

Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Joint Delivery Board

Final Report



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Foreword

Supporting Children and Young People's Mental Health has been a priority for Scottish Government and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) as we have sought to provide support to those impacted by the pandemic and address the need to improve mental health supports and services that existed prior to it. Between Spring 2021 and Spring 2023, with partners across the public and third sector, and children and young people themselves, we have sought to continue to enhance mental health support through the work of the Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Joint Delivery Board.

The work of this Board has been ambitious. It has recognised that prevention and early intervention from an early age is crucial, as well as the importance of the right support at the right time. It has sought to better understand need and enhance the range of supports and services children and young people may require across the mental health continuum; from seeking to understand what may be required to better support 3-5 year olds to supporting the implementation of the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) Service Specification.

We are delighted to see the early impact of this work with new and enhanced community-based supports and services for emotional wellbeing and tackling distress available in every local authority and continuing to develop. We are encouraged by the early learning from our Tests of Change in implementing the Neurodevelopmental Service Specification, recognising the potential impact this may have on mental health provision. We are also pleased that the recently published CAMHS statistics, show both an increase in CAMHS staff numbers and progress in addressing long waiting lists.

A strong partnership between the public and third sector has been vital in progressing this work, as has listening to the views of children, young people, parents, and carers. We are very grateful for the insight and commitment from young people who have been Board members since its inception, and stakeholders from across the system who have supported the Board's work.

Although the work of the Board has now drawn to a close and we recognise what has been achieved, we also recognise the considerable challenge ahead of us in continuing to develop support for our children and young people. The learning from the Board will inform our next steps as we continue to seek to ensure the best possible mental health, support and services for the children and young people of Scotland.

**Hugh McAloon, Director of Mental Health,
Scottish Government**

**Nicola Dickie, Director of People Policy,
COSLA**

Executive Summary

1. The Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Joint Delivery Board (JDB), co-chaired by COSLA and Scottish Government, is the most recent national programme of work seeking to support children and young people's mental health. The JDB ran from Spring 2021 to Spring 2023 and focused on eight 'deliverables' in areas including community-based, crisis and neurodevelopmental support, CAMHS, support for children and young people in vulnerable situations, 3-5 year olds, education and training and mental health communications. Work undertaken has been underpinned by Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) and is aligned to the Promise.
2. At the beginning of the process each deliverable was at a different starting point from a policy/delivery perspective and was taken forward according to need and context. This resulted in a range of actions and outputs across the breadth of the Board's remit including:
 - Reports on service level implementation/ mapping of services
 - Events and resources to capture and share good and emerging practice
 - Tests of Change (Neurodevelopmental Services)
 - A range of learning and training materials
 - A range of research to further understand need
 - Engagement with children, young people, and wider stakeholders.Learning and recommendations from work on each deliverable informed final recommendations made by the JDB.
3. A review of the work of the JDB was undertaken by Public Health Scotland (PHS). This considered the impact the JDB has had on children and young people's mental health to date. Two deliverables, those focused on community-based support and CAMHS, had reached the stage where regular data on impact is collected; this illustrated some positive impact. Where data was not yet collectable, PHS noted the potential for positive impact in the longer term. Opportunities to consider how mental health data is collected and interpreted in the longer term was also highlighted.
4. In considering learning across the breadth of its remit, the Board highlighted:
 - A need to retain a focus on prevention and early intervention
 - A need to prioritise work to support care experienced children/children and young people in vulnerable situations and providing crisis support
 - A need to support policy coherence across the complex mental health policy landscape
 - A need to build on connections between mental health supports and services.
5. The final JDB recommendations draw on work undertaken across the breadth of its remit. A summary of the high-level recommendations includes:
 - The continuation/establishment of good practice sharing events, networks, and platforms to share learning from the JDB and support ongoing development of good practice
 - Further consideration, development, and delivery of a whole-systems approach to mental health provision at a national and local level, ensuring connections between mental health services

- That work taken forward by the governance structure that follows the JDB should be underpinned by a clear set of short, medium and long-term outcomes and a shared understanding of how progression towards mental health goals will be monitored and evaluated
 - Ensuring children and young people from all backgrounds are a core partner in improving mental health matters that affect them
 - That a shared and accessible language should be used to describe mental health and associated services
 - That quality learning resources, and training opportunities considered by the JDB should continue to be developed, disseminated, supported, evaluated and be accessible for the workforce
 - That Scottish Government should continue to fund mental health and wellbeing services across the mental health continuum, including prevention and early intervention, in line with agreed commitments that result from the work of the JDB
 - The production of targeted communication on mental health and wellbeing to ensure that all stakeholders including children and young people, parents and carers and mental health and mental wellbeing professionals can access the information that they need
 - To influence policy development across the wider social determinants of children and young people's mental health to further embed approaches that support mental health and mental wellbeing.
- Please refer to **Appendix A** of the final report for the full recommendations from the Board.
6. Support for children and young people's mental health remains of upmost importance and, whilst the Board draws to a close, it is hoped actions and learning from the JDB will continue to support children and young people and inform next steps across the system. Whilst we recognise what has been achieved, we also recognise the considerable challenge ahead of us. The voices and experiences of children, young people and their families will remain key to improving access to mental health support.



Introduction

The **Children and Young People’s Mental Health and Wellbeing Joint Delivery Board** (JDB) is the most recent national programme of work led by COSLA and Scottish Government seeking to support children and young people’s mental health.

Timeline of recent key developments...

- March 2017** - Scotland’s Mental Health Strategy (2017-2027)
- June 2018** - Children & Young People’s Mental Health Taskforce
- Sept 2018** - Children & Young People’s Mental Health – Audit Scotland Report
- May 2019** - Youth Commission on Mental Health Report
- July 2019** - Children & Young People ‘s Mental Health Taskforce Report
- June 2019** - Rejected Referrals CAMHS: A Qualitative and Quantitative Audit Report
- Aug 2019** - Children & Young People’s Mental Health and Wellbeing Programme Board
- March 2021** - Children & Young People’s Mental Health & Wellbeing Joint Delivery Board



Figure one: Children and Young People’s Mental Health Policy Timeline- Key developments.

