

Evidence Set 5

My Health, Our Future

Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Project

Background

From December 2015 to March 2016, Healthwatch Suffolk ran a pilot engagement project children and young people in partnership with the Thomas Gainsborough School in Sudbury, through which we collected the views of pupils about their use of current services as well as the ambitions of the EWB2020.

Our project has given over 500 young people the opportunity to take part in a live interactive survey and to share their feedback about using services. We also ran sessions with students about the importance of speaking up and to ask for their views on key areas identified within the EWB2020.

Key findings from the Thomas Gainsborough pilot:

- Almost a third of students were dissatisfied with their PSHE lessons
- Over half wanted their school to run mental health awareness workshops.
- Students were asked to prioritise seven topics taken from the CAHMS Transformation Plan. The results:
 - 76% of students rated knowledge of general mental health in their top three priorities
 - 54% rated self-harm in their top three priorities
 - 39% rated sexual health in their top three priorities.

Key outcomes:

- Mental health awareness for students and training for staff.
- Adapted PSHE curriculum for all year 7 - 11 students.
- Health and Social Care students now have a specific module on mental health.

Moving Forward: My Health, Our Future

After the success of the Thomas Gainsborough pilot, Healthwatch Suffolk began a new project called "My Health, Our Future" with eight schools across east and west Suffolk. The aim will be to obtain the views of young people and their teachers about mental health and wellbeing support in school and at home.

The project will help schools to identify the needs of pupils in respect of mental health and wellbeing so that steps can be taken to increase support and promote healthy psychological development. Pupils will have the opportunity to talk about their views on mental health and wellbeing and about how their school could improve its approach to maintaining the wellbeing of pupils.

Over the course of the My Health, Our Future project, Healthwatch Suffolk hope to collect data from over 4,000 students aged thirteen to eighteen. The data will help to inform schools, local services, the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Transformation Plan and commissioners in Suffolk.

Method

In simplistic terms, each project will be completed via eight stages. However, please note that each school will be provided with a bespoke service. For example, three of the schools involved do not have collapsed timetable days, so engaging pupils on a mass scale in one sitting is not feasible. Therefore, Healthwatch Suffolk have offered to embed an online survey into the schools' PSHE lessons, which can be completed over the course of one term.

Please see the eight stages below.

