

How to set up a senior leaders mental health network



time to change

let's end mental health discrimination

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Foreword by Sue Stirling



The emotional wellbeing and mental health of our younger generation is becoming one of the most challenging issues of our time. Problems seem to be on the increase, and the impact on young peoples' lives and futures - both positive and negative - is becoming clearer. In response, last year saw the launch of the Government's Future in Mind initiative and, with it, a five-year strategy and increased investment. This publication is part of Time to Change's national campaign which will help you turn these aspirations into reality.

Schools are central to any attempt to promote and protect wellbeing in young people, and already do a great deal. Schools and staff have responsibility, as outlined by Ofsted, 'to help young people know how to keep themselves healthy both emotionally and physically and how to get help if they need it'.¹ In turn, we know that instilling these skills is core to all aspects of school life, from achievement and attainment through to behaviour management and the culture of the school.

Ensuring schools can create the conditions to provide support during tough times and promote positive wellbeing at all times is now becoming part of high quality education. Nationally we are learning more about what works and there are more and more examples of schools doing this well. Research carried out for Time to Change revealed that the majority of headteachers want to do more within a context where external supports are diminishing and resources continue to be stretched.

Supporting schools and leaders is therefore a priority if we are to achieve better wellbeing and resilience all round.

Sharing knowledge and increasing capacity is one route forward. This is why Time to Change believes strategic networks are worth investing in. Education has a long history of inter-school collaboration and networking. Indeed, 88% of headteachers interviewed in our research were interested in using strategic support networks.

This toolkit, based on our experience of supporting such networks, aims to offer the best evidence and advice available about what makes these types of networks successful. It contains a series of advisory notes, support materials and protocols. It also takes you through the critical thinking and key agreements that we know create effective networks. It helps you create the conditions for you and your school to benefit fully from the time and commitment invested in this approach. The ability to identify local need and tailored solutions is key and these materials will enable you to design a network that builds on existing knowledge, skills and relationships.

If you are interested in creating or joining a strategic network in your local area we hope this toolkit and the national Time to Change campaign will provide the support you need.

Our aim is to help you reduce mental health stigma and discrimination, and help you as leaders achieve the strategic changes we know will be part of changing attitudes. "Challenging the stigma and misconceptions about mental health requires a starting point and some knowledge of where to signpost students and staff for support should they need it. Having a network of colleagues and contacts from both in and out of other schools can give you that starting point. Moreover, it's so important that we have the opportunity to share ideas that have really worked."

Matthew Wright, Headteacher, Wrotham School

Introduction



About Time to Change and its Children and Young People's Programme

Time to Change is England's biggest programme to end the stigma and discrimination faced by people with mental health problems. The programme is run by the charities Mind and Rethink Mental Illness, and funded by Department of Health, Comic Relief and the Big Lottery Fund.

We know that what works to address mental health stigma and discrimination are multi-level, multi-faceted campaigns that ensure mass reach and noise. This includes elements of grassroots activity based around social contact, with an integral focus on supporting and helping empower people with lived experience of mental health problems to lead change.

Since April 2012, we have delivered two pilot projects in the West Midlands and Kent, as well as elements of the work in London, the East of England, the South West, the North West and the North East. Through each pilot, we have helped to shift the attitudes and intended behaviour towards mental health among young people (aged 14-18) and their parents. We have done this by:

- Improving knowledge, attitudes and behaviours around mental health
- Reducing the number of young people with mental health problems who experience the negative impact of stigma and discrimination
- Improving the confidence and ability of young people and families to speak openly about their mental health problems
- Improving the confidence and ability of all young people and families to tackle stigma and discrimination when they see or experience it
- Improving the social capital of young people with mental health problems by building confidence and encouraging engagement within their local communities and activities

To support this work we also ran social marketing activity for young people that aligned with messages in our campaign to reach adults. As part of this, we conducted research to ensure that we used appropriate avenues to reach this audience as well as effective messaging that would engage and influence them.