Taking into account learning and recommendations from previous work, referenced at figure one, and the evolving context, the JDB convened in Spring 2021 and focused on eight deliverables. These included:

1. Continue to enhance community-based support for emotional wellbeing/mental distress through ongoing investment and support for local partnerships.
2. Ensure crisis support is available 24/7 to children and young people.
3. Support mental health pathways and services for children and young people in vulnerable situations and in need of care and protection, aligned to the work of the Promise.
4. Develop a support programme to enable the implementation of the CAMHS service specification.
5. Agree and support the implementation of a neurodevelopmental service specification / principles and standards of care.
6. Develop a programme of education and training to increase the skills and knowledge required by all staff to support children and young people’s mental health.
7. Work jointly with the Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Programme Board to consider what is currently available and what is required in the future to support the mental health and wellbeing of 3-5 year olds across Scotland and produce recommendations.

8. Through a selection of appropriate media platforms, we will ensure:

- information on the work of programme board reaches stakeholders, young people, parents, and families
- information on the interconnecting work of other boards reaches relevant stakeholders
- information on how to access mental health support is available to staff supporting children and young people.

These deliverables have been progressed by the JDB, with each deliverable supported by a Task and Finish Group.

Individual Task and Finish Groups considered how to progress their deliverable taking into account the previous work undertaken in the area and current context. Consequently, work undertaken across the breadth of the JDB has been wide-ranging and taken different forms including research, Tests of Change, evaluation, sharing good practice and the production of learning resources. Based on learning from the work they undertook, each Task and Finish Group made recommendations to the JDB which were considered within the Board's final recommendations provided at page 20.

An outline of the work undertaken by the JDB, as described by young members of the Board, can be found [here](#). Full details on the role and remit of the Board can also be found on the Board's [webpage](#).

The following report details work undertaken on each of the deliverables and considers progress made towards the JDB's intended outcomes. It also provides a set of recommendations from the JDB which address how their work can be continued and embedded, and what should be important next steps in supporting children and young people's mental health.



Board Membership and Supporting Principles

The Board aimed to include representation from stakeholders with a wide range of expertise and responsibility for supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing. Organisations/associations represented at the JDB are outlined in Appendix B. Membership of the Task and Finish Groups was also wide-ranging and informed by the specific focus of their work.

A priority for the JDB, across all its work, has been meaningful engagement with children and young people. A set of principles for **participation and engagement** were developed to support consideration of this at the Board itself, where children and young people were represented through Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP), and within Task and Finish Groups. For more information on participation and engagement please see page 15.



Outcomes and Measuring Progress

In the context of working towards its deliverables, the JDB recommended a whole systems approach to evaluation be considered for work being undertaken across the breadth of its remit. Public Health Scotland (PHS) was asked to consider how this could be progressed. This resulted in an agreed outcomes framework (Appendix C) which is inclusive of:

- the short-term outcomes – the changes within the direct control of the deliverables
- the intermediate outcomes – the changes which the deliverables can contribute toward, either individually and/or in combination
- wider population outcomes – the changes that the work of the JDB will contribute to longer term.

PHS subsequently undertook a review of learning from the JDB both as a whole and of its individual deliverables. This included drawing on the outcomes and any existing monitoring or evaluation findings, to begin to consider the difference the deliverables are already making or have the potential to make, toward improving the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people. This exercise has informed the understanding of progress made by the JDB outlined in this report, subsequent reflections and considerations for future policy and delivery of children and young people's mental health support.

Action on our Deliverables

A brief overview of action undertaken on each deliverable is provided below. Information and updates on key learning from the work of each Task and Finish Group is provided on the JDB's website.

Deliverable One: Continue to enhance community-based support for emotional wellbeing/mental distress through ongoing investment and support for local partnerships.

A Task and Finish Group was established which focused on supporting the development of services aligned to the **Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Supports and Services framework** and underpinned by associated funding. The group:

- Developed anticipated outcomes for the Framework and utilised these to produce a good and emerging practice document with and for local delivery leads, as well as supporting a good practice event for all local authorities that was well received by attendees
- Advised on independent evaluation of services aligned to the Framework. The Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP) were commissioned to undertake an evaluation of community mental health services. The Key findings from this evaluation are summarised in infographics on page 10 the full report is available on the **SYP webpage**.

- Reviewed the implementation of the Framework. The group considered 6-monthly reporting data provided by local authorities on services aligned to the framework. At the time of consideration, 2 data sets were available (July-December 21, Jan-July 22). Available data from 6 monthly reports can be found **here**
- Consideration was also given to areas where the Framework would merit being strengthened or expanded.

Having considered learning from across its work, the Task and Finish Group found that the implementation of the Framework and associated funding, had enabled local authorities to develop new and existing supports and services for children and young people based on identified needs. The flexibility of approach within the Framework had empowered local areas to be innovative and creative, with good and emerging practice developing across Scotland in relation to early intervention and prevention. The value of opportunities to share good and emerging practice was highlighted and the early data collected was found to be encouraging. However, opportunities were identified to improve provision and recommendations were made to the JDB on this basis.



THE SCOTTISH YOUTH PARLIAMENT'S INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OF COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

KEY FINDINGS

66% of young people agreed or strongly agreed that the services meet their needs and involve them in making decisions about their support.

67.4% of young people agreed or strongly agreed that the services help them to better understand their mental health and wellbeing.

54.3% of young people find out about the services from a teacher or lecturer.

74.3% of young people said that they definitely or mostly know where to go for help since they started receiving support.

73% of young people agreed or strongly agreed that they feel safe and supported while using the services.

71.6% of young people agreed or strongly agreed that they received support when they needed it, and 63.9% of parents and carers agreed.

21.7% of young people suggested that they still feel stigma since they started receiving support.

59.4% of parents and carers agreed or strongly agreed that their child is happier and more able to cope since using the services.

60.7% of the services offer support for young people aged 16-25.

Deliverable Two: Ensure crisis support is available 24/7 to children and young people.

This Task and Finish Group sought to understand gaps in crisis support for children and young people by mapping its availability across Health and Social Care Partnerships. It considered children and young people's needs in relation to crisis support and sought to understand how new and developing services at a national level might impact on the provision of crisis care.

Key observations included a lack of a shared definition of crisis support; further opportunity for the local provision of crisis supports, which could be considered through the Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Supports and Services Framework and the need to enhance connections between services provided for children and young people to support their mental health. The group particularly highlighted the opportunity to support these connections through Children's Services Planning.



Deliverable Three: Support Mental Health pathways and services for children and young people in vulnerable situations and in need of care and protection, aligned to the work of the Promise.

