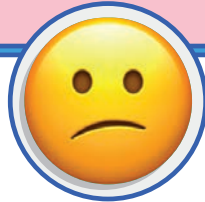


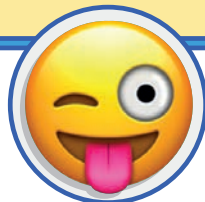
FEELS FM

THE EMOJI JUKEBOX

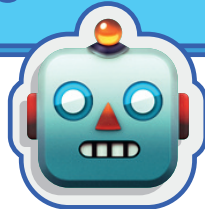
Ever feel like this?



Or this?



Maybe this?



THEN VISIT FEELSFM.CO.UK

Through Feels FM we had nearly 5000 responses from young people on what makes it difficult to talk about mental health, and what can help.

Stigma is a significant barrier to young people opening up about their mental health.



BACKGROUND

During the 2018 Year of Young People The Scottish Government Mental Health Directorate commissioned See Me to host conversations with children and young people (aged 8 – 26) about what mental health and wellbeing means to them.

The campaign objectives were to:

- Empower young people, by giving them a forum to have their voice heard where they can speak about their mental health and take action
- Ensure young people's voices are included in the decisions that affect them
- Help to normalise conversation about mental health and wellbeing from an early age and reduce the stigma around mental health
- Encourage as wide a discussion as possible on the key issues and gain a better understanding of what is important to young people
- Raise awareness of what mental health means to young people

See Me worked with young people to develop and coproduce Feels FM to provide a forum where children and young people (CYP) could speak about their mental health and what is important to them.

The key elements of the campaign were:

- Young people co-producing all aspects of the campaign
- Partnerships with agencies and partner organisations to maximise reach, include younger children, and ensure involvement of seldom heard individuals and groups
- Social media campaign (103,560 post engagements on Facebook /Instagram) (684 Tweets)
- Month long, online survey to engage 12 – 26 years olds: to surface what was important to them and to guide the campaign focus (1455 responses)
- Development of interactive facilitation tools for use with groups of CYP in a variety of settings: to begin conversations and gather data on what was important to CYP (140 packs ordered)
- Creation of an online interactive platform including use of emojis, jukebox and playlists (associated with feelings) (63,000 visits to Feels FM from 32,000 different users); questions on speaking about mental health (4849 responses) and getting CYP thoughts on what could make the difference to mental health (281 responses)



See Me prepared a detailed report on Feels FM , the section that follows provides a summary of the data gathered through the campaign:

UNDERSTANDING OF MENTAL HEALTH:

Generally more CYP are having conversations about mental health. Although mental health is talked about, how it is described varies. Some CYP found mental health confusing and suggested they don't have the language to describe it. Some CYP described it in a positive way acknowledging that everyone has mental health, and some made connections between mental and physical health and linked it to a general sense of wellbeing.

More CYP associated the term mental health with mental health problems and illness. Some CYP used negative language and stereotypes when sharing their understanding of mental health; people being a risk to themselves and others, being scary, different and unable to enjoy life and work.

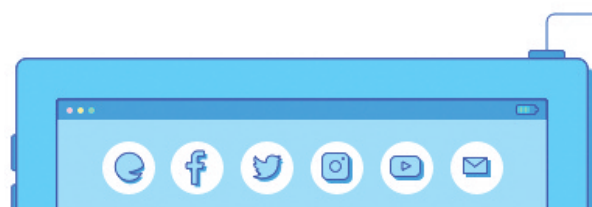
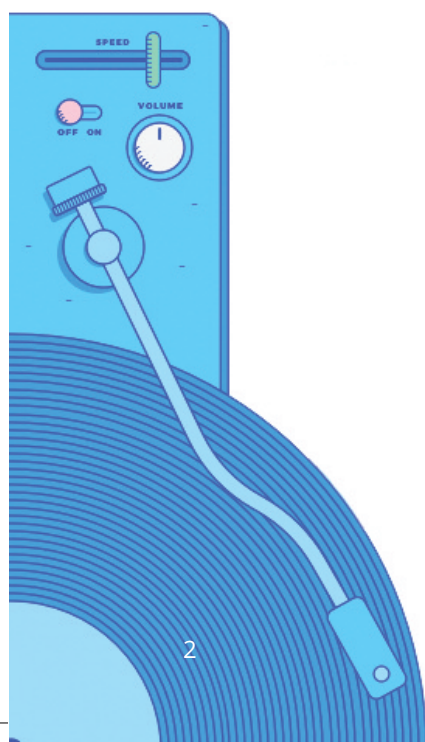
The way mental health is described changes across the age ranges with younger children talking of feelings and relating them to emotional reactions and responses. Mid-teens more frequently described mental health as feelings and emotions linked to relationships and life events. Some described expectations and pressures from friends and family as having a negative impact on their mental health, and some were talking more openly about mental health problems. More (older) young people described the fluctuating nature of mental health (their experience of

periods of good and poor mental health), having higher awareness or experience of mental health problems and the factors that contribute to them. Many described the importance of developing coping strategies, being in control, self-care and the impact of others or life circumstances on their mental state.

WHAT MAKES IT DIFFICULT TO TALK ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH?

