

Taking action and challenging stigma



Key learning points

- Positive coping strategies can help everyone maintain and enhance their mental health
- There are skills and strategies that we can learn to help us maintain good mental health
- We all have a responsibility to fight the stigma associated with mental health

Introduction

In order to create any type of lasting culture shift or behavioural change within the school it is essential to provide direct actions that the whole school can become involved with. These should give individual and collective responsibility for creating an agenda within the school to directly address mental health stigma and discrimination. Linking this to the Responsible Citizens area of the curriculum and the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 supports the impetus for change.

Mental health awareness raising activities ideas

Organise an event or activity:

One visible and interactive way to participate is by organising an event or activity in your school or community. Whether it's 5 or 500 people, you can help celebrate the day. Work with your youth organisation, school or See Me with some friends and/or colleagues to think about the type of event you want to have. From a discussion, to performance, online to offline, the possibilities are endless. Activities could include seminars, lectures and debates, or roundtable discussions between adults and young people to promote understanding and partnerships on the issue of how to overcome stigma surrounding mental health conditions.

Organise an exhibition: Get permission to use a public space for an art exhibition, which showcases the challenges facing young people today.

Concerts and festivals (music, dance, art, poetry): Invite your local musicians and combine it with a panel discussion or invite a politician to make a speech. Don't know how to start? Then start small! Book a room in your school or community centre. Come up with an idea for what

you want to discuss or focus on during your event. Make some flyers, invite some speakers, and invite some friends/audience. That's an event!

Be an advocate

Another great way of helping bring about positive change is to be an advocate on the issue. You can influence policy and decisions at all levels by drawing awareness to the importance of the issue. Here are some ideas to get you started:

Engage the media: Speak out and take action to influence positive change. Some questions you could ask: Why do we need to talk more about youth and mental health? Who is directly and indirectly affected? How is this relevant to your community? What can be done to reduce stigma surrounding youth mental health?

Lobby your Government: How do you lobby your government? Start by writing a letter to your local MP, MSP or MSYP. Write to them about the challenges young people experience and to suggest solutions.

Conduct a survey: At school/college/work to determine public concerns in relation to youth mental health conditions.

Create an "info point": About youth mental health in the centre of town/village, at school, or at university. All you need is a table, some leaflets, or online materials, or your own voice to provide information. Be sure to make sure it's okay to set up something in the space first.

Spread the word: Not everyone knows a young person who is experiencing a mental health condition, nor do they know why it's such an important issue to discuss, reduce stigma around and raise awareness about.

Events and campaigns can be great ways of increasing knowledge and awareness of the issue, but sometimes, just having a discussion or informal chat amongst your friends, peers and family can be a simple yet powerful way to have an impact.

- Bring up the issue with your family and friends, ask them what their thoughts are – get the conversation started and keep it going.
- Share See Me online campaign materials with your friends on social networks like Facebook and Twitter. Get them to pin pictures and stories to our Pinterest accounts and send videos via Instagram or email.
- Distribute educational materials including leaflets and email alerts.
- Create petitions, campaigns and surveys to help you.

We have included an activity planning worksheet to help you start to think of and plan out an event.

See Me wants to know how you intend to do. Send us an email to **CYP@seemescotland.org** or reach out to us via Facebook and Twitter to let us know.

Pass the badge

The idea is simple: People wear a See Me badge for a day and then pass it on to someone else to wear for the next 24 hours. When people pass it on they share two facts that are on the back of the card which accompanies the badge: that 1 in 4 people will experience some form of mental health problem this year and of those who do, 9 out of 10 report experiencing stigma and discrimination.

The campaign was created by Richard Monaghan. Richard joined See Me and became a Community Champion, trained

to lead on tackling mental health stigma in his community. He knew that the best way to do that was to get out and speak to people and show that anyone can experience a mental health problem. However, he wanted his message to spread further than to just the people he spoke to. So he developed the Pass the Badge campaign.

