Mental Health Awareness

FRESH
Helping young minds find a better place
The Words We Use

• Write all of the good/positive words for mental health on one piece of flipchart
• Write all of the bad/negative words for mental health on the other piece of flipchart
• What do you notice?
Mental Health & Stigma

• When someone experiences a mental health problem it can be difficult for others to understand what that person may be going through and how they can help.

• When we make assumptions about how mental health problems will affect someone's behaviour, this makes it more likely that they will be singled out, or labelled as different, dangerous or strange. This is what we call stigma.

• Treating someone differently from how we treat others because of their mental health, whether consciously or subconsciously, is what we call discrimination.
Mental Health & Stigma

• In a recent Time to Change survey, 9 in 10 young people reported experiencing stigma from others as a result of their mental health problem. They described stigma as feeling:
  – Isolated
  – Shamed
  – Misunderstood
  – Criticised as a person
  – Demeaned.

• In fact, many said the stigma they received from friends, family, boyfriends or girlfriends, teachers and even doctors was worse than the mental health problem itself!

• The fear of stigma can stop them doing everyday things

• For many people with mental health problems, the fear that they'll be labelled can make them want to give up on their hopes and dreams.
The GAME of LIFE
FRESH Edition

Negative reactions most often come from friends (70%) and teachers (40%).

40% stop going to school/college
30% are put off joining groups and/or clubs
Fear of negative reactions stop 57% applying for jobs and 32% applying for further education

Ultimate 1 in 4 will give up on their hopes, dreams and for some... their life.

(Statistics from time-to-change.org.uk)

FRESH
Helping young minds find a better place
Myth or Fact?

• Mental Health Problems are very rare
  – Myth! 1 in 4 people will experience a mental health problem in any one year

• People with Mental Health Problems are violent and unpredictable
  – Myth! In fact they are more likely to be a victim of violence

• Young People find it difficult to talk about their feelings
  – Fact! Nearly 3 in 4 fear the reaction of their friends

• Someone with a broken leg or in a wheelchair can ‘snap out of it’
  – Myth! And mental health difficulties are real difficulties too. It’s not always that easy
Activity: Who has Mental Health?

- Read through the Activity Sheet
- Decide which of the people described has mental health
Who Has Mental Health?

- Everyone has Mental Health in the same way that everyone has Physical Health
- If you’re in good mental health you can:
  - Make the most of your potential
  - Cope with the ups and downs of life
  - Play a full part in your family, school and amongst friends
Who Has Mental Health?

- Check out this video done by young people at FRESH CAMHS

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9oKoXsng60
Who Has Mental Health?

- Looking after mental health is as important as looking after your body
- Mental health is everyone’s business
- We all have days where we struggle but mostly these feelings pass
- Sometimes they develop into a more serious problem
Who has Mental Health?

- Everyone is different
- Sometimes you can bounce back from a setback
- Other times you may feel weighed down for longer
- Your mental health can change as things happen in your life
Signs & Symptoms

- If you are experiencing any of these for more than a few weeks you should seek advice:
  - Eating or sleeping too much or too little
  - Pulling away from people
  - Not engaging in your usual activities
  - Having low energy or no energy – flat and unmotivated
  - Feeling numb, like nothing matters or can’t be bothered with anything
  - Having unexplained aches and pains
  - Feeling helpless, trapped or hopeless about the future
  - Using alcohol or drugs
  - Feeling unusually confused, forgetful, on edge, angry, upset, worried, or scared
  - Fighting a lot with family and friends
  - Experiencing severe mood swings that cause problems in relationships with family or friends
  - Having upsetting thoughts and memories that you can’t get out of your head
  - Hearing voices or believing things that are not true
  - Thinking of harming yourself or others
  - Struggling to perform daily tasks like taking care of your personal hygiene, getting school work done or even getting to school
Activity: Case Studies

• Read the Case Study provided to you
• Discuss in your groups
• Use the Early Signs & Symptoms sheet to guide your discussion and answers
Risk & Resilience

• People don’t develop mental health problems for no reason.
• Risk factors are what can increase a person’s chances of developing mental health problems.
• Risk factors include a range of stressful life events and situations, relationships, genetic factors and the behaviour of ourselves and others.
• The more risk factors you have, the more likely you are to develop a mental health problem.
Risk & Resilience

• Resilience factors protect us against the possibility developing mental health problems.
• These include genetics, situations, relationships and many other things
• With more resilience factors in place, you will be better at bouncing back from the tough stuff that happens in life
Activity: Risk & Resilience