Many CYP find it difficult to open a conversation about mental health suggesting they don't understand it or have the words to express their feelings. Stigma is a significant barrier to CYP opening up about their mental health. Fear featured highly in a large number of responses, fear of not being listened to, not being believed or taken seriously by adults if they did raise an issue and fear of the consequences of speaking out. The anticipated reactions of others was a significant barrier; embarrassment, judgement, rejection, isolation or being treated differently or unfairly as a result of opening up the conversation. Some CYP described they were vulnerable and fearful of the outcome and of getting a label or diagnosis and how this would be viewed by peers, wider community and society. CYP described witnessing other people being treated unfairly as a result of their mental health or of disclosing a mental health problem.

FEELS FM



Many CYP said they would be uncomfortable talking to someone about their mental health or to reach out to someone if they were struggling to cope. Many described not knowing where to go, or who to go to, for help. They said they are more likely to talk to friends about their mental health, suggesting there is a lack of skilled, trusted adults to approach. They suggested most adults are ill informed about mental health, would provide an unhelpful response, be unable to provide information about where to get help, and would not maintain confidentiality. They highlighted education as a key sector where there is a lack of information and knowledge about mental health. Many CYP are unsure of credible, trusted sources of support online.

WHAT HELPS CYP TALK ABOUT HOW THEY ARE FEELING?

CYP would like more opportunity to have open and honest conversations about mental health in environments where they feel safe to disclose or talk about mental health. Some CYP indicated they had been able to reach out and get support and now have a support system in place for if and when a mental health problem occurs. That's not the case for all, many CYP said they need help to start mental health conversations. Most CYP describe having trust in the person the CYP are speaking to is key (professional, parents, carers, family members, friends), trust that they can have an open conversation, that they will be listened to, respected, and supported. Some CYP described how it has been helpful to link with peers/ people who understand things from their perspective, and they welcome involvement of, and advice from, peers who have lived experience of mental health problems.

Many suggested that having better access to a range of credible and trusted sources of information (on and off line) would be really helpful in supporting their own and their friend's mental health challenges. Some CYP would prefer to access anonymous support or advice but many CYP asked that parent, carers, teachers, youth workers and other key adults and professionals who work with CYP, receive training to develop their understanding of mental health, how to respond if a CYP opens a conversation and has knowledge of where to go or to signpost the CYP to for help and support. Some CYP suggested it

would be helpful to have a directory of mental health support and services.

Many CYP want to see improvement within Education. They suggested embedding mental health across the curriculum (not just in PSE) with emphasis on normalising mental health and increasing knowledge and skills around mental health and what to do to help someone experiencing a mental health problem. They would welcome better access to counsellors or pastoral care and support at times of crisis.

CYP want to be directly involved in making and taking decisions that affect them, they want to have sufficient literacy (or access support from others) to be able to state what is important to them in respect of care and treatment of mental health problems.

LEARNING FROM THE FEELS FM APPROACH?

Engaging CYP to co-produce (and where appropriate facilitate) the campaign elements enhanced engagement and buy in from other CYP. CYP fed back that Feels FM provided a safe and engaging platform for them to discuss mental health; they liked the accessible, interactive and fun nature of the campaign; using emoji's was seen to be an effective, inclusive and innovative way to start conversations about feelings and personal situations. CYP engaged well with the on line platform and playlists.

Music is a positive way of engaging CYP and their mental health, they engaged well with the online platform and playlists. They also describe using music generally to enhance their wellbeing and mood, as a coping mechanism to deal with pressures and stress, and to help understand and express their feelings.

The 8 - 26 age range was challenging; CYP over 12 engaged well with the campaign however children under 12 benefited from taking part in facilitated discussions and interactive workshops.





See Me Response to views of children and young people - Feels FM

Many of the points raised by the children and young people are consistent with See Me's learning and experience more generally. See Me identifies some key themes that should be considered to respond to some of the issues raised through Feels FM:

STRUCTURAL OPPORTUNITIES

- Empowering leadership within public services that demonstrates it is okay not to be okay and creates conditions where mental health can be talked about and addressed without fear of stigma or discrimination – building and sense of trust and confidence in and across services
- Developing evidence based training and development for parents, carers and the professionals most impactful on CYP lives, to develop knowledge and skills to discuss mental health openly, to listen to and respond in ways best suited to the needs of the child or young person
- Identifying and addressing issues of access to information, advice and sources of support for CYP, taking account of local variation and the wide range of different needs
- Locating opportunities to influence and engage in digital and other creative developments

SOCIAL CONTACT

- Engaging young people with lived experience in shaping initiatives and approaches being designed to promote wellbeing, prevent mental health problems and to provide support, care and treatment
- Empowering young people, through youth development and peer led approaches, to co design and deliver programmes and initiatives to changes their/ and others understanding, attitude and behaviours in respect of mental health

PUBLIC STIGMA

- Addressing issues of language – normalising mental health: avoiding explicit use of the term mental health can perpetuate the view that mental health refers to mental illness
- Addressing longstanding negative attitudes to mental health, still prevalent in society Curriculum, learning and teaching
- Profiling mental health and mental health inclusion as core within Educational excellence, Curriculum for Excellence and GIRFEC



Young people worry that if they tell someone about their mental health they will be judged, rejected or isolated.

To talk about mental health, young people need someone they can trust.





See Me

End mental health
discrimination



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