisations.
- We fully involve children and young people and are accountable to them.
- We learn lessons from situations where things do not go well for children and young people and involve them in doing things better in the future.
- We recognise and act on opportunities to influence local policy and systems that will have a positive effect on children and young people's emotional well-being and mental health.
- We clearly share our plans and progress with everyone.
- We link to other local strategies to ensure a consistent approach that does not duplicate or create gaps.



The separate Implementation Plan for this Strategy contains the detail about what will be done, by whom and by when, to make sure that we put in place all the things that we have said we will do.

We will measure our progress against this plan and seek the continued involvement of children, young people, their families and carers and professionals so that we know when things are working and improving, as well as where we still need to focus more work.

**Separate documents that will support this Strategy:**

- Background Information.
- Research, Guidance and Strategies – both national and local.
- The needs of children and young people in Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole.
- How we have included the views of children, young people, families and professionals.
- Our plan to implement and monitor the impact of the Strategy – which will also incorporate existing action plans such as the Emotional Well-being and Mental Health Local Transformation Plan.