We encouraged young people to talk more about mental health - in the same way they might talk about physical health - thus normalising the subject. Our research also highlighted that 'friendship' was a helpful hook, as teenagers tend to define themselves through their friendship groups. Young people want to be a good friend - it

is something they really value. So, we used tips of how to be a good friend as a vehicle to show the ways they could also tackle stigma and discrimination.

As part of the programme activity we have:

- Reached 1.27 million young people and staff across secondary schools in England
- Reached 2.97 million young people through a social marketing campaign
- Trained almost a thousand youth professionals and volunteers to facilitate a social movement to address mental health stigma and discrimination

Creating a whole school ethos towards mental health

Statistics show that the level of anxiety, depression and mental health problems in young people is increasing. Estimates suggest that^{2,3}:

- 850,000 children and young people aged 5-16 will experience a diagnosable mental health problem; an average of 3 in every class.
- 50% of all lifetime mental health problems start by the mid-teens, and three quarters by the age of 20.
- As a result of stigma 40% of young people stopped attending school and 26% wanted to give up on life.
- Recent research has shown that more than two thirds of headteachers were worried about their pupils' mental health.
- 9 in 10 young people with personal experience of mental health problems say they have faced negative treatment from others as a result.

The Department for Education has highlighted four roles that schools can play⁴:

Prevention

Reducing the incidence of mental health problems over the long term and promoting good health and wellbeing.

Signposting to early, complementary support

Helping to prevent problems escalating and/or help to manage problems - to reduce adverse impact on other outcomes, and avoid crisis situations.

Identification

Spotting emerging issues earlier and more accurately, facilitating good early support and/or swift referral.

Enabling access to specialist support

Enabling swifter access to the right specialist support and treatment when it is needed, and supporting engagement in education.

^{2.} ONS. 2004.

^{3.} Time to Change online survey, 541 young people, November 2013.

^{4.} Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools - departmental advice for school staff, Department for Education, March 2015.

It is clear that solutions need to be strategic and holistic once you consider the challenges to be addressed, the expectations being set and the evidence of what works. Ofsted now acknowledges the following about developing a whole school, positive approach to mental health: 'Done well, it will enhance attainment, reduce exclusions, re-engage students who are experiencing problems, build good relationships, attract and retain staff, and raise standards across the school'.

A whole school approach speaks to the following truths:

- Social and emotional competencies are a more significant determinant of academic attainment than IQ
- Mental wellbeing has an effect on learning confidence and inspires a 'growth mindset' (i.e. a belief that their abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work, and an ability to persist when faced with challenges)
- Pupils who can set goals, manage stress and organise their school work achieve higher grades
- Pupils who use problem-solving skills to overcome obstacles do better academically

School leaders are steeped in the processes involved in strategic change. But there are barriers and challenges to delivery, which include stigma, lack of understanding and awareness, lack of capacity and access to good information relating to mental health problems.

Finding ways to gain resources and support are critical to success. One tested route forward is through collaboration with other school leaders.



"Even if you're looking at it from the business point of view, and the school producing consistently excellent results, you need to have well-rounded, content students for them to achieve well."

"You need a whole school ethos and sense that we talk about these problems openly and that there are different channels. Here we have really good student services and very supportive senior leadership who have opened the discourse."

Fabian de Fabiani, Humanities Teacher, Townley Grammar School

An open letter from a headteacher

Matthew Wright, Wrotham School

Recent research commissioned by Time to Change among headteachers in England shows the extent to which the mental health of students impacts on schools nowadays. Compared to just five years ago, 80%⁵ of respondents said that mental health took up more of their workload in 2015. Mental health was right at the top of a list of current concerns for heads, and over three-quarters said they would like to do more to support students who experience problems.

It's become clear to me that our role as headteachers allows us to be bold in creating environments where children and adults feel they are able to talk about their mental health - as openly as their physical health. In doing so, individuals will be more able to seek support earlier and avoid reaching crisis points that, among other things, have an inevitable detrimental impact on progress and learning, or success at work.

For over two years I have been working with Time to Change on programmes and strategies to challenge the stigma felt by those with mental health problems, and to challenge the common misconceptions about mental health. Sadly, this stigma still exists in all areas of life – not just in schools.

