

The first six months...

"The Devon Association of Governors (DAG) is committed to supporting this service in any way we can."

*Leandro Rodrigues,
Communications
Officer, Devon
Association of
Governors*

In September 2015 the Early Help for Mental Health (EH4MH) initiative was introduced in Devon. EH4MH supports early intervention and fosters cultural change in the way schools address pupils' mental health needs. EH4MH is currently split into two elements; School Support delivered by Virgin Care (VC) and Direct Support for children and young people delivered by Young Devon and Xenzone (via KOOTH.com).

Over the last six months a great deal of work has been done to roll out the EH4MH initiative across Devon; as a result an amazing **236** schools have joined the programme—which represents around two thirds of all schools in Devon. 116 schools have not yet taken up the offer of free support from the EH4MH programme, so Virgin Care are continuing to reach out to all schools and would be pleased to hear from any wishing to join.

"Teachers have found the clinical supervision from mental health professionals very beneficial. The Introduction to Mental Health training was very well received...one staff member described it as the most productive inset day she has ever had!"

*Catherine Rees,
Headteacher, Countess
Wear Community
School*

School Support

Virgin Care have been contacting schools to find out what support was already available and to arrange introductory meetings. Schools were asked to nominate Emotional Health and Wellbeing Champions, who are a really important factor in helping implement the programme. We now have 147 registered champions across 91 schools (with some schools having more than one champion).

Training

The School Support Programme has delivered a range of training sessions since September 2015, including Introduction to Mental Health, Anxiety and Bereavement training. The aim is to work with each school to find the best approach for them, and training is offered flexibly, for example over full days, 2 hour twilight sessions or one hour team meetings.

Direct Support

Young Devon

Our direct support provision to young people is provided by Young Devon and Xenzone (via KOOTH.com). As knowledge about the service spreads, use of the service is growing steadily. During the last six months:

286 young people
accessed face-to-face
support

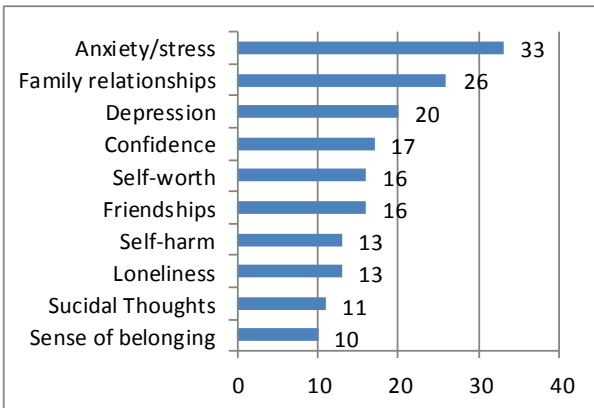
Young Devon provided
897 information-giving
and counselling sessions

Young people aged
15-18 years
are using the direct
support most

34% of user were male,
65% were female and
1% were non-binary

Use of the on-line counselling and support service provided by KOOOTH.com is growing steadily. The latest figures for March show that there are now 484 young people registered, with 19% being male and 81% being female.

484 young people are registered with KOOOTH.com



Young people are seeking support and advice around many issues, the most common being anxiety / stress, family relationships, depression and lack of confidence. The top ten presenting issues are shown on the left.

74% of log-ins are outside office hours

Of users... 19% are male 81% are female

288 counsellor hours were offered

The out of hours service is proving invaluable, as the log-in data shows that 74% of users are accessing the site outside of 9am—5pm. Satisfaction levels are very high with KOOOTH.com, with the average user score being 5 out of 5.

Parenting Support Update

As part of the programme, Parenting Support was originally planned to be delivered by Devon’s Children’s Centres. Some trial parenting programmes have been delivered but unfortunately, as a result of recent Public Health grants cuts, Devon County Council has had to suspend the Parenting Support element of EH4MH. Children’s Centres deliver a range of evidence-based parenting programmes for parents of children aged 0-5, many of whom will also have school-aged children. These programmes will continue, and if they are not fully booked, Children’s Centres will be encouraged to contact their local school or learning community to identify parents who may benefit from the programme but who have older children at primary school. In some areas, there is already a partnership between the Children’s Centre and local primary school, where parenting programmes are being delivered in partnership or through the school parent support advisor. Schools are encouraged to work with their Local Learning Community to find out what opportunities may be available.

Stop press...library service launches new scheme to support young people’s mental health

The ‘Reading Well’ for young people scheme (part of the national Books on Prescription Scheme) has just been launched in Devon libraries. Designed to help 13-18 year olds to understand and manage their wellbeing and emotional resilience, the books can be recommended by GPs, school nurses, counsellors and other health professionals as well as being free to borrow from the library.

In summary

We are pleased with the progress that has been made with EH4MH initiative, which has been running for just six months. Strong relationships are being built with schools all over Devon to set firm foundations for successfully moving the programme forward. We are very keen to work with schools who have not yet taken up the offer of the free EH4MH programme and would encourage any that would like to join to get in touch.

Thank you for your interest and support for the EH4MH programme. We will be reviewing it regularly and will continue to provide updates via this newsletter and other communications. If you would like to receive future briefings or copies of previous briefings, please contact Rachel Humphries, Advanced Public Health Practitioner: Rachel.humphries@devon.gov.uk