

Training Strategy for Staff Working in Universal Services

Introduction

The strategy details the training that all those working directly with children and young people should receive in relation to the emotional well-being of children and young people. This strategy related to staff working within universal services, training for staff working within CAMHS is addressed elsewhere. The term 'young people' applies to those up to the age of eighteen.

Within this document the terms 'emotional well-being' and 'mental health' are interchangeable, although it is accepted that the term mental health may have more stigma attached, especially to those children and young people who may wish to access services. Emotional well-being is a relatively new term, although one that is quickly gaining acceptance within universal services, as it includes all children and young people and not just the 10% of young people who have been identified as having mental health difficulties at any one time.

Rationale

Kay (1999) defines children who are mentally healthy as those 'who have the ability to:

- Develop psychologically, emotionally, spiritually and intellectually;
- Initiate, develop and sustain mutually satisfying personal relationships;
- Use and enjoy solitude;
- Become aware of others and empathise with them;
- Play and learn;
- Develop a sense of right and wrong; and
- Resolve (face) problems and setbacks and learn from them.'

The NSF (2004) identifies the potential consequence of mental health problems in children and young people:

"Mental health problems in children are associated with educational failure, family disruption, disability, offending and antisocial behaviour, placing demands on social services, schools and the youth justice system, untreated mental health problems create distress not only in the children and young people, but also for their families and carers, continuing into adult life and affecting the next generations."

In order to promote mental health amongst children, young people and their families, staff in universal services need to have the necessary knowledge and skills to identify and respond appropriately when there is a problem.

Aims

The aim is to develop a workforce within universal services that has the necessary knowledge, skills and competence to promote emotional well-being amongst children and young people.

Objectives

- To deliver inter-agency training for universal services
- To provide consistency in terms of training quality and training content
- To develop a shared understanding of appropriate referral pathways
- To develop a shared understanding of the model of service delivery within CAMHS and its implications for those working within universal services
- To improve the skills of the workforce in relation to emotional well-being

Proposal

It is proposed that the following training opportunities be made available to staff working in universal services.

Embracing Children's Emotional Needs: This seven day course has been running in the East Riding for the past five years, and has been run twice in Hull. It has been very positively received and has evaluated well in terms of increasing awareness and confidence amongst staff.

Introduction to Child Mental Health: This course is a one day introduction to child and adolescent mental health. It also covers aspects of recognition and referral of the more complex mental health issues that may require targeted or intensive interventions.

Building Esteem in Children and Young People: This one day course explores how positive self-esteem may be developed in children and young people.

Children's Behaviour – Disorders and Difficulties: This one day course will be developed to explain and explore behaviour disorders in children and young people and how such behaviours should be responded to by professionals alongside any guidance and advice that should be given to parents/carers.

Deliberate Self-Harm and Young People: This one day course looks into definitions of deliberate self harm, and behaviours these young people may take part in to help them cope with feeling such as isolation, anger, guilt or desperation.

Introduction to Emotional Well-being and Learning Disabilities: This two day course explores issues surrounding the emotional well-being of children and young people who have learning disabilities. Consideration is given to ways forward, approaches, tools and good practice.

Involving Young People

Young people have been involved in the development and evaluation of the emotional well-being training currently provided.

Benefits

This strategy will increase the skills and knowledge of the workforce and will contribute towards a more robust and focused response to the emotional needs of children and young people. It will also contribute to a greater understanding of the roles and responsibilities of those working with children and young people and will ensure that their needs are recognised and responded to in an appropriate and timely manner.

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