Having been involved in the programme for that length of time, it felt like the next - and obvious - step was to develop a local network among schools to explore the issue and share experiences. A lot of schools are already doing good work around mental health, so sharing is an important role of these networks.

"At our first meeting there was a real consensus that, as school leaders, we could be influential in developing initiatives to support those affected by mental health problems."

From first contact, it was obvious that others were eager to be engaged in the conversation. As the Time to Change research suggests, mental health is high on the agenda for all schools, wherever they are based and whatever their profile. At our first meeting there was a real consensus that, as school leaders, we could be influential in developing initiatives to support those affected by mental health problems, and in creating a supportive whole school culture. It was also clear that a key to the group's success would be the direct involvement of heads, rather than the responsibility being delegated elsewhere.

My experience of our network has been wholly positive and so I would absolutely encourage you to set up your own group, or join an existing one. Among other things, by working together - sharing ideas and resources - we can support each other in making a difference for our young people, and also our staff members.

5. Consumer Insight, November 2015. Survey of 103 senior teachers, plus in-depth discussions with 12.

Benefits of running a network

The primary aims of networks are simple and will be familiar to all school leaders. Among other things, they help us to learn from others' experiences and share ideas on what works and where changes might be made.

Studies reveal that there are some concerns among teachers around the perceived complexity of mental health and emotional wellbeing, around a perceived lack of understanding, and a fear mental health distracts from the academic standards agenda.

In the area of emotional wellbeing, there are specific advantages to be gained from being a member of a network.

This is not an exhaustive outline of the benefits of investing in a network, but it captures some of the current priority tasks facing schools. Networks come in many shapes and sizes, but all aim to face similar challenges and gain joint opportunities.

Sharing knowledge

Our understanding of mental health is shifting and, with that, the potential interventions and supports that are available. It can be difficult to keep up to date with these changes and networks can improve access to this information and advice.

Strategies

Evidence shows that creating a whole school ethos around mental health, as well as a culture of support and the capacity to intervene early, are key to the wellbeing, attainment and achievement of both students and staff. This relies on leaders feeling confident to develop their own strategic whole school approach; networks can ease the burden on individual headteachers and enable "develop; test; finesse" to ascertain what will work across your school.

Systems

Protecting wellbeing relies on early identification of mental health problems. In order to do that, resources need to be assigned and monitored within the school. Systems that are put in place can help improve capacity, inform how resources are best designed, what measures will capture how well you are doing, and how to cost and check impact. Networks can help members to share best practice in creating these systems and developing policy.

Staff development

The skills and confidence of staff are core to meeting the new promoting and protecting wellbeing challenges outlined by Ofsted. Progression requires investments in new continual professional development (CPD) and many schools are now also addressing the emotional wellbeing of staff as well as students. Networks can help create economies of scale in commissioning training as well as swapping skills across schools.

Services

Schools cannot promote and protect the wellbeing of students in a vacuum and there is a need for changes and improvements in specialist services. Working collaboratively to influence and shape how health and social care services are delivered on behalf of students is a role schools will increasingly play. Networks offer that voice and can assist individual schools in negotiating the areas of support students need with external providers.

Scale and sustainability

Every school will have to develop their own approaches based on their own priorities, and there are likely to be areas where the support and services you need to commission are difficult to access. Networks can be valuable as a means of sharing services and ensuring investments are sustainable, particularly in a time of limited resources.

Standards

In some ways, this is new territory. The Department for Education and teaching bodies are expecting schools to lead the way in creating curricula, cultures and skills to secure wellbeing outcomes and maintain and develop standards, so there is a steep learning curve ahead. Networks are a place where senior leaders can share and develop their own professional skills - a resource that could be of very real value in managing these new agendas.

Student voice

Young people themselves are increasingly involved in looking out for their own and friends' wellbeing. They can be a source of ideas and offer insight into and solutions for the challenges they and their friends face. Networks could be a way to let young people gain that voice and find routes to involve them. We have developed a leadership pack that will help staff support student involvement in school posed anti-stigma campaigns.



Liverpool Senior Leaders Mental Health Network

Senior school leaders have established a mental health network in Liverpool – affiliated to the Liverpool Children and Young People's Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Partnership (CAMHS), through Merseyside Youth Association and Liverpool City Council (Public Health).

