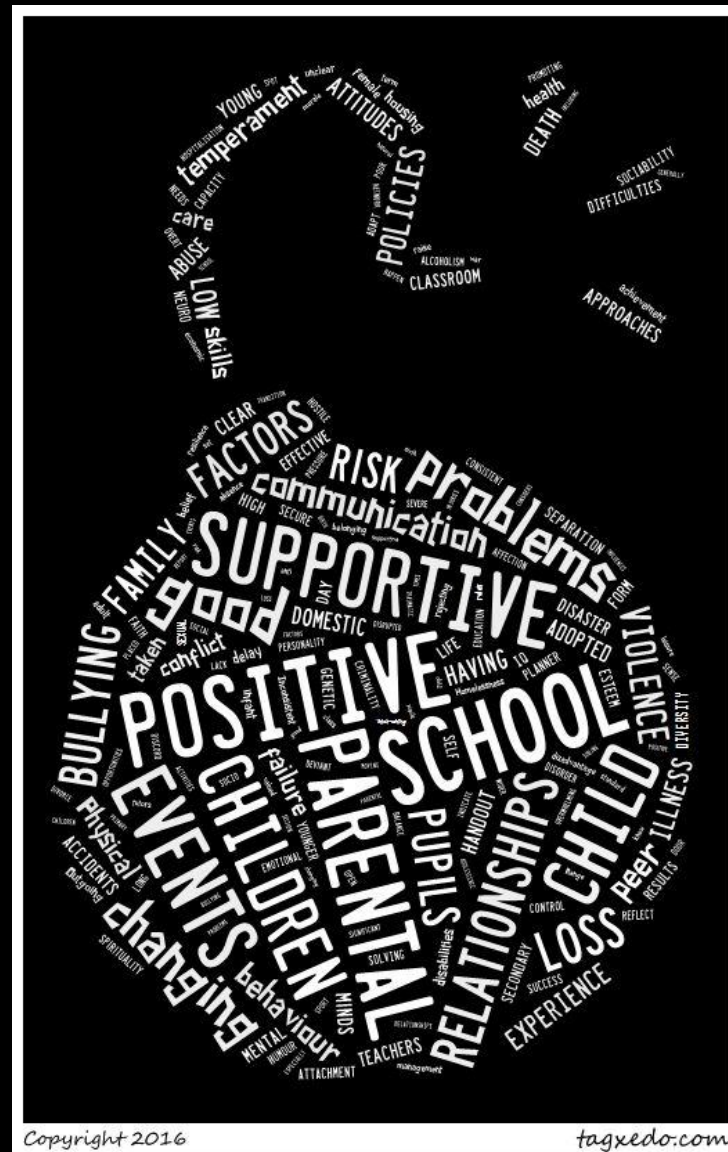


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Mental Health
&
Young People



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WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?

Mental Health affects all aspects of a child's development including their cognitive abilities, their social skills as well their emotional wellbeing.

Many thousands of children and young people are isolated, unhappy, have eating disorders and self-harm; some tragically take their own lives. Many are likely to become victims of crime, grow up in dysfunctional families, or left to cope with illness, drugs and/or alcohol issues – not necessarily their own.

With good mental health, children and young people do better in every way. They enjoy their childhoods, are able to deal with stress and difficult times, are able to learn better, do better at school, navigate the online world they grew up in so they benefit from it and enjoy friendships and new experiences.

Childhood and teenage years are when mental health is developed and patterns are set for the future. So a child with good mental health is much more likely to have good mental health as an adult, and to be able to take on adult responsibilities and fulfil their potential.

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Many aspects of today's society can be bad news for the mental health of children and young people in the UK. As they grow and develop, children have to navigate a complex and ever changing world, facing challenges and pressures in numerous aspects of their lives.

- Family breakdown is widespread.
- There is so much pressure to have access to money, the perfect body and lifestyle.
- Materialist culture heavily influences young people
- 24 hour social networking and what young people can access from a young age can have a negative impact on their mental health and wellbeing.
- Body image is a source of much distress for many young people.
- Bullying on and offline is rife.
- Increasing sexual pressures and early sexualisation throw young people into an adult world they don't understand
- Violence is rife in many communities and fear of crime a constant source of distress for thousands of young people.
- Schools are getting more and more like exam factories; university entry has become more competitive and expensive.
- 13% of 16-24 year olds are not in employment, education or training (NEET)

850,000 CHILDREN AGED 5-16 HAVE MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

- Three children in every classroom have a diagnosable mental health disorder.
- Roughly 725,000 people in the UK suffer from Eating Disorders, 86% of these will have shown symptoms before the age of 19.
- One in 10 deliberately harm themselves regularly (and 15,000 of them are hospitalised each year because of this).
- Nearly 80,000 children and young people suffer from severe depression.
- Half of all lifetime cases of mental illness begin by age 14.
- 45% of children in care have a mental health disorder - these are some of the most vulnerable people in our society.
- Nearly 300,000 young people in Britain have an anxiety disorder.

Risk Factors In the school

- Bullying
- Discrimination
- Breakdown in or lack of positive friendships
- Deviant peer influences
- Peer pressure
- Poor pupil to teacher relationships

Protective Factors in School

- A caring Ethos with strong Pastoral support
- Clear policies on behaviour and bullying
- 'Open-door' policy for children to raise problems
- A whole-school approach to promoting good mental health
- Positive classroom management
- A sense of belonging
- Positive peer influences
- Counselling services
- Access to external Agencies
- Clear and transparent communication with Parents

- <http://www.youngdevon.org/youth/mentalhealth>
 - <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/online-mental-health-services/Pages/kooth.aspx>
 - <http://www.youngdevon.org/youth/mentalhealth>
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- Any Questions?