



Cheshire and Merseyside

Children and Young People's Mental Health Plan

Our plan to continue to improve mental health support for children and young people



**Easy
Read**

Easy Read



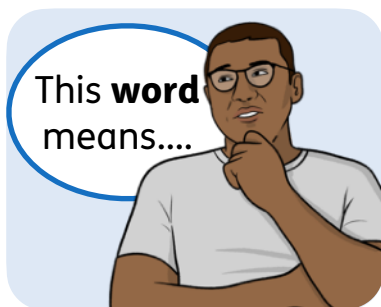
This is an Easy Read version of some information. It may not include all of the information but it will tell you about the important parts.



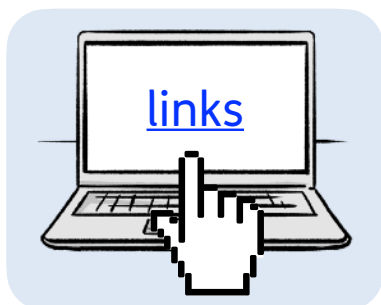
This Easy Read booklet uses easier words and pictures. Some people may still want help to read it.



Some words are in **bold** - this means the writing is thicker and darker. These are important words in the booklet.



Sometimes if a bold word is hard to understand, we will explain what it means.

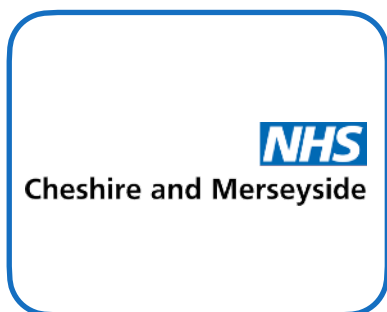


Blue and underlined words show links to websites and email addresses. You can click on these links on a computer.

What is in this booklet

About this plan.....	4
About children and young people in our area	5
What we have already done	8
What we need to do better.....	14
What we are going to do	21
What we are doing to make our services better.....	23

About this plan



This plan is from NHS Cheshire and Merseyside.

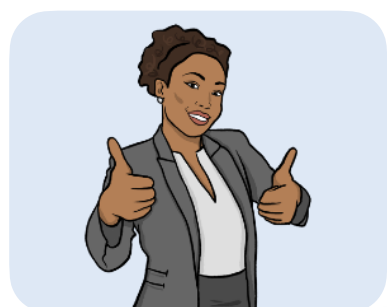


This plan tells you about how we will improve **mental health** support for children and young people.

Mental health affects how we think, feel, and act. Having good mental health means being able to cope with your emotions, relate to others, and make healthy choices.



We spoke to children and young people and professionals who work with children to help us make this plan.



This booklet will tell you about how we are going to make our services better.

About children and young people in our area



We looked at important information about people living in Cheshire and Merseyside to make sure we are offering the right mental health services.

In Cheshire and Merseyside:



- Over 60 thousand children and young people are likely to have a mental health problem.



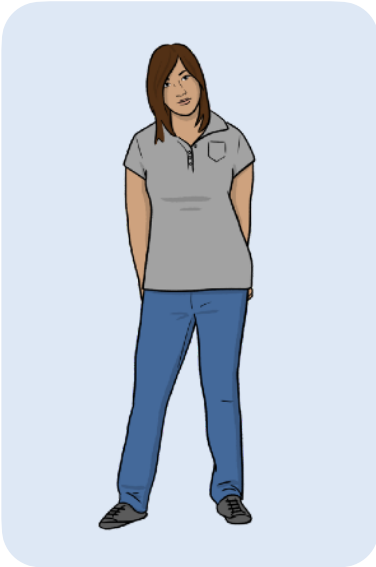
- Children who have poor mental health are more likely to miss school.



- More children and young people are going to **A&E** with mental health problems than they did 5 years ago.

A&E stands for Accident and Emergency. It is a part of a hospital where you go if you need care right away.

Also, in Cheshire and Merseyside:



- The number of children and young people **self-harming** is increasing.

Self-harming is when somebody hurts themselves.

Attempted suicide means that somebody has tried to take their own life.

Research suggests that children and young people are more likely to experience mental health problems if they:



- Live in families who do not have a lot of money.



- Have **autism**.

Autism is a condition which affects things like **communication**, being with other people, or how you think and feel about things.