The network has 10 member schools that are already sharing knowledge, information and expertise to support their strategies for promoting mental health, appropriate pastoral care, and challenging mental health stigma and discrimination.

The first meeting took place in October 2015, with a general introduction to the network and an open discussion on key issues. Future topics for meetings include: ways to engage with families; support methods in the school for students whilst they wait for a CAMHS referral; and how to develop a whole school approach to mental health.

The group will be meeting quarterly, and guest speakers will attend. It is being administered and hosted, on a rolling basis, by one member who will work with Merseyside Youth Association.

Time to Change has offered member schools training opportunities for staff and students, as well as access to key resources from the campaign.

"If they're struggling with their maths, we would offer them support with maths. If they're struggling with their mental health, we would offer them support with that."

"The rewards that you get back from the students are enormous. They value the fact that you have thought about them as a whole person and not just about a grade. The feedback that you will get is brilliant and it actually fosters a real sense of purpose in the staff if you do it right. So you have to just do it."

Clare Deavall, Senior Assistant Headteacher, Cannock Chase High School

Getting started



We've found there are four main ingredients to a successful local schools network:

1. Creating a mission statement and strategy

Your mission statement and strategy will depend on variables such as the types of schools in your network, their geographic location, and demographics.

Your mission statement should outline the vision for your network and what a whole school approach to mental health means in light of the needs of your schools.

Your strategy should outline the steps that you will take to ensure your network achieves its mission statement and vision as well as the procedures you'll use, the resources you have, key stakeholders who might support you as well as risks and opportunities.

Here are some questions to help you develop your strategy:

- **a.** What are your main aims and priorities?
- **b.** What is the current state of resources and services in your school?
- c. What are you already doing that lends itself to your network's stated mission? How have you been inspired by what others are doing and how might you replicate that for your network? What are your main concerns?
- **d.** How might your schools put themselves in the best possible position to adopt a whole school approach?
- **e.** What resources will you need (i.e. time, space, personnel, funding, equipment) and how will you access them?

2. Choosing and contacting potential members

You are very likely to already have a network of contacts at other schools in your area which you can draw on to recruit the members of your network. Appendix B is a template member recruitment document which you may find useful to share with other senior leaders in explaining the purpose of the network.

3. Arranging your first meeting

The tone and agenda of your first meeting will depend entirely on how engaged your schools already are in the topic and whether you have a clear idea of what you want to achieve. In the networks we've supported up to now, it's often useful to:

- explore the issues attendees are facing
- undertake an audit of existing best practice
- establish your aims and objectives
- begin to map an action plan with achievable milestones

Kent Headteachers Mental Health Network

Matthew Wright, Headteacher at Wrotham School, is leading a headteachers' mental health network in Kent. The network is raising the profile of mental health and wellbeing, and allowing member schools to share knowledge, information and best practice.

The group currently represents eight schools. The first meeting took place in November 2015, with a general introduction to the network and an open discussion on key issues like how to create culture change, ways to support staff, and the challenges involved in choosing initiatives to invest in at schools.

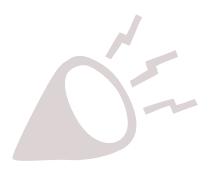
Future meetings will focus on the strategic intent of members around prevention, early intervention and recovery. Meetings will take place 3-4 times per year and the group will plan joined-up initiatives such as training and how to make the most of resources available locally.

Time to Change has offered member schools training opportunities for staff and students.

"You don't have to do much, it's not a question of enormous resources, it's just the change in mindset, giving children skills to manage their emotional health, and you can do that through the curriculum."

Kate Donovan, Deputy Headteacher, Newall Green High School

Running the network



Maintaining and running your senior leaders' network does not need to be labour intensive. With strong structures in place, it should be able to work effectively around your role and reinforce all the great mental health work you are already doing in your school. Meeting with other senior leaders should enable you to share learning, signpost to key resources and gain positive feedback from others in a similar position.

