

Centre for
Mental Health



Children and young people's mental health: The impact of the pandemic

Kadra Abdinasir

Thursday 21 May 2020

Local Government Association Webinar

@Kadra_A_ / @CentreforMH

Centre for
Mental Health



We're a charity with over 30 years' experience in providing life changing **research, economic analysis** and **policy influence** in mental health



Follow us on social @CentreforMH

Overview

Centre for
Mental Health



- ❑ **What do we know about the impact of Covid-19 and measures on children and young people's mental health?**
- ❑ **Access to emotional and mental health support during lockdown**
- ❑ **Priorities for helping children to recover and longer-term changes**

The impact of Covid-19 on CYP mental health:

Centre for
Mental Health



□ **Some indication that CYP MH are worsening:**

- More children and young people are reporting distress – calls to ChildLine are up with young people reporting anxiety, sleep problems and feeling isolated
- According to YoungMinds, 83% of surveyed children and young people with pre-existing mental health problems have had their problems worsened.

Specific concerns about the impact of:

- Trauma
- Poverty
- Online harms



- **However**, some children are faring better during lockdown, such as children who experience anxiety associated with school 'school refusal' or exam pressures and those who are bullied.

Access to emotional and mental health support during lockdown

Centre for
Mental Health



- ❑ One in four young people with mental health problems have stopped receiving help since the lockdown (YoungMinds, 2020).
- ❑ Referrals to specialist CAMHS have fallen: Insight from NHS England suggests that referrals may have fallen by 30 to 40% (Health Select Committee 01/05/20).
- ❑ However CAMHS is **#StillHereToHelp**

Adaptations during lockdown

Centre for
Mental Health



- ❑ Going digital (though not without challenges)
- ❑ Self-help resources
- ❑ Outreach support
- ❑ Crisis care helpline

Priorities for recovery and longer-term changes: local authorities

Centre for
Mental Health



□ **Whole system approach**

- No one organisation can be expected to address the effects of the pandemic, including CYP mental health.

□ **Developing trauma aware communities**

- LAs can play a key role in convening local responses, bringing together schools, businesses and community groups to help them create safe environments for people to learn, work and live in.

□ **Tackling inequalities:**

- Public Health teams could lead local responses to the rise in MH needs, working with communities directly to help them come to terms with emotional impact of Covid.
- Local authorities should ensure community organisations are getting funding through to enable them to keep working and adapt to new circumstances.

Wider asks:

Centre for
Mental Health



- **Cross-departmental approach:** We are calling on a commitment from government to cross-departmental working on this agenda to develop a systems-wide response; and on recovery planning with mental health and wellbeing as a primary focus.
- **Recommitting to NHS Long Term commitments:** Additional investment in CYP mental health services, roll of Mental Health Support Teams, workforce expansion and development.
- **Whole School Approach:** Department for Education to work with schools to promote an approach that is Whole School focussed and is trauma-informed will to support their recovery would give consistency across the system and could facilitate a unified strategy.



We're in!

The Mental Health Challenge

Local councils championing mental health

- Local authorities nominate a 'member champion' for mental health
- They advocate for mental health in their council and local community
- National charities offer advice, information and training
- Champions and lead officers join national network of peers



Centre for
Mental Health



Thank you

For more information:

Email Kadra.Abdinasir@centreformentalhealth.org.uk

Follow @CentreforMH @EqallyWellUK @MH_challenge

www.centreformentalhealth.org.uk