Communication is the way people share information. This includes speaking and writing.

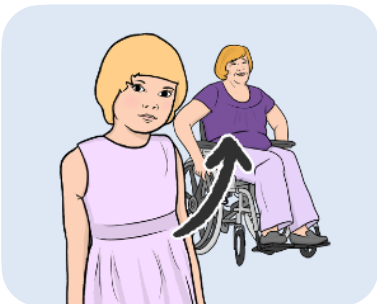
Children and young people are also more likely to have mental health problems if they are:



- Are **refugees** or **asylum seekers**.

A **refugee** is someone who has come to this country because it is not safe to stay in their own country.

An **asylum seeker** is someone who has left their own country and asks to live in a new country.



- Are **carers**.

Carers help look after people who struggle to do some things on their own like cooking and cleaning.



- Have a learning disability.

What we have already done



We have made our mental health services for children and young people better.



More children can get help from mental health services now than they did 4 years ago.



About half of our schools now have access to a mental health support team.



We give mental health support to young children and their families in the community.



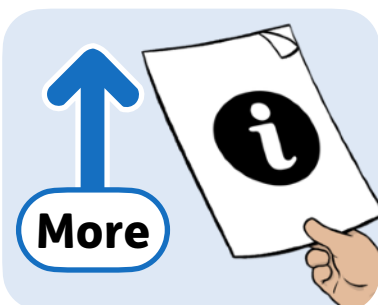
We have a telephone service available all day every day for mental health emergencies.



We have found new ways to help children and young people closer to where they live, so they do not need to go to an emergency department.



More people are working for mental health services now, so we can help more children and young people.

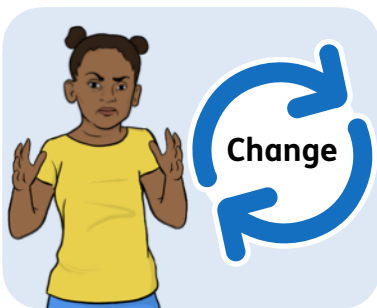


We use information from local charities to understand what is happening to children and young people's health in our area.

Some children and young people need more support



We have a new type of care, meaning these patients will work with more than one health professional.



This means we can help patients if something changes in their lives.



This also means that if these patients need more mental health support then we can give it to them.

Children, young people and their parents and carers told us what is working well

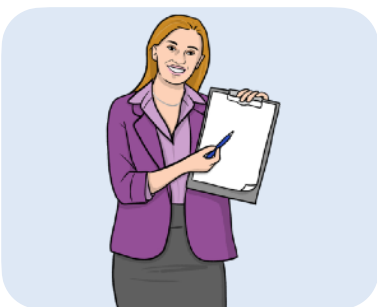


We asked children, young people, and their parents and carers what they think is working well.

They said that:



- They get to see the same health professionals for help.



- Health professionals listen to them and give them good information.



- There are many different mental health services for them to choose from.

What health professionals think is going well



We asked health professionals what they think is going well.

They said that:



- Mental health support being available in the community is good.



- Patients can have their say about what they think about their care.



- Staff working in different services work well together to support children and young people.

They also told us that:



- Health staff are friendly and work hard.



- Mental health support is available online.

What we need to do better



We try to make sure our mental health services are what the local people in Cheshire and Merseyside need.



We know there are ways our services need to get better.

Some of these ways include:



- Helping people who live in areas that do not always get health care treatment easily.



- Improve waiting times to get help for your mental health.

We also need to get better at:



- Giving more support to children and young people with **eating disorders**.

An **eating disorder** is when a person finds eating food in a healthy way hard. Eating disorders can make people very unwell.

We also know that children and young people with mental health problems are having to:



- Sometimes go to A&E.