The Task and Finish Group supporting the progression of this deliverable identified key areas for improvement in the mental health and wellbeing support available to children and young people in vulnerable situations, while reviewing data and evidence and the views of children and young people to support this. Actions focused on:

- Building a resource which helps those working with children and young people in vulnerable situations to understand their specific mental health support needs, including a set of key principles for staff working with care experienced children and young people and children and young people in vulnerable situations
- Building a bank of good and emerging practice in supporting the mental health and wellbeing needs of children and young people in vulnerable situations from across sectors
- A co-designed digital resource focused on relationships and the key behaviours and skills that make the biggest difference to care experienced children and young people, when these are demonstrated by the adults that support them.

These resources will continue to be developed and disseminated beyond the life of the JDB and shared with children and young people's services as appropriate.

Throughout its discussions, the JDB agreed that the needs of this group of young people should be prioritised, this has been noted within the JDB priorities for future action on page 18.

Deliverable Four: Develop a support programme to enable the implementation of the CAMHS service specification.

Work aligned to this deliverable sought to support the broad implementation of the CAMHS Service Specification, bringing together relevant areas of expertise to inform discussion and development around elements of implementation. This has:

- Informed the allocation of an additional £40 million CAMHS funding in 2021/22
- Supported and advised on Health Board engagement on CAMHS provision
- Informed ongoing data improvement.

Deliverable Five: Agree and support the implementation of a neurodevelopmental service specification/principles and standards of care.

Supported by the JDB, The National Neurodevelopmental Specification: Principles and Standards were published on the 8th September 2021.

In order to further develop understanding of how the specification can be implemented and the resources required, five Tests of Change areas (Aberdeen City, Fife, East Lothian, Highland and Forth Valley) were identified. Each area addressed specific aspects of the specification. Events to share learning from the Tests of Change to date with stakeholders have been undertaken and it is intended that learning will continue to be captured and shared beyond the life of the JDB.

A Self-Assessment Tool has also been developed by the Task and Finish Group to support the ongoing implementation of the specification.

Deliverable Six: Developing a programme of education and training to increase the skills and knowledge required by all staff to support children and young people's mental health.

Building on the Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing: A Knowledge and Skills Framework for the Scottish Workforce and following co-operation with the wider Task and Finish Groups to identify training and learning needs, a number of learning resources were developed by this Task and Finish Group:

- a Digital Learning Map that maps high quality training resources to the knowledge and skills framework and allows staff to plan their learning journeys and leaders to plan learning and development for staff groups
- a first point of contact/signposting resource which considers the education and training needs of whomever first comes in contact with a young person with a mental health issue, how they respond and support that person to get effective help
- an Evaluation Toolkit to help organisations to evaluate the quality of training at all practice levels
- the One Good Adult Job Description a job description for adults who work with children and young people, developed by children and young people
- a Promise Sway Resource aimed at organisations and individuals who have an interest in mental health education and training resources and materials that are relevant to the work of the Promise. The resource pulls together education, training and good practice relevant to the workforce supporting care experienced children, young people and adults.

All resources are hosted on the Digital Learning Map and will continue to be supported by NHS Education for Scotland (NES).

Deliverable Seven: Work jointly with the Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Programme Board to consider what is currently available and what is required in the future to support the mental health and wellbeing of 3-5 year olds across Scotland and produce recommendations for further action.

It was recognised that the mental health and wellbeing of 3-5 year olds represented a gap in national mental health policy development. This Task and Finish Group began to address this by identifying and understanding the nature of the support available and what was required to support the mental health and wellbeing of children 3-5 year olds. Work included:

- Developing an addendum for the **Principles for Participation and Engagement with Children and Young People** paper to support appropriate and effective ways of engaging with younger children
- Commissioning Early Years Scotland (EYS) to undertake engagement activity with children, parents, carers and the Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) workforce across 7 local authorities. This resulted in the **'Mental Health, Happiness and Wellbeing Project'**

- EYS also conducted an audit of existing ELC professional learning resources available to support the mental health and wellbeing of 3-5 year olds
- Collaborating with Public Health Scotland (PHS) to synthesise the evidence and data collected. PHS extrapolated the key messages about supporting young children's mental health and wellbeing to shape and inform the groups recommendations
- Communicating and consulting with colleagues, stakeholders, and policy areas where there were significant links and interdependencies.

There was a wealth of learning across the group's work. The Mental Health, Happiness and Wellbeing Project provided a strong indication of the views of children, parents and the ELC workforce. This learning is summarised in the infographics below.

As with the other groups, learning informed recommendations made by the Task and Finish Group to the JDB which were considered within the final recommendations.





Friends give me a cuddle and it makes me happy again

Strong bonds between the **workforce**, **children** and **families** were apparent in feedback and are the foundation for positive early years

88% of staff felt there should be more access to professional learning opportunities.



PARENTS OF P1-P3 CHILDREN said that **ELC settings were vital in supporting transition to school, but COVID exacerbated anxieties**



65% said they received assistance from their child's ELC setting to support their child's mental health and well-being.

Children told us how much they love to play, especially outdoors and with their friends, and that cuddles from people they love and trust give comfort when they're feeling sad.

79% of children said that different types of play made them feel happy or excited.

Mental Health, Happiness and Wellbeing Report

Half of all parents of children aged 3-5 surveyed told us that they would approach their ELC setting if they had any concerns about their child's mental health, happiness, and wellbeing.



“ There are various charities I'd contact, but this would be alongside the ELC setting because I know mental health support for young children under 12 years is extremely difficult to get. ”



Visits before school starts would be appreciated so the parents have a greater understanding of the set up and can discuss more with their child.



Everything in ONE Place

Parents told us that there would be real benefit in the creation of a 'one stop shop' model of support with information, advice and support about children's mental health, happiness, and wellbeing.

Deliverable Eight: Through a selection of appropriate media platforms, we will ensure:

- **information on the work of programme board reaches stakeholders, young people, parents and families**
- **information on the interconnecting work of other boards reaches relevant stakeholders**
- **information on how to access mental health support is available to staff supporting children and young people.**

A Task and Finish Group supporting this deliverable undertook a series of actions to progress the JDB's ambitions including:

- Producing an accessible quarterly JDB newsletter providing updates on the work of the Board and wider relevant information, available [here](#)
- Producing regular Information Bulletin's updating on work being undertaken across the wider mental health policy landscape, available [here](#)
- Sharing a series of videos on community-based supports on social media. An example of the videos can be found [here](#)
- Supporting accessibility - efforts have been made to consistently use plain language and a supporting A-Z [glossary](#) has also been developed by children and young people to support public facing documents, like the newsletter.

The group identified a number of ongoing challenges in reaching and meeting the needs of its desired audiences. These challenges were shared with the JDB and considered within the Board's final recommendations.