Communication

While you might only meet every few months, many of the existing networks stay in touch in between meetings via appropriate online / digital platforms. The network could also be a virtual one, and there are numerous easy ways to stay in touch between meetings. You could:

- Create a closed Facebook, Whatsapp, Google or LinkedIn group so that members can post comments, ideas or links
- Use your mailing list to ask members to send you updates, and share this with members at the midway point between meetings
- Highlight the work of the network on your school website or in your newsletters

Measuring impact

There are simple ways to evaluate and demonstrate the impact of your network. You could:

- Interview staff and pupils at your school
- Monitor attendance at meetings
- Note any changes that members have made in their schools as a result of the network
- Create a pool of resources that members of the network can draw upon

Maintaining momentum

As a founding member of the network, you are in a good position to spread the word and share your learning wider than your network.

Below are some examples of how you might encourage others to start their own network.

You could:

- Send an email to other senior leaders in your area, outlining the work of your network and the value of starting one
- Ask members of your network to start their own with another group of senior leaders
- Share the concept of networks on social media, including a link to this toolkit
- Phone your local newspaper and tell them about the work of your network
- Contact us (Time to Change) as we can also share your work.
 You can email us at info@time-to-change.org.uk



"We use a positive mental health model, in terms of explaining to students that we all have mental health, we can have good mental health and poor mental health and we move up and down that spectrum."

Kevin Buchanan, Assistant Headteacher, Newall Green High School

Conclusion

This toolkit is intended as a starting point. Our hope is that it will help you to establish a local peer network that enhances the work you are already doing to support student and staff wellbeing, including addressing mental health stigma and discrimination. Networks typically develop according to the vision of the group and the needs of member schools.

We realise that it is your commitment and dedication that will bring about a whole school approach to mental health, ultimately changing attitudes and behaviour for the better. So, thank you.



We would love to hear about your experiences – of setting up a network, creating connections, sharing knowledge, and anything else. If you would like to share, please email us at

info@time-to-change.org.uk

Appendices

a) TERMS OF REFERENCE



Name of group:

Title: Terms of reference (followed by date terms of reference written / revised)

Purpose / role of the group:

What is the broad purpose / role of the group?

The group is set up for senior leaders in secondary schools to meet *insert* frequency>> to look at mental health and mental health stigma and discrimination. They will share information, access local services and run school-based and network initiatives.

When was the group established and by whom?

The group was established in <insert date>> with support from <insert supporting organisations>> and Time to Change.

- What are the aims / responsibilities of the group?
 - to commit to having mental health and mental health stigma and discrimination remain a key priority for secondary schools to ensure the wellbeing and attainment of its students and staff.
 - 2. to ensure that schools are aware of and linked to all of the available support from local services and the voluntary sector.
 - **3.** to ensure that schools are committed to supporting each other to challenge mental health stigma and discrimination.

Membership:

Who is membership of the group open to?

Senior Leaders in <insert geographical location/academy group/other network model>> secondary schools, representatives from <insert other organisations/ services>>.

Are there any restrictions on numbers?

Minimum of 8. We could look at whether we want to split out geographically if we have more than 15. Would be up to the group.













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- Are any representatives from other organisations included?
 - The group will be having a **<insert frequency>>** meeting schedule and agenda. Ideally this will include presentations from local services on what is available or projects that may be coming up. Equally local groups could feed information to **<iinsert other organisations>>** to promote to the network.
- How long is the period of membership and can it be extended? (agree to review chair and vice chair on a yearly or bi-yearly basis. Also suggest setting all meeting dates and skelton agendas for the year ahead).

Accountability:

• Are individual group members responsible for reporting back on activities of the group and if so to whom?

Individual group members will be responsible for ensuring work and engagement from within their own schools.

Review:

How often will the group review the relevance and value of its work and the terms of reference? <<insert frequency>>.

Working methods / ways of working:

- What method / approach to working will you adopt (for example a shared learning approach)?
- Will any sub-groups be convened?
 - Schools within the group could link together to look at commissioning or joint projects.
 - Group may set some tasks that could be taken up by members.
- What will your chosen working method involve in practical terms, for example with reference to:

Meetings

How many meetings will be held each year and where will they be held?
<Insert frequency>>. Need to decide if one school will host or if it will rotate















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- Who will organise and chair the meetings?
 See above.
- How will topics for the agenda be generated?

