



Our generation's epidemic: young people's awareness and experience of mental health information, support, and services

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About SYP

The democratically elected voice of
Scotland's young people...



The Scottish Youth Parliament represents young people all over Scotland.

- We were established on the 30th June 1999, making us one day older than the Scottish Parliament.
- Elections are held every 2 years, and young people from all over Scotland can stand as candidates to become MSYPs.



#SYPSpeakYourMind

Speak Your Mind

Campaign Objectives

1. To increase young people's awareness and understanding of the issues associated with mental health;
2. To encourage the use of a common language in order to promote positive conversations and tackle stigma;
3. To identify young people's awareness and experience of mental health information and services for young people across Scotland;
4. To advocate for high quality mental health services and information provision for all of Scotland's young people





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Our generation's epidemic



- 1,453 young people responded to paper/online survey
- 30 young people took part in focus groups
- One of the largest pieces of research of its kind in Scotland



Our generation's epidemic: key findings



- 74% do not know what mental health information, support, and services are available in their local area.
- One in five do not know where to go for advice and support for a mental health problem.
- Young people feel that a lack of understanding about mental health, as well as embarrassment and a fear of being judged, are some of the barriers to talking openly about mental health.
- 27% of young people do not feel supported to talk about mental health in their place of learning or workplace.



Our generation's epidemic: What did young people say?



- **Mental Health Information** – “The Internet is a very scary place. It over-exaggerates and the scaremongering is extreme. It’s a great place to get resources, but should never be used to gure out what you’re feeling. I was feeling sad at the start of the year. I googled how I was feeling, and by the end I was convinced I had paranoid schizophrenia. It was terrifying.”



Our generation's epidemic: What did young people say?



- **Mental Health Support in Schools** – “It’s felt to be more important for you to get qualifications than be healthy and happy at school.”
- “We’ve had no information through PSE about mental health.”
- Positive feelings:
- “ Supportive teachers who will listen to you and take positive steps with you.”
- “They make time to sit and listen and they do not interrupt until you have ended and they make it as friendly as possible so it is not formal and is in a private area.”



Our generation's epidemic: Recommendations



- 11 recommendations to ensure high quality mental health information, support, and services for Scotland's young people.
- Recommendations aimed at various stakeholders including local and national health and educational bodies, and Scottish Government.



Our generation's epidemic: key points from our recommendations



- Places of learning should provide high-quality information about mental health
- Places of learning should implement a Mental Health Action Plan to promote mental health conversations and support
- A Mental Health Standard should be developed for schools to drive improvements in mental health education
- School counsellor numbers need to be reviewed and a minimum level of service provision established



Our generation's epidemic: What young people think can be done in school?



- “Mental health should be talked about as a positive thing, not something that is only a ‘thing’ when there’s a problem.”
- “Have class relaxation sessions to relax when stressed.”
- “Make learning about mental health fun and enjoyable by having workshops or mental health events.”
- “Make it mandatory in schools for info to be distributed at [the] start of term.”



Our generation's epidemic: What can school staff do?

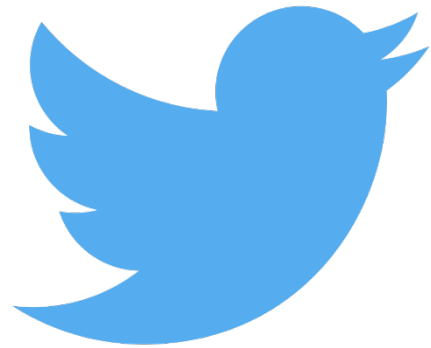


- Look out for a mental health action plan that aims to aid schools in developing their own mental health action plans
- The plan should include provisions such as an annual Mental Health Awareness Week, training for young people and staff in Mental health first aid, utilising See Me's What's on Your Mind resources, providing practical steps to manage stress and anxiety, and promoting local information, support and services
 - Talk to young people if you think anything is worrying them
- Lots of views in our Generation's Epidemic report that may be helpful
 - Seek help if you don't know what to do



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THANK YOU FOR
LISTENING!