Engagement with Children and Young People

Whilst not a deliverable, the engagement of children and young people has been central to the work of the JDB. This has built on the previous engagement and research that has informed this workstream to date. The Board had specific Children and Young People's Engagement Officers to ensure the voices of as many children and young people with lived experience were heard.

Since its inception, young people have been represented on the Board through the Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP) and SYP undertook workshops and events to gather the views of young people on accessing information and support for mental health and wellbeing. Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYP's) also produced blogs to share experiences, these were communicated through the JDB newsletter in **March 2022** and **July 2022**. Workshops were also undertaken with Who Cares? Scotland to hear from those with care experience, which focused on supporting children and young people in vulnerable situations, aligned to the Promise.

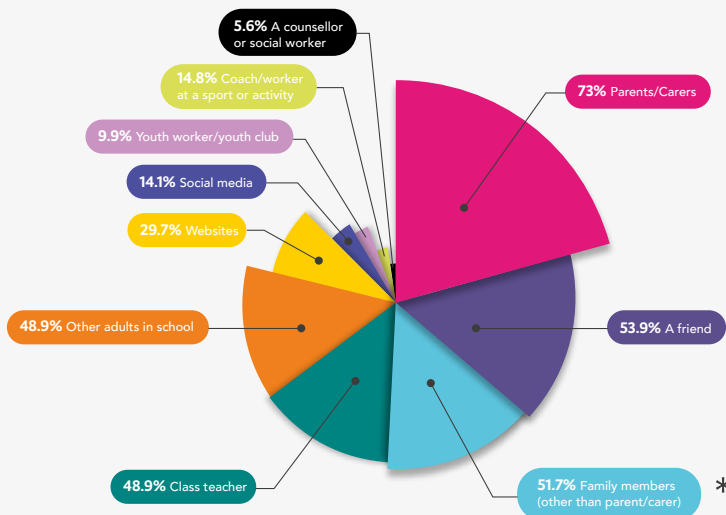
A range of engagement was also undertaken with the support of third sector partners. YouthLink Scotland was commissioned to work in partnership with Young Scot, Scottish Youth Parliament, and Children's Parliament to gather the views of children and young people on accessing information and support for mental health and wellbeing. Infographics summarising the results from the **Insights report** can be found below. Learning from engagement with children and young people informed the work of the Task and Finish Groups, the decisions made by the JDB and the final recommendations.

Access to mental health and wellbeing information and support

Views from children and young people

Views from 8 to 12-year-olds

Where they access information



Children told us

“It is important that they get support when they need it - this means at the time they are feeling anxious, upset or distressed.”

Children report they want more opportunities to talk and learn about mental health and wellbeing in school.



Children like to do an activity with an adult when they explore their mental health and wellbeing, for example a game or doing something creative.

Children will ask for information and support from adults they trust, who are kind to them and who have the time.

Accessing support

97.8%

of children have access to a device at home to look for information however few children think websites or social media platforms are places to go for information or support, preferring face-to-face support

1 in 10 children

do not have good enough connectivity for a video call.



Face to face support should be:

- Private
- Comfortable
- Welcoming



Children's core needs, identified by them:

- opportunities to play
- to be free from bullying
- to have a supportive home environment
- to have a good education.



Children said they hope and aspire to:

- Have more self-control
- Be/feel less angry
- Relax more
- Be less anxious
- Be smarter about their feelings

- More able to speak out
- Be able to control their emotions better
- Not be depressed
- Control their feelings with knowledge of support strategies

* This question was multiple choice, with respondents identifying as many sources they would use, therefore results do not total 100%.

Access to mental health and wellbeing information and support

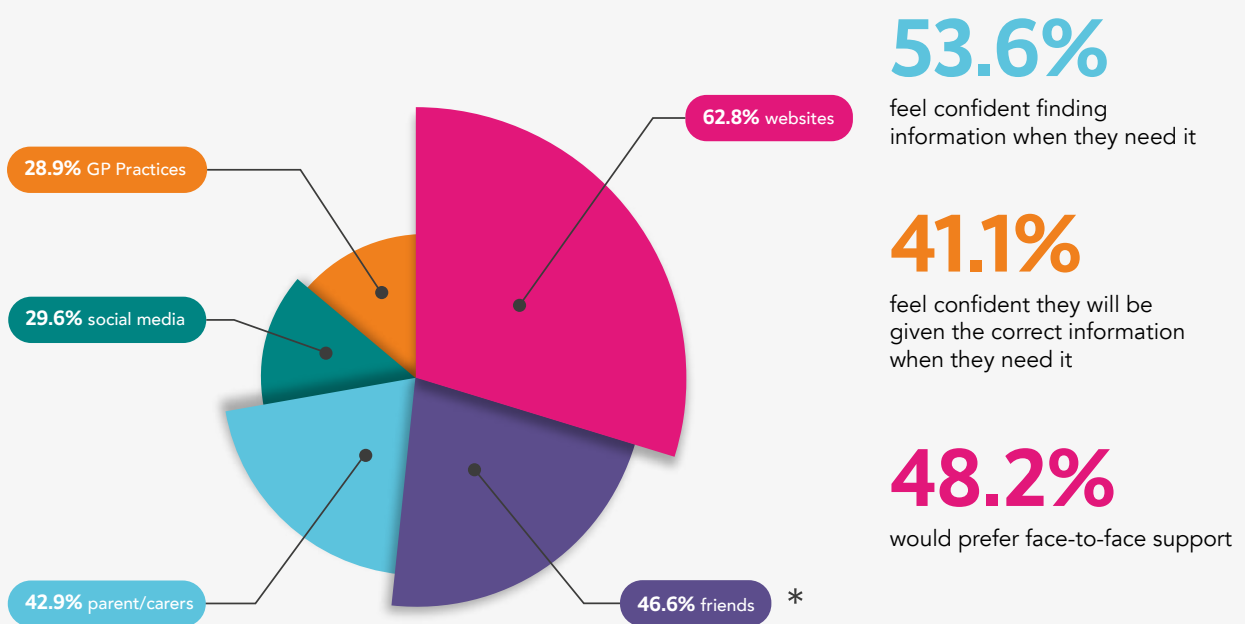
Views from children and young people

Views from 12 to 25-year-olds

Almost half of the children and young people aged 12 - 25 told us they do not feel good about their mental health and wellbeing.