The agendas will be generated at the first meeting of the year and then additional details can be added at each meeting or generated as any local opportunities develop.

- How and when will meeting papers be circulated?
- What will the format of meetings be, for example will they include small group discussions?

See draft agenda.

Will non-members be invited to group meetings and if so, under what circumstances?

See above info on engagement of local services and voluntary sector organisations.

• Who will provide secretariat for the group?

Sharing of information and resources (including confidential materials)

- How will group members share information and resources?
 Email, Google Docs or similar.
- How will confidential materials and copyright issues be identified and dealt with?
- Will there be a web space for the group and if so, will it be password protected and who will be responsible for facilitating it?

Definition of terms

Provide definitions of any key terms.











b) MEMBER RECRUITMENT DOCUMENT



Time to Change

Mental health stigma and discrimination can have a profound impact on young people's lives; preventing them from fulfilling their potential or seeking help, leading to loneliness, depression and loss of confidence. Most worryingly, young people told us it made them want to give up on life.

That's why Time to Change has been running a national programme to end mental health stigma and discrimination aimed at adults since 2007 and in 2011 expanded this to include a regional pilot and a national campaign aimed at young people, including specific work within secondary school settings. From digital advertising to leadership programmes in schools, Time to Change has started the conversation with over 1.27 million young people and secondary school staff about mental health.

In 2015 and 2016, Time to Change is setting up a series of headteacher networks in Liverpool, Bristol and Kent, bringing together senior leaders in order to share knowledge, information and expertise. They are working on supporting schools to deliver their strategies for promoting mental health, appropriate pastoral care and challenging mental health stigma and discrimination.

School Senior Leaders Network for <<insert region name>>

<insert school name>> is seeking to initiate a senior leaders mental health network in <insert region name>> They will coordinate meeting dates between members and circulate meeting agendas and minutes.

Meeting face to face 3-4 times per year the group could plan joined-up initiatives such as training and how to make the most of resources available locally. The network could also discuss a range of issues, such as risk management, and policy and procedure development.

What the network is seeking to achieve:

To bring together representation from a minimum of <<insert number>> schools. We will be seeking agreement from prospective network members to;

- <<insert agreed goals>>
- .
- .

Funded by











c) PROJECT INITIATION DOCUMENT



Senior Leaders Mental Health Networks - Project Initiation Document

Founding School: <<insert school name>>

1. Purpose of the Network

Objectives and Desired Outcomes

The aims and objectives of the senior leaders' network will be;

- <<insert aims and objectives>>

2. Background

3. The Business Case















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4. Senior Leaders Network Team

Founding School:		Network Schools:
< <insert name="">></insert>	-	< <insert names="">></insert>

5. Project Plan - Checklist	st
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6. Project Communications Plan

Lead contact: <<insert name and contact details>>

Frequency of communications: <<insert details>>

7. Risks and Risk Management Strategy (if required)















Mental Health Network Meeting Agenda

Date: <<insert date>>

Time: <<insert time>>

Location: <insert location>>

Chair: <insert names/s>>

- 1. Welcome & Introductions
- 2. Background
- 3. Objectives of the Senior Leaders Network
- 4. Network Operating Agreements & Terms of Reference
- 5. Opportunities and Topics for Discussion Setting future agenda
- **6.** Any other business
- **7.** Date/location of next meeting













e) LINKS TO OTHER TIME TO CHANGE RESOURCES



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Time to Change Resources

http://www.time-to-change.org.uk/resources-youth-professionals/session-plans

http://www.time-to-change.org.uk/resources-youth-professionals/free-stuff

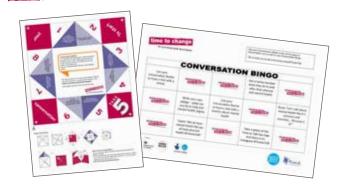
Assemblies



Videos and Blogs



Short Activities



Engaging with Parents



Lesson and Session Plans



Campaign Toolkit



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