

MENTAL HEALTH CHAMPIONS NEWSLETTER



Bradford Educational
Psychology Team



2023-24

Issue 3/6

Spring 1, 2024

Dear Champion,

We hope that 2024 has got off to a good start in your school. Half term is almost upon us – and then it's lighter nights and the beginning of Spring (at last)! Here is a round up of the latest news and information that you might find helpful in your Champion role. Please share it with your colleagues – particularly the information about this month's featured service, Education Support (see page 3).



1. Local News and Information

MHC Core: As advertised in the previous newsletter, we are running workshops for parents after February half term, on **Exam related anxiety (19th and 21st March)** and **Supporting your child with transition (11th and 13th June)**. Parents need to book places directly, by emailing mhchampions@bradford.gov.uk.

The **webinar** to accompany this newsletter will be available before half term and will include an introduction to **Solution Circles**. Solution Circles are a short and powerful way to encourage a group of (usually) adults to generate possible solutions to an identified problem, so could be used with colleagues to problem-solve when somebody is feeling a bit "stuck" with an issue. A Solution Circle takes approximately 30 minutes from start to finish so is useful tool to have up your sleeve. We will send the link out by email very soon!



MHC+: We are really pleased to have welcomed more schools onto MHC+ over recent weeks and hope that new (and existing!) recruits are finding the MHC+ training sessions helpful. Sophie is running sessions this week (w/c 29th Feb) on **Emotional Literacy**, and after half term Sabiha will run sessions on **Trauma and Brain Development** (w/c 11th March).

Sessions are **FREE**, virtual and usually last between one and two hours, and it's always good for Champions to interact with each other, to have some time to focus on a particular topic and to share new ideas and resources. Please sign up to these sessions if you can! Bookings can be made via Skills4Bradford, for Champions signed up to MHC+.



Live sessions: The traffic situation continues to be difficult around Margaret McMillan House, which may help to explain why sign up for the live sessions has been very low this year. For the time being we will continue to offer one live session per half term (usually the final session) as feedback was positive last year, but please be aware that there is a strong possibility that we will need to make these virtual instead. We will keep you posted via email.

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MHC+ training session feedback: Unfortunately the link to the feedback questionnaire did not work for the session last half term (The Importance of Play for Children's Mental Health and Well Being), but we have now fixed the glitch! *If you attended one of Georgina's sessions in December we would really welcome your feedback* as it helps us to monitor the impact the session had and know how we can adapt it for the future. Scan this QR code on your mobile phone or follow [this link](#) and it should take you straight to the survey, which should be quick and easy to complete. Many thanks!

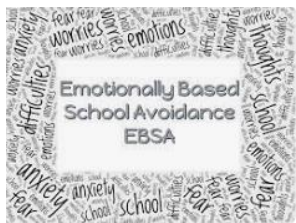


New training packages now available! Two new packages have been added to the list of Healthy Minds interventions; **Starving the Anxiety Gremlin** and **Developing Social Skills and Interactions Through Lego Based Interventions**. All of the Healthy Minds packages are available **FREE** to Champions who are signed up to MHC+, the



Chartermark or the DfE Senior Leads training programme and aim to give you enough information about the intervention/approach to be able to roll it out across your setting.

Packages come as pre-recorded YouTube videos, accessible via a link upon request (via mhchampions@bradford.gov.uk) but, as stated previously, there is an expectation that Champions will share knowledge with colleagues in school and allow one approach to embed properly before accessing training on another. A third new package, on the **Superflex** social skills resources, should also be available next term.



EBSA Pilot Project: Improving school attendance is a national and local priority, with rates of persistent and severe absence that have grown significantly post-covid. Bradford has some of the highest rates of severe and persistent absence nationally, making attendance a key priority for the district. It is recognised that for some young people, low attendance is as a result of emotionally driven factors and can be understood as Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA).

The Educational Psychology Team are currently leading a project, working alongside colleagues in the Attendance Team and Medical Needs Hospital Education Service to improve practice and outcomes for young people and their families who are impacted by EBSA. This includes a working group to produce guidance for schools, training for schools and in time access to implementation support for targeted schools.

The much-anticipated **EBSA Spotlight Conference (25th April 2024)** is now open for booking. This conference will launch the proposed guidance for schools and give schools the opportunity to hear from local and national professionals working in this area, as well as from those with lived experiences of EBSA. We expect this conference to be in high demand. Early booking is therefore recommended; please discuss with your Senior Leadership Team first. Please find the flyer and booking details attached and via Skills4Bradford or this link: [Spotlight Conference 3 - EBSA - Emotionally Based School Avoidance | Skills 4 Bradford](#)

To further support schools with implementing the guidance, further training will be offered for schools on **5th June (am)** and **12th June (pm)**. These courses will be free and will be open to booking from the date of the conference. Please share this information with your Senior Leadership Team. If they would like to be kept up to date with information from the EBSA pilot project (such as training offers and access to the guidance), they can email victoria.morris@bradford.gov.uk to be added to a mailing list.

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Children's Mental Health Week takes place w/c 5th February. As discussed in the webinar last half term, there are lots of resources and ideas for primary and secondary settings available at www.childrenmentalhealthweek.org.uk.

3. Featured service



Working in education has never been an easy option but, for many reasons, it seems more difficult than ever at the moment. School leaders, teachers and other school staff continue to do amazing things on a daily basis to support our families (and each other), but this can come at a cost to mental health and wellbeing. **Education Support** offer a range of support to individuals and organisations in relation to this, much of which is **FREE**, including:

- A **helpline** staffed by qualified counsellors, who can offer immediate, confidential emotional support – **08000 562 561** (downloadable poster also available for the staffroom)
- **Financial support** to help with essential living costs, awarded on a grant basis
- **Resources** (e.g. downloads, videos, articles and research)
- **Webinars**
- **Professional supervision for school leaders** (funded by the DfE, places subject to availability)



Further information about these services, and the other offers of support available, can be found at www.educationsupport.org.uk or by emailing enquiries@edsupport.org.uk.

4. Diary Dates – Spring term

12th, 13th and 14th March	MHC+ training sessions – The impact of trauma on brain development – please book via Skills4Bradford.
19th / 21st March	MHC Parenting workshop – Exam related anxiety (see above)
20th March (pm)	Peer supervision sessions for MHC+ Champions – please book via Skills4Bradford.

Legal
Living Well Schools
Mental Health
Healthy Minds
About Healthy Minds
Bradford Healthy Minds Chartermark
DfE Grant Funded Senior Mental Health Lead Trainin
Education Emotional Wellbeing Practitioners Team
Healthy Minds - Services Directory for Schools
Healthy Minds Wellbeing Intervention Training
Mental Health Champions CORE
Mental Health Champions PLUS
Self Harm in School

5. Further information and contact details

Up to date information about all of Bradford's mental health projects is available on the various pages on Bradford Schools Online (Bradford Schools Online - Mental Health / Healthy Minds).

If you have any other questions or queries or need to update the name of the Mental Health Champion for your setting, please contact mhchampions@bradford.gov.uk.