Accessing support

Twelve to 25-year-olds access information on mental health and wellbeing from:



Face-to-face and online mental health and wellbeing support should feature:



- trust
- privacy
- feelings of safety and familiarity
- non-judgemental engagement
- a sense of understanding and empathy



The most common barriers to using online/digital support:

- a lack of access to devices
- internet connection
- a lack of privacy.



Concerns about school-based support are:

- confidentiality
- anonymity
- privacy
- stigma

* This question was multiple choice, with respondents identifying as many sources they would use, therefore results do not total 100%.

Progress

As outlined above, over the course of the JDB, the Task and Finish Groups have taken a wide range of action to support the delivery of better mental health support for children, young people and families in Scotland. This includes:

- developing and disseminating learning
- producing training and development resources for the workforce
- supporting improvements in services
- identifying areas for further work.

As part of their review of the work of the JDB, PHS considered progress made towards the Board's outcomes at Appendix C (uploaded as supporting document). It was noted that due to the varied phases the deliverables began, only deliverables One and Four were at a stage when it would be feasible for them to demonstrate the impact of the work on the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people. While elements of this data suggested work undertaken is having a positive impact on children and young people's mental health, in relation to children and young people accessing community-based support for example, it was highlighted that improvements can still be made in the collection and interpretation of data, with further work required to consider how to capture outcomes in the longer-term.

PHS also noted that where it is not possible at this stage to demonstrate direct impacts of the JDB's work on the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people, it is possible to see how the activities of the JDB can contribute to change both through supporting the development of existing work and by influencing future work.

Overarching Themes and Priorities

In reviewing the reports from Task and Finish Groups, the JDB identified key themes including:

Connectivity - A 'golden thread' that emerged through discussions was the importance of connections between services across the spectrum of mental health provision and the need for this to continue to be developed. The majority of deliverables identified an opportunity to support this through Children's Services Planning. This has a national and local role in driving a whole systems approach to the planning and delivery of services and support. It safeguards, supports and promotes wellbeing, and leads to improved outcomes.

Culture - The Board also agreed that the issues it sought to address are cultural and structural, involving multiple policy areas, sectors, and professions; for individuals and families, they are often lifelong and inter-generational. Given this, it reflected that two years was too short a time frame to begin to see the impact of the work it had undertaken and that:

- the work it has undertaken to date requires time and support to develop and embed locally, and
- any governance structure replacing the JDB should be considered over a longer time period.

The Board also identified a number of priorities that should be considered as children and young people's mental health work moves forward:

Retaining a focus on prevention - A degree of progress has been made in implementing early intervention approaches, for instance through the Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Supports and Services Framework. Whilst there remains work to be done, indications are that these services are making a difference to children, young people, their families, and carers. It is recognised that there

are currently significant financial pressures across the system, but it is the Board's view that prevention and non-clinical approaches to mental health support should not be lost as a result.

Care experienced/children and young people in vulnerable situations - There remains significant work to be done to meet the mental health needs of care experienced children and young people, and those most at risk within the system, with work undertaken over the life of the Board to be developed further and wider work related to the delivery of the Promise to be undertaken.

Crisis - As evidenced by Task and Finish Group Two - *Ensure crisis support is available 24/7 to children and young people*, there remain gaps in service provision for children and young people in crisis. Whilst the group was able to make recommendations, gaps remain and bridging them must be a priority for the JDB's successor. This must take account of the specific needs of children and young people in vulnerable situations.

Policy Coherence - The JDB recognised the significant complexity of the mental health policy and delivery landscape. Currently, interrelated policy decisions are made by separate forums on perinatal work, suicide prevention and student mental health, all of which are interrelated. The next steps should bring greater clarity on how mental health policy work connects, where key decisions are made and how this sits within the wider children and young people policy and delivery context.

These themes and priorities were considered in the formulation of the Board's recommendations but should also be considered more broadly in relation to next steps.

Reflections and Learning

In addition to considering progress made towards outcome its outcomes, the PHS review of the JDB provided insight into the process undertaken and provided a number of learning points for consideration in our next steps including:

- The JDB process was seen by participants as helpful in supporting a greater understanding of national policy processes and local delivery challenges, enhancing participants understanding and learning on effective ways to connect national delivery and local implementation
- Whilst an outcomes framework was created during the life of the JDB, a clearer outcomes framework earlier in the process may have helped work progress as well as providing a coherent framework to monitor and evaluate implementation. It would have also helped to locate the work of the JDB within the wider system
- There are currently a range of opportunities for aligning and embedding the work of the JDB with existing and emerging Scottish Government and local strategies which provide a focus on collective, whole system action. This includes connecting work within and across other frameworks (e.g. the Children, Young People and Families Wellbeing Framework) and new Scottish Government and COSLA strategies that focus on a preventative approach to children and young people's mental health and wellbeing (Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy; Suicide Prevention; Self Harm), as well as strategies aimed at tackling inequalities and poverty and other social determinants impacting on children and young people and families

- A longer-term plan for evaluation would allow time to consider additional issues raised in this review, such as the need to develop monitoring and evaluation that captures the full journey of a child or young person through support and services and over the longer-term.

In order that these issues are considered by any future governance and the opportunities are taken to align with other strategies and frameworks, consideration has been given to how the recommendations can be taken forward, outlined on page 21. Ensuring consideration of outcomes by any incoming governance structure is also addressed within the JDB's recommendations.

Recommendations

The JDB considered recommendations from each Task and Finish Group, taking these into account in the formulation of a set of final recommendations to support taking this work forward. The final high-level recommendations of the JDB are provided below. Full recommendations can be found at Appendix A.

Strategic Recommendation One: Appropriate good practice sharing events and networks should be continued/established to ensure learning from the Joint Delivery Board is disseminated, and platforms provided that continue to support good practice development across the mental health continuum in line with relevant frameworks, specifications and/or standards. Support for practice platforms must be coordinated to allow for information sharing and strong connections between groups to address shared issues.

Strategic Recommendation Two: Scottish Government, Local Government, the third sector, Health Boards and relevant partners should seek to further understand, develop and deliver a whole systems approach to mental health provision at a national and local level, ensuring connections between services are established, optimised and well understood by those that deliver and use them.

Strategic Recommendation Three: Actions progressed by the governance structure that follows the Joint Delivery Board should be underpinned from the outset by a clear set of short, medium and long-term outcomes and a shared understanding of how progression towards mental health goals will be monitored and evaluated.

Strategic Recommendation Four: In alignment with the UNCRC and the ethos of previous mental health work, Scottish Government, Local Government and relevant strategic partners, should ensure children and young people from all backgrounds are a core partner in improving mental health matters that affect them, at personal, community and wider society level and have their views taken seriously.

