

Increased mental health support for children and young people

Thousands of young people will benefit from additional mental health support in their schools, colleges and universities, the government has announced.

To mark Mental Health Awareness Week, the Department for Education is today (12 May 2022) announcing a further £7 million for schools and colleges to train a senior mental health lead, bringing the total amount of funding for 2022/23 to £10 million.

Senior Mental Health Leads will play an important role in helping schools and colleges embed a culture of openness when it comes to mental health, whilst also forging stronger links with local health services to ensure young people can access the right level of support.

The Government's [green paper](#) committed to offering training to all eligible settings in England by 2025, and new figures released today show that the Government is well on track to achieve this. Over 8,000 schools and colleges claimed a £1,200 grant to train a senior mental health lead between October 2021 and March 2022, which includes half of all state-funded secondary schools in England – well above ambitions to reach one third of settings.

The new investment will mean up to 8,000 more schools and colleges – the equivalent of two-thirds of eligible settings – will be able to apply for a training grant by the end of this financial year, which will support them to promote and support the mental health and wellbeing of all pupils.

Children and Families Minister, Will Quince, said:

It is vital that we continue to support the wellbeing and mental health of young people alongside their academic recovery, and senior mental health leads will play an important role in doing this. I am grateful to those who have signed up for training so far, as well as all education staff who actively support their pupils' wellbeing.

I am continuing to work across government to ensure we meet the commitments set out in our mental health green paper. This includes rolling out mental health support teams so that millions of children across England can access the support they need.

Feedback from schools on the training has so far been positive, with one member of staff writing that they “feel much better prepared and empowered to support students”, which going forward will be vital as pupils return to normality following the pandemic.

Funding for five leading charities and organisations working to tackle

bullying and champion respect has also been announced today, to continue supporting pupils in thousands of schools in England. After a successful first six months, these organisations will receive an additional £1 million to continue the rollout of training and support programmes until March 2023.

These are:

- National Children's Bureau (Anti-Bullying Alliance)
- Diversity Role Models
- Equaliteach
- Anne Frank Trust
- The Diana Award

The grants will focus on projects aimed at tackling bullying against children who identify as LGBT, those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and victims of hate-related bullying. It follows previous grants worth £1 million provided to the organisations in November, as well as an additional £3.5 million to various charities working within the anti-bullying space in previous years.

Today's new report also details the outcome of the Wellbeing for Education Return and Wellbeing for Education Recovery programmes, which provided local authorities with £15 million of additional funding over the course of the pandemic to help pupils recover from the emotional impact of the pandemic. Findings show that over 14,000 state-funded schools and colleges in England benefitted from the two programmes. 92% of councils who responded to a survey from the Department said the funding improved their plans to support schools and colleges, while 77% reported the funding had helped to improve joined-up work locally to support mental health.

Additional information on the rollout of Mental Health Support Teams is also included in today's report, which follows the news that more than 2.4 million children and young people now have access to in school and college support. NHS England has also announced that over 500 teams will be confirmed this year, which will surpass the Government's original ambition to have 400 teams in place by April 2023.

To further support individuals with their mental health, the Department of Health and Social Care recently launched a [call for evidence](#) to inform a new 10 year mental health plan. This will set an ambitious agenda for setting out where the mental health of the nation should be a decade from now. It seeks views from the public, those with lived experience of mental ill-health and health and care professionals on how support and services should adapt for the future.

Minister for Mental Health Gillian Keegan, said:

The last two years have been particularly challenging and although children are incredibly resilient, it's crucial they can access mental health support as early as possible.

We're making great progress on better supporting young people's

mental health and this additional funding to train senior mental health leads will complement our work on the accelerated rollout of Mental Health Support Teams in schools and expansion of community services which is well underway.

We have recently opened a call for evidence and I encourage people of all ages to share their views to inform a new 10-year mental health plan to keep the nation in positive mental wellbeing.

The £10 million funding for senior mental lead training includes a [£3 million pre-commitment](#) that was announced in February 2022.

Schools can find further information on how to register for a senior mental health lead training grant [here](#).

The transparency data release on the 'Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Implementation Programme' is available [here](#).

The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) delivers videos, co-created with 11–18-year-olds with input from clinical experts and charities, which address topics affecting young people's mental health (such as managing unhelpful thoughts, bullying and sleep) and model self-care behaviours. These videos are shared with young people via social media (eg Snapchat and Instagram) and via [Better Health-Every Mind Matters](#)

OHID also offers lesson plans for Year 6 and Key Stages 3 and 4 to support the Relationships, Sex and Health Education curriculum and enable teachers to support the wellbeing of students. Written and peer reviewed by teachers, the lesson plans feature films co-created with young people to encourage pupil discussion and are accessible via OHID's dedicated teacher website, the [School Zone](#).

To further support students and marking this year's Mental Health Awareness Week theme of 'loneliness', the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, in partnership with the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, is also encouraging people to 'Lift Someone Out of Loneliness'.

Minister for Civil Society and Youth, Nigel Huddleston, said:

We know our young people are disproportionately affected by loneliness. Mental Health Awareness Week is an important moment for everyone to do what they can to help and this £10 million investment from the Government will ensure more students will have access to mental health pathways in our schools.