

The Burnt Chef Project joins HSE's Working Minds campaign

The Burnt Chef Project has joined forces with the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) Working Minds campaign to tackle work-related stress in the hospitality industry.

The Working Minds campaign aims to help businesses recognise the signs of work-related stress and make tackling issues routine. The Burnt Chef Project will use Working Minds in its efforts to help hospitality professionals, who face long antisocial hours, tough environmental conditions and pressures to perform are just some of the issues on a daily basis.

Work-related stress and poor mental health risk becoming a health and safety crisis for Great Britain's workplaces, the regulator has warned. Statistics published by HSE show in 2020/21 of the 1.7 million workers suffering from a work-related illness, 822,000 were due to stress, depression or anxiety.

The Burnt Chef Project conducted a survey of 1,273 hospitality professionals, which showed that eight out of 10 (84%) of respondents had experienced difficulties with their mental health within their career and 46% would not feel comfortable talking about their health concerns with their colleagues.

Kris Hall, Founder of The Burnt Chef Project, said: "The wellbeing of hospitality teams has been neglected for far too long, the hospitality sector is the third largest recruiter within the UK employing just over 3.2 million people. Often the hours are long, demanding, often antisocial and workplace environments are hot and noisy, add to this a skill gap shortage from low retention rates and resource crisis we find ourselves facing, it's unsurprising that the workers within the industry are facing high levels of stress.

"We need to address the root causes of work-related stress, that's why we're pleased to be working with HSE on the Working Minds Campaign. Here at The Burnt Chef Project we're committed to providing the right level of supportive structures and training so that we're able to douse the flames associated with work related stress that ultimately lead to higher rates of ill mental health.

"We're working towards a happier, healthier and more sustainable profession, where we can thrive not just survive."

Alison Wellens, interim head of Health and Work Branch at HSE, said: "We are calling for a culture change across Britain's workplaces where managing stress and talking about how people are coping is as routine as managing workplace safety. A recent Deloitte report estimates the total annual cost of poor mental health to employers has increased by 25% since in 2019. Adding up to around £53-56 billion between 2020-21.

“We’re delighted to have our new campaign partners on board to champion Working Minds in hospitality. They will play an important role in sharing key information as well as provide essential insight into the unique stressors experienced by people working in the industry as we continue to evolve our campaign.”

Working Minds is aimed specifically at supporting small businesses by providing employers and workers with easy to implement advice, including simple steps based on risk assessment to Reach out, Recognise, Respond, Reflect, and make it Routine.

Employers and workers wanting to know more about the Working Minds campaign, including the legal obligations, advice, and tools available, should visit: workright.campaign.gov.uk/campaigns/workingminds

The Burnt Chef Academy training app has modules specifically designed to tackle work-related stress and is free to access. In addition, The Burnt Chef Support Service is available to anyone who may be experiencing difficulties with high levels of stress. Simply text BURNTCHEF to 85258 to be connected to a trained volunteer 24/7 and in complete confidence.

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Notes to editors

1. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is Britain’s national regulator for workplace health and safety. We prevent work-related death, injury and ill health through regulatory actions that range from influencing behaviours across whole industry sectors through to targeted interventions on individual businesses. These activities are supported by globally recognised scientific expertise. www.hse.gov.uk

2. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>

3. The Burnt Chef Project is a non-profit social enterprise fully committed to making the hospitality profession healthier and more sustainable. They provide free training and resources to the hospitality community to aid better mental health and wellbeing. They sell merchandise and additional training courses to raise funds to provide this free support to the hospitality industry. They also build the capability of owners, line managers and employees through training to enhance the awareness of mental health and open conversations. <https://www.theburntchefproject.com/>

For the Deloitte report ‘Mental health and employers: The case for investment – pandemic and beyond’ see <https://www2.deloitte.com/uk/en/pages/consulting/articles/mental-health-and-employers-the-case-for-investment.html>