Strategic Recommendation Five: A shared and accessible language should be used to describe mental health and associated services, to ensure services are designed with a common goal and children, young people and their families feel able to access them.

Strategic Recommendation Six: Quality learning resources and training opportunities considered by the JDB are developed, disseminated, supported, evaluated and accessible for the children and young people's mental health and mental wellbeing workforce. These must align to the strategic planning processes that relate to children and young people's mental health and continue to evolve to ensure the needs of our communities are met.

Strategic Recommendation Seven: Scottish Government should continue to provide funding for mental health and wellbeing services across the mental health continuum, including prevention and early intervention, in line with agreed commitments that result from the work of the JDB.

Strategic Recommendation Eight: Beyond the life of the JDB, Scottish Government, Local Government, Health Boards, and the third sector should produce targeted communication on mental health and wellbeing to ensure that all stakeholders including children and young people, parents and carers, mental health and mental wellbeing professionals can access the information that they need to support themselves and/or others.

Strategic Recommendation Nine: Scottish Government and COSLA should seek to influence policy development across the wider social determinants of children and young people's mental health, including education and family support, to further embed approaches that support mental health and mental wellbeing.

Taking the recommendations forward

Learning from the PHS review of the JDB indicated that progressing the recommendations would benefit from clear demarcation between policy and programme and making links to relevant frameworks and strategic developments.

Across the recommendations the key drivers identified include:

- Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy and associated delivery plans
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy Workforce Plan
- Children's Services Plans
- Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Supports and Services Framework
- CAMHS Service Specification
- Neurodevelopmental Service Specification
- Further Mental Health Quality Standards being considered by Scottish Government
- Principles of Participation and Engagement developed by the JDB
- Redesign of Urgent Care Mental Health Workstream Group.

Consideration will be given to how recommendations can be progressed via these mechanisms.

Children and young people's mental health remains of utmost importance. Whilst we recognise what has been achieved, we also recognise the considerable challenge ahead of us in continuing to support our children and young people. It is hoped actions and learning from the JDB will support children and young people and inform next steps in further developing across the system.

Appendix A - Strategic and supporting recommendations

Strategic and supporting recommendations are outlined below. Consideration has been given to whether these recommendations should be progressed over the short (S), medium (M) or longer (L) term.

Strategic Recommendation One

Appropriate good practice sharing events and networks should be continued/established to ensure learning from the Joint Delivery Board is disseminated, and platforms provided that continue to support good practice development across the mental health continuum in line with relevant frameworks, specifications and/or standards. Support for practice platforms must be coordinated to allow for information sharing and strong connections between groups to address shared issues.

Supporting recommendations

- In March 2023 the JDB will host a Learning and Sharing good practice event focused on work undertaken across its 2-year timeframe, with a particular focus on impact at a delivery level (S)
- In early 2023 the Scottish Government should facilitate a session for children's services partners focused on sharing learning from implementing the Neurodevelopment Service Specification, Principles and Standards of Care in Test of Change areas (S)
- In early 2023 COSLA, Scottish Government, third sector partners (YouthLink Scotland, Scottish Youth Parliament, Young Scot, Children's Parliament, Children in Scotland, and Early Years Scotland) should consider showcase sessions to share findings and learning from their engagement activity and from the engagement approaches with wider policy teams and stakeholders. The involvement of children and young people is key to this event (S)
- Scottish Government should continue to support and resource the good and emerging practice network aligned to the Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Supports and Services Framework (S)
- Scottish Government should continue the CAMHS Improvement Programme through established work within the CAMHS policy teams and the CAMHS and Neurodevelopmental (ND) Programme Board alongside key stakeholder groups (S)
- Scottish Government and relevant partners should establish a CAMHS and ND Implementation Support Team (CaNDIST) to provide individualised support to NHS Boards and other relevant partners on issues where they require further expertise to support full implementation of the CAMHS and ND Service Specifications (M)
- Scottish Government should establish regional planning support arrangements to co-ordinate regional planning and delivery of the regional elements of the CAMHS Service Specification (M)
- Scottish Government should establish and support a national ND Network to further the nationwide implementation of the ND Specification. This should include sharing the learning from the Tests of Change, and exploring how best to share publications, materials and other resources (M)
- Scottish Government should consider, in conjunction with the Infant Mental Health Advisory and Implementation Group establishing a successor to the Infant Mental Health Advisory and Implementation Group with an expanded remit of 0-5 years. This group should support implementation of infant mental health services across Scotland and undertake practical action to improve the provision of support for children 3-5 years olds who require assessment and specialist individualised support for their mental health.

Strategic Recommendation Two

Scottish Government, Local Government, the third sector, Health Boards and relevant partners should seek to further understand, develop and deliver a whole systems approach to mental health provision at a national and local level, ensuring connections between services are established, optimised and well understood by those that deliver and use them.

Supporting recommendations

- Scottish Government and COSLA should identify and disseminate examples that demonstrate how whole systems approaches have been developed and delivered (S)
- Whole systems approaches to mental health should be considered alongside ongoing delivery of related commitments including UNCRC, GIRFEC, the Promise and the National Trauma Training Programme (ongoing)
- The Scottish Government together with Local Government, Health Boards and Children's Services Planning stakeholders, in the public and third sector, should work in partnership to further embed children and young people's mental health and mental wellbeing within development and delivery of Scotland's approach to Children's Services Planning. Each area's Children's Services Plan should include information which sets out how local organisations will work collaboratively to plan, co-design and deliver a whole system approach to mental health and wellbeing which:
 - encompasses prevention, early intervention, universal services, and targeted services that provide crisis/intensive support
 - makes available a flexible range of delivery options (e.g. an appropriate balance of face to face and digital supports) that meets the needs of children, young people and families
 - communicates this offer effectively to local children, young people and families, organisations, and frontline practitioners
 - takes into account the specific needs of children and young people in vulnerable situations and those with a greater risk of experiencing mental health issues
 - takes account of relevant service specifications (Neurodevelopmental and CAMHS) and national guidance (S/M)
- Scottish Government and COSLA should ensure that high level governance for children and young people's mental health provision continues to involve relevant cross sector partners. It must sit within a clear and connected policy landscape where links to other groups are clearly mapped and understood, ensuring whole systems approaches are supported by joined up policy making and an understanding of delivery (S)
- During 2023, COSLA and the Scottish Government should review and update the children and young people's Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Supports and Services Framework, taking into account feedback and learning from Task and Finish Group One. The framework should remain focused on 5-24yrs (26 for care experienced) but ensure closer links with pre-5 work occur. A focus on 16-25 provision, mental health support for higher risk groups (e.g. LGBT) and transition from children's services to adult services will also be critical. Whilst it must place continued emphasis on early intervention, the review should also consider the additional provision of crisis support through the framework (S/M).