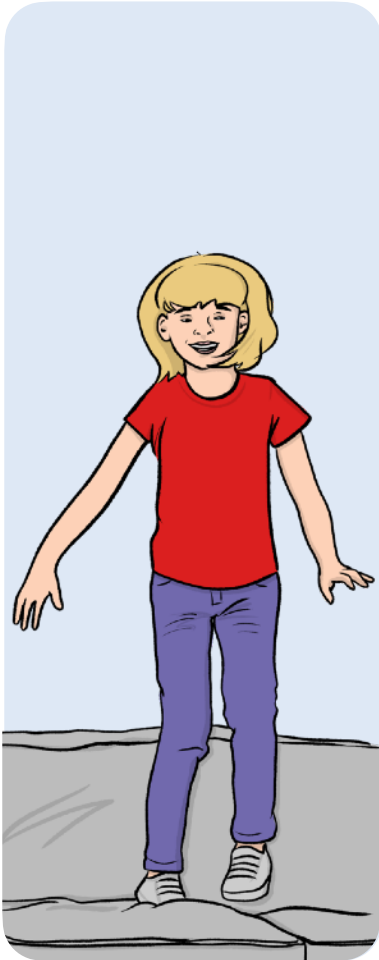


- Sometimes stay in **acute hospitals** because of their mental health.

An **acute hospital** is a type of hospital where people go for a short time to get help from doctors and nurses that they can not get at home.

We also know that children and young people with mental health problems are:

- Coming to our service with symptoms of autism and **ADHD**.



Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a health condition that can make someone feel:

- Hyperactive - this means you have a lot a of energy and can find it hard to stay still.
- Impulsive - this means sometimes you act without thinking.
- Inattentive - this means you find it hard to focus.

What children and their families told us needs to be better

They told us that we need to be better at supporting people who:



- Are from the **LBGT+** community.

LBGT+ means lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender + others.



- Might have a **neurodiversity**.

Neurodiversity is the idea that everyone's brains are organised in different ways.

In the same way that our fingerprints are unique, our brains are unique too. Some people have brains which are organised in a very different way, sometimes people may have a diagnosis like Autism, Learning Disability, ADHD, Dyslexia and Dyspraxia, but sometimes the differences don't fit neatly into a diagnosis.



Dyslexia

Dyslexia is a learning difficulty which affects reading and writing skills. Dyslexic people sometimes find understanding and remember information hard.



Dyspraxia

Dyspraxia is a health condition where you might find it hard to balance, play sport, write or use small objects.



- Have been through **trauma**.

Trauma is when upsetting things happen that are difficult to recover from.



- Health professionals who work in different services should work together better.



- Information needs to be shared with different health staff, so that children and young people only need to tell their story once.



- Families need to be supported in the years from their child's birth to when they are 5.



- Young people need to be supported when they get older, and move out of our mental health service and into a service for adults.

What health professionals told us needs to be better

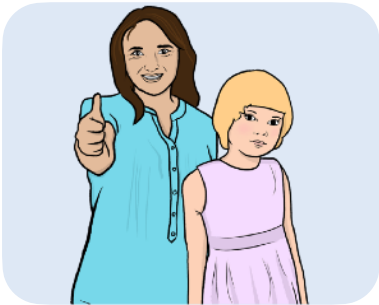


Health professionals told us what they think needs to be better.

They said that:



- We need to focus on trying to stop mental health problems starting in children and young people early on.



- Staff need time to build trust with children and young people to give them the help they need.



- We need to understand how mental health services can affect children and young people's lives.



- Our services to help people with eating disorders need to be better.

What we are going to do

To give the best mental health services, we will keep making sure that:



- We talk to children, young people and their parents or carers while they are using mental health services.



- Every child and young person can get mental health services if they need to.



- Our services meet the different needs of each child and young person.



- We support young people with their mental health needs as early as possible.



- We try to stop young people's mental health from getting worse.



- We learn new better ways to help children and young people.

What we are doing to make our services better



We have looked at information from NHS England and NHS Cheshire and Merseyside. We have also listened to Children and Young People and professionals that work with them.



Using this information we have found 8 important ways to make our services better.

These areas are:



1. Inclusive

Inclusive means we will work together with children, young people and their families to make our services better.



2. Timely Access

Timely Access means making sure that no patient is waiting too long to get support for their mental health.



3. **18-25 Years Offer**

The **18-25 Years Offer** is to support young people in a better way to meet their needs. They may also be moving to adult mental health services.



4. **Eating Disorders**

We are going to make sure our patients can get services that will treat people with eating disorders in the best way.



5. **Crisis Response**

Crisis Response is how we will support children and young people with mental health needs that might lead to an emergency.



6. Better Places of Care

Better Places of Care is how we will support children and young people with mental health problems in the best place to meet their needs.



7. Specialist Mental Health Care

Specialist Mental Health Care is how we will make sure that patients who need more support can get it.



8. Using Research

We will use research to help us continue to improve services.

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