How it works:

- Once you have your badges you can then pass them out to your group to keep the badges for 24 hours
- After 24 hours hand the badge on to someone else and share the facts – starting a conversation about mental health. You can give it to whoever you want, but whoever it is you have to tell them about mental health stigma. You could ask them if they know anyone with a mental health problem. Often we hear that people are embarrassed to speak about it, or to go and get help.

More information and badges can be provided from See Me by contacting Eleanor or Richard at:

eleanor.ogilvie@seemescotland.org
richard.monaghan@seemescotland.org

Walk a Mile

The idea of Walk a Mile is to bring together people from different backgrounds and groups, who don't always communicate and may stigmatise each other, to help break down any barriers that exist. Professionals, carers, people with and without first-hand experience of mental health problems, young and old, come together to walk a mile together. It's a safe space for people to share stories and get the chance to see each other as they really are, not as the labels they may have.

There will be no uniforms, no barriers, everyone will be on a level playing field;

it's all about breaking down stigma and rediscovering how fabulous people are. Walk a Mile has been developed by Chris McCullough Young and See Me, Scotland's programme to end mental health stigma. Now Chris is setting up a series of events where people who don't normally mix will share a social space.

Since being diagnosed with Borderline Personality Disorder in 2011, Chris has been walking around the country, with no money, only his mini trailer 'Hubert' and his rucksack 'Darth 2', speaking to everyone he meets about mental health, to change the way people think and behave 'one conversation at a time'.

How it works:

If you're as enthusiastic about challenging mental health stigma as we are then you might want to put on your own Walk a Mile event. That's why we've put together an events pack complete with tips, posters and flyers to get you started: see **letswalkamile.org/get-involved** or find a list of prearranged walks to join at **letswalkamile.org**.

Linking learning

This pack has been designed as a standalone resource, meaning that it can be used without input from any other sources, but it can be linked in with many awards and recognition programmes. For more information on these please see the following links:

Scottish Peer Education Network **spen.org.uk**

Welcome to SPEN, a group of peer education charities and other organisations who work with young people and adults on all kinds of issues, from sexual health to illegal highs. We promote the spread of projects throughout Scotland, and our members work all across the country, from Edinburgh to Shetland and everywhere in between. Our dedicated SPEN Officer provides members with toolkits and resources, training and free consultations and advice. We also organise educational events and networking meetings throughout the year, and we would love to have you along.

Saltire Awards **saltireawards.org.uk**

Saltire Awards are the Scottish awards designed to formally recognise the commitment and contribution of youth volunteering to voluntary organisations. Supported by the Scottish Government, the Saltire Awards enable young volunteers to record the skills, experience and learning gained through successful volunteering placements provided by local and national voluntary agencies.

Challenging stigma – Activity planning worksheet

This worksheet is designed to help you consider all the aspects you need to think about when planning an activity. What do you want people to know, figure out, experience, and be able to do as a result of the activity?

Planning

What do you already know?

What new knowledge and/or skills do you want to leave with?

The five Ws

You also need to think about the five Ws – Who, What, Where, When and Why?

Ask questions...	Things to consider	
Who	Who are the people you want to involve? How do they feel about the subject?	Know who your target audience is
What	What do you want to get out of meeting these individuals?	Will they get something out of it too?
Where	Where is the best place to arrange to meet people?	Is it accessible? Best location for young people? Do you need to provide materials?
When	How much time is available?	How long should activities be?
Why	Why do you want to change what these people think?	Where will the information go and what will they do with it?
How	How will you deliver the information?	Have you planned what you are going to do? How will you provide the information? Videos/worksheets?

Student involvement

It's easier to be effective and reach your goals if you understand the aims and concerns of others in your community, both the decision makers and those living with mental health conditions. It can help to:

- Find out more about the important issues identified by young people
- Encourage young people to become more informed so they can develop ideas and become advocates in their own care
- Encourage young people to empathise with others' agendas
- Help young people understand how to state their case clearly and negotiate support

Before setting out with the peer support work involving young people, it is important to:

- Understand why you want to work this way
- Recognise that young people are interested in their care, have the right to form groups and to participate in beneficial activities
- Remember that young people may have a different agenda to yours, so it's necessary to consult with them, to identify and prioritise issues together.
- Build relationships with young people and negotiate ground rules which will ultimately help you and them to achieve longer term aims
- Ensure safe working practices for all participants

Acting together can make for a stronger case and ensure that work undertaken is relevant and applicable to meet current needs. You can also share the work and resources available and ensure a wider reach through peer support work within the school.