- Scottish Government should consider funding for community-based mental health services on a multi-year basis to provide the stability that enables cross-system connections to be formed. Other means to support whole systems approaches through approaches to funding should also be considered (M)
- Scottish Government and partners should review the implementation of the CAMHS service specification and Neurodevelopmental specifications to make sure these services are meeting the needs of children and young people in vulnerable situations. (M)

Strategic Recommendation Three

Actions progressed by the governance structure that follows the Joint Delivery Board should be underpinned from the outset by a clear set of short, medium and long-term outcomes and a shared understanding of how progression towards mental health goals will be monitored and evaluated.

Supporting recommendations

- The incoming high level governance group must initially agree outcomes to be progressed, the programme of work which will enable outcomes to be achieved and how progress towards mental health outcomes will be monitored. The group must give regard, both to this report, the outcomes agreed by the JDB (Appendix C) and wider relevant outcomes (S)
- Consideration should be given to reporting through Children's Services planning structures, maximising utility of funding and consolidating reporting asks (S/M)
- Considering links to Children's Services planning processes, the Scottish Government and relevant partners should work to standardise data in CAMHS, ND Services and information to support improved service planning and patient experience of service (M)
- Approaches considered to monitor progress under the new governance group should take into account other work being undertaken to support improvements across mental health and the wider public sector, inclusive of approaches to implementing quality standards (current and under development) and wider health and wellbeing outcomes; ensuring data asks are proportionate and co-ordinated. (S)

Strategic Recommendation Four

In alignment with the UNCRC and the ethos of previous mental health work, Scottish Government, Local Government and relevant strategic partners, should ensure children and young people from all backgrounds are a core partner in improving mental health matters that affect them at personal, community and wider society level and have their views taken seriously.

Supporting recommendations

- Work on children and young people's mental health policy and strategy at a national level should continue to be informed by the Principles for Youth Participation and Engagement, with COSLA and Scottish Government undertaking a regular review of the principles to ensure they remain up to date. The psychological safety of children and young people must be paramount to this process and resulting engagement (ongoing)
- The engagement of children and young people must be central to work resulting from the JDB including:
 - Any review of the Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Supports and Services Framework
 - The development and testing of mental health information and resources
 - The implementation of the CAMHS and Neurodevelopmental Service Specifications.
- Scottish Government should work with partners to establish national, independent, and routine arrangements to engage with children, young people and their families to feedback on their experience of the ND specification. The voices of children and young people with additional support needs should be undertaken alongside the existing work stream within Scottish Government looking at children and young people with a learning disability who are accessing CAMHS. Further opportunities should also be identified for children, young people and their families to contribute to the evaluation of mental health supports services, sharing their experiences
- Engagement of children and young people should also be central to wider mental health developments including the new Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy (ongoing)
- Views and information gathered from young people by the JDB, and its predecessors should be fully considered within the next steps for this work and utilised within wider mental health policy work to avoid repetition (ongoing)
- Focus on engaging with children from 'all backgrounds' across this work should seek to ensure inclusion of children and young people both with protected characteristics as well as other characteristics not covered by the Equality Act 2010
- Parents, carers and family members such as siblings must also be central in future developments to policy/guidance supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing, ensuring their voices are heard and they have the opportunity to engage fully in planning and development.

Strategic Recommendation Five

A shared and accessible language should be used to describe mental health and associated services, to ensure services are designed with a common goal and children, young people and their families feel able to access them.

Supporting recommendations

- Considering links to the GIRFEC refresh, Scottish Government's Children, Young People, Relationships and Families Unit should liaise with the Redesign of Urgent Care programme to ensure that any definition of crisis takes account of stakeholders' views on the needs and experiences of children and young people. This definition should be adopted once signed off by the Redesign of Urgent Care Mental Health Workstream group and used consistently across services and disciplines (M)
- Scottish Government, COSLA and relevant partners should include the term 'happiness' when referring to children's mental health and wellbeing, so that the phrase mental health, happiness and wellbeing comes to be regarded as familiar terminology for children, parents/ carers and professionals. (ongoing)

Strategic Recommendation Six

Quality learning resources and training opportunities considered by the JDB are developed, disseminated, supported, evaluated and accessible for the children and young people's mental health and mental wellbeing workforce. These must align to the strategic planning processes that relate to children and young people's mental health and continue to evolve to ensure the needs of our communities are met.

Supporting recommendations

- Over 2023, learning and training resources developed under the JDB should be completed, disseminated and evaluated, supported by appropriate resource and multi-agency collaboration at a national and local level. This should include:
 - The Neurodevelopmental self-assessment tool to support local areas progress with the implementation of the Neurodevelopment Service Specification (SG)
 - The Neurodevelopmental Learning Framework (SG)
 - The One Good Adult Job Description (NES)
 - The First Point of Contact Resource (NES)
 - The Training Evaluation Toolkit (NES)
 - the Promise Sway (NES)
 - The Digital Learning Map (NES)
 - Key Principles for staff working with care experienced children and young people and children and young people in vulnerable situations (SG)
 - The good and emerging practice document sharing effective practice when working with children and young people in vulnerable situations.(SG)
 - The new digital resource, co-designed with care experienced children and young people which focuses on relationships and the key behaviours and skills that make the biggest difference to care experienced children and young people. (SG)

(lead organisation for each resource indicated in brackets)

- Scottish Government and COSLA should consider identifying local mental health champions to promote and embed available resources
- Scottish Government, through the incoming Mental Health Workforce Strategy and together with organisations for whom the training is relevant, should consider enhanced resource for additional, dedicated training and education infrastructure to help with dissemination, embedding and staff time for education, training and support
- Inline with developing knowledge and policy in 3-5 year old mental health, Scottish Government, COSLA and relevant stakeholders across early learning and childcare should seek to:
 - raise awareness about the knowledge and skills needed by the ELC workforce to support young children’s mental health, happiness and wellbeing
 - raise awareness across the ELC workforce of the range of existing resources and learning opportunities that aim to support young children’s mental health happiness and wellbeing
 - raise awareness about the reasons and importance of placing family wellbeing at the heart of supporting young children’s mental health, happiness, and wellbeing
 - identify the gaps in materials and resources available for the ELC workforce with regard to supporting young children’s mental health, happiness and wellbeing and adapt/develop as required
 - explore possible ways of supporting the ELC workforce to have more opportunities to undertake professional learning about children’s mental health, happiness and wellbeing. (S/M)

Strategic Recommendation Seven

Scottish Government should continue to provide funding for mental health and wellbeing services across the mental health continuum, including prevention and early intervention, in line with agreed commitments that result from the work of the JDB.