- Use the Activity sheet Risk vs. Resilience
- Cut out each factor
- Decide which side of the scales they go
  Risk Factor
  Or
  Resilience Factor
Resilience
Activity: Resilience

• Having read the Carrots, Eggs & Coffee story decide which you are most like
• Have a think about how you could be more like coffee – making a bad situation better
How to Build Resilience

- Actively increasing your resilience factors and looking after your well-being is a good idea
- Scientific research on well-being tells us there are 5 things we should all be doing everyday
5 Ways to Well-Being

• Connect
• Be Active
• Take Notice
• Keep Learning
• Give
Activity: Building Resilience

- Read the ‘How to Build Resilience’ handout
- Fill in the ‘Promises to Myself’ activity sheet
- Include things you already do
- Plan to do more giving, connecting, learning, taking notice and being active
Help Available

- We should all be looking out for each other
- Most mental health difficulties are solved within families and friendship groups
- Sometimes help is needed from a professional
- There are a variety of levels of support
- Expert support comes from CAMHS
Levels of Support

1. Talking to friends or family if something is bothering you, (even just a small amount). Socializing and building up your resilience (joining a youth group or arranging to get out with your friends or alone). Making sure you do the 5 Ways to Wellbeing.

2. Talking to a learning mentor or IAG worker in school or asking a parent to phone in and make the school aware. Calling a helpline or accessing a trusted web-based service.

3. Via GP, School Nurse etc...

4. Accessing therapeutic help available to you through the CAMHS Partnership.

5. More intensive therapy maybe with medication.

6. Inpatient - Very few people.
Activity: What could Todd do?

• Todd has recently moved from London to a school in Liverpool. Todd has struggled to make new friends at school and in his community. Todd is feeling lonely and isolated.
  – What could Todd do? What could others do?
Activity: What could Todd do?

• **Todd could:**
  – Join a sports team or Youth Club
  – Speak to a classmate
  – Talk to his parents and teachers
  – Keep in touch with his old mates
  – Speak to a School Based CAMHS Key Worker

• **Others could:**
  – Make an effort to make him welcome
  – Include Todd in activities and at break times
  – Give him suggestions about places to hang out
Activity: What could Todd do?

- Todd did not speak to anyone about how he was feeling. 3 months have passed and he still feels lonely and isolated. These feelings are getting worse.
- To make things worse, Todd’s Dad who he is very close to has recently begun a new job where he has to work away overseas.
- At school Todd feels different to the other kids as he talks differently to his peers. One day the teacher called upon Todd to answer a question, when Todd answered, another young person imitated him and made fun of his accent. Now Todd is reluctant to participate in lessons and has withdrawn even more.
  - What could Todd do? What could others do?
Activity: What could Todd do?

• Todd could:
  – Speak to his parents & a teacher about how he feels
  – Refuse to give in and make sure he keeps trying in class
  – Speak to the person who imitated him in class
  – Speak to a School Based CAMHS Key Worker

• Others could:
  – Stop imitating him & be more understanding
  – Teacher could challenge people making fun of Todd
  – Dad could Skype/FaceTime more
Activity: What could Todd do?

• Todd begins to feel worthless, he doesn’t have his Dad around to talk to and he thinks his Mum is too busy looking after his little sister and taking care of the house.

• Todd feels like he has no one to turn to and has recently begun to cut his arm.
  – What could Todd do? What could others do?
Activity: What could Todd do?

• **Todd should:**
  – Speak to his Mum & Dad about how he is feeling & what he is doing
  – Try hard to stop harming himself as in the long-run it makes things worse
  – Find other ways to express his feelings & improve his well-being
  – Speak to a School Based CAMHS Key Worker

• **Others should:**
  – Notice that Todd is very low & talk to him or get him some help (a referral to CAMHS would be a good idea)
Activity: What could Todd do?

• More time has passed, this situation has worsened and Todd now feels hopeless and like there is no point living. He has thought about suicide and has begun to write a suicide note.
  – What else could Todd do? What could others do?
Activity: What could Todd do?

- At this point, Todd needs the support of classmates, parents, teachers and most likely Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services.
- When feeling suicidal he should attend A&E to seek urgent help.
- He could also access helplines such as ChildLine on 0800 1111.
More Information

- Other places to find reliable information on Mental Health are:
  - http://liverpoolfyi.com/
  - www.freshcamhs.org
  - www.youngminds.org.uk
  - www.time-to-change.org.uk