There are a variety of ways that you can involve young people in the process ranging from students creating signposting areas, to 'safe places' – a designated space where individuals can go when they are experiencing distress – or integrating buddying and mentoring systems within the school to deliver elements of the pack to younger students.

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

Margaret Mead



Please make sure that you have completed an evaluation consent form before filling in this form.

School/Organisation:

Year group:

Gender: Male Female Other Prefer not to say

1. Please rate your agreement with each of the following statements:

As a result of taking part in the What's On Your Mind activities...

	Strongly agree	Slightly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Slightly disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
I know what my school could do to challenge mental health stigma and discrimination						
I know what my friends/family could do to challenge mental health stigma and discrimination						
I know what I could do to challenge mental health stigma and discrimination						

2. Please rate your agreement with each of the following statements:

While taking part in What's On Your Mind activities...

	Strongly agree	Slightly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Slightly disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
I felt safe talking about my thoughts and feelings						
I felt listened to by adults						
I felt listened to by my classmates						
I felt able to participate and contribute						
I felt included						
I felt supported by my classmates						
I felt supported by adults						



3. Are you going to do anything differently as a result of taking part in the Taking Action section of What's On Your Mind?

Yes		No	
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If you are going to do anything differently, please tell us what:

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4. Which activity did you enjoy most and why?

Activity:	
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Why?

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5a. What changes, if any, would you make to this section to make it better?

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5b. What changes, if any, would you make to the pack to make it better?

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Thank you for taking part in this evaluation.



We would appreciate some feedback on your experience of using the What's On Your Mind pack. This will help See Me improve its resources and learn from its activities. All responses will remain anonymous.

Please ensure that you have completed a consent form before filling in this form.

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School/Organisation:

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Job title:

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Year group:

.....
Gender: Male Female Other Prefer not to say

From which modules did you complete activities? (please tick)

Module 1: Building confidence	
Module 2: Mental health stigma and discrimination	
Module 3: Taking action	

1. Talking about mental health

Now that you have used the What's On Your Mind pack with young people, please rate your agreement with each of the following statements:

	Strongly agree	Slightly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Slightly disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
I felt confident talking to groups about their mental health while doing WOYM activities						
If someone told me that they were worried about their mental health, I would feel confident talking to them about it						
If someone told me they were worried about their mental health, I would know where to signpost them for support						



2. What's On Your Mind activities

Please rate your agreement with each of the following statements:

Thinking about the activities in the What's On Your Mind pack...

	Strongly agree	Slightly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Slightly disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
I felt confident delivering the activities						
The activities were clear and easy to understand						
The activities were engaging						

3. Impact of What's On Your Mind

Please rate your agreement with each of the following statements:

Thinking about the activities in the What's On Your Mind pack...

	Strongly agree	Slightly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Slightly disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
The activities were effective in increasing understanding of mental health						
The activities were effective in increasing understanding of the effect that mental health stigma and discrimination can have on someone						
The activities were effective in reducing mental health stigma and discrimination amongst the groups with which I worked						



4. Which activities did you find most effective in addressing mental health stigma and discrimination and why?

Activity:	
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Why?

5. Did delivering the activities in the What's On Your Mind pack have any impact on the way you think about mental health or stigma and discrimination? (please tick)

Yes		No		Don't know	
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If yes, please tell us the impact:

6. Do you plan to carry on activities to reduce mental health stigma and discrimination in your school or organisation? (please tick)

Yes		No		Don't know	
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If no, why not:

If yes, please let us know what you plan to do:

[illegible]

Yes		No	
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[illegible][illegible]

To complete this evaluation online, please go to <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/WOYMadults>