Supporting recommendations

- Children and young people’s mental health governance should continue to be resourced to allow ongoing, cross sector engagement in decision making and mechanisms by which practitioner voice is heard (ongoing)
- Sufficient funding for prevention should continue and be developed further. Scottish Government and COSLA should seek to further understand the impact of this investment to inform long term investment in services across the continuum of support (ongoing)
- Any expansion of community-based supports and services, resulting from the proposed review of the framework, should be supported by a corresponding expansion of funding (S/M)
- Learning from the work of the Joint Delivery Board should inform future funding decisions. In particular, final reporting from the Neurodevelopmental Tests of Change should inform discussions between Scottish Government, COSLA and relevant partners on financial/ resource planning for full implementation of the ND Specification. (S/M)

Strategic Recommendation Eight

Beyond the life of the Board Scottish Government, Local Government, Health Boards and the third sector should produce targeted communication on mental health and wellbeing to ensure that all stakeholders including children and young people, parents and carers, mental health and mental wellbeing professionals can access the information that they need to support themselves and/or others.

Supporting recommendations

- Through community and children's planning and other relevant local mechanisms, Local Government, third sector and Health Boards should work closely to communicate and promote locally available mental health support, ensuring relevant information reaches children, young people, parents and carers. Where possible, promotion should be via existing channels to ensure maximum reach (ongoing)
- Scottish Government should develop and disseminate, to practitioners, parents and carers, communications that provide clarity on the expectations of CAMHS as a service for 0-5 year olds (S)
- Scottish Government and COSLA should consider developing appropriate communications with and for parents/carers represented on the Board to raise awareness around the work and recommendations of the Board. This should also link with wider policy areas who may be considering developing resources for parents/carers (ongoing)
- Scottish Government, COSLA and relevant partners should consider developing communications on 'social norms', detailing commonplace experiences with mental health and wellbeing for children and young people, parents and carers and professions with no mental health background to support wider understanding of mental health and when to seek help (S/M)
- A campaign should be considered for children and young people, parents, carers and relevant professionals, emphasising role non-clinical interventions can play in supporting children and young people. A wider range of communications should be considered (S/M)
- A national awareness campaign should be undertaken to raise awareness of mental health and wellbeing for the 3-5 age group building on the successful Wellbeing for Wee Ones campaign, and additional resources and initiatives should be developed which encourage a shared language and understanding across parents, carers, and professionals. The appointment of a National Champion as a face of the campaign is recommended (S/M)
- The Information Bulletin should continue to be created, published, and shared on a regular basis by Scottish Government, enabling partners across the system to continue to understand the scale, scope, and direction of travel across the children and young people's mental health policy landscape (ongoing)
- Routes should be explored to ensure communications on early intervention and community-based supports reach primary care practitioners and they feel confident in signposting/supporting children, young people and their families into these services (S)
- Scottish Government, COSLA and the third sector should give consideration to the development of a platform to share and celebrate good practice to support children and young people's mental health, demonstrating and promoting progress (S)

- Sufficient funding is required at national and local level to support strong communications on support available for children and young people's mental health and wellbeing (S)
- Consideration should be given to how national communication channels (e.g. Aye Feel/Parent Club) might support high level messaging where possible (S)
- Scottish Government should commission research to look at the need for a National Helpline to support parents and carers of young children (birth to 5 years old). This should include engagement with parents/carers of babies and young children to establish the following (S/M):
 - what extra support is needed to sustain positive emotional wellbeing and mental health and happiness, that helps build resilience (for both child and parent/carer)?
 - what existing resources address these support needs and where is the gap?
 - what modality would parents/carers find most helpful for accessing support?
 - Is birth to 5 years the preferred age group, or should this be narrower/broader?
 - Whether this could be delivered as an expansion of currently available telephone lines.

Strategic Recommendation Nine

Scottish Government and COSLA should seek to influence policy development across the wider social determinants of children and young people's mental health, including education and family support, to further embed approaches that support mental health and mental wellbeing.

Supporting recommendations

The development of wider policy should consider:

- Work with ELC providers and local authorities, in the context of ELC provision, to enhance flexible and responsive relational approaches to children's mental health, happiness and wellbeing; enhance the provision of family learning and support; and support/enable the release and support staff to undertake professional learning in mental health
- The establishment of a National Review Group to examine and improve connections between Health Visiting, Early Learning and Childcare, parents/carers and others, including the sharing and use of data
- Seeking to ensure that the new National Education Agency considers children's mental health, happiness and emotional wellbeing is at the heart of all policy and practice. And that the new inspection framework places significant focus on supporting children's mental health, happiness, and wellbeing within ELC provision
- Supporting collaborative working within Children's Service Planning Partnerships to improve holistic whole family support, including an exploration of the impact of family support models of ELC provision on children's mental health, happiness, and wellbeing
- Seeking to influence the development of future guidance to ensure this takes account of the mental health and wellbeing needs of children and young people. Scottish Government and key partners including Local Government, third sector and other public bodies, should consider if guidance which already exists regarding health assessments for children and young people in vulnerable situations needs to be updated or reviewed to include mental health and wellbeing support. This should align with work already underway within Scottish Government to review guidance on child protection and rights and to implement the Promise.

Appendix B - Board Membership

JDB Membership

Members attending from the following organisations include:

- COSLA
- Scottish Government
- SOLACE
- Integration Joint Board (IJB) Chief Officer Network
- Young person representation (Scottish Youth Parliament)
- Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Programme Board
- Association of Directors of Education Scotland (ADES)
- Association of Scottish Principal Educational Psychologists (ASPEP)
- Social Work Scotland
- CAMHS Lead Clinicians
- NHS Education for Scotland (NES)
- NHS Chief Executives
- National Parent Forum of Scotland
- Children in Scotland Forum representative (CiS)
- Coalition of Care and Support Providers Forum representative (CCPS)

Appendix C - Public Health Scotland: Outcomes Framework for the Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Joint Delivery Board

See supporting document.



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