

Southampton Mental Health Support Team

Primary Schools Wellbeing Newsletter

This week's theme – Bereavement

29th April 2020

Welcome to the third Southampton MHST Newsletter. This week we want to address one of the more difficult aspects of this pandemic: bereavement and other forms of loss.

Losing someone we love is, sadly, a normal part of life. At this time we are aware that more of us may be facing bereavement than usual, and trying to support our children and young people through this difficult time too. Simon Says, the Child Bereavement Support charity, have released some helpful guidance, adapted for isolation, which we will send out in full to accompany this edition. We would like to highlight a few of these principles which are very helpful for dealing with bereavement through the death of a loved one but also any loss. We are aware that in these times children may be separated from a parent or other close caregiver which may provoke deep feelings of loss.

Those of us who are parents of Preschool children as well as Year 6s may be experiencing a sense of loss as schools came to an abrupt end without the usual opportunities to celebrate, say goodbye and acknowledge those important transitions.

Psychologist, Eda Le Shan is quoted as saying that, "A child can live through anything provided they are told the truth and allowed to share the natural feelings people have when they are suffering." Our instinct can be to protect children and young people from experiencing difficult emotions and this can leave us feeling that we don't know how to help them through grief and bereavement. One of the key principles is to give **enough information**. Children and Young People experiencing loss need answers to their questions in a truthful, clear and age appropriate way. They should also have opportunities to both **tell their story** and **express their feelings**. Bereaved children and young people need to feel that they can talk freely about what has happened to them and not be afraid to show any difficult emotions such as sadness, anger or anxiety. These feelings are important and a normal and healthy part of going through bereavement. **Looking after yourself** is also really important...like the oxygen mask on a plane, you can't look after those who depend on you if you don't first take care of yourself.

Please see the attached guidance from Simon Says for more information and email info@simonsays.org.uk for further Bereavement Support.

Parents Top Tips

In these extraordinary times with our children experiencing losses, whether that be a loved one, missing friends/family, school events, they will need our help and support more than ever. It is really important to remember, as a parent, that you need to look after yourself to be able to look after your children. Some points to consider when talking to children about losses are:

- Use simple, clear words when talking about loss to a young child. Pause to give your child some time to take in your words.
- Listen and comfort. Every child reacts differently; some may cry, some ask questions and others appear to not react at all. This is completely normal and will be your child's own way of processing the news.
- Answer their questions as honestly as you can. If you are unsure of the answers, let them know and come back to them when you know the answer.
- Encourage your child to talk about how they are feeling. Talk to them, age appropriately, about how you are feeling, so they know they aren't alone in their grief. Children should feel comfortable in expressing how they feel. They might be experiencing feelings such as anger, sadness, anxiety and guilt. They may need your help in finding ways to deal with this.
- At this present time, with funerals being for very limited numbers, your child may not be able to attend. However, it is still important for your child to be involved in the process. You could have your own special service at home, following the order of service. Your son/daughter could draw a picture or write a letter.
- Help your child remember the person – encourage them to draw pictures or write down favourite stories of their loved one. Talk about their memories with them. Younger children may share their memories through play, such as using puppets, or they may wish to make a memory box.
- Give your child time to heal from the loss – grief is a process that happens over time. Check in with your child to see how he/she is feeling. It is important to also remember to give them some space and alone time if they need it.

The Goodbye Book – here is a link to a read-out-loud/story-time video of The Goodbye Book. This can be helpful for younger children with explaining how they might feel if someone died.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=efWd0ol5g6o>

Here is a short video explaining death called **Lifetimes**, which you may find helpful;

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zwwGBVa1j9A>

Good News Story

Over the last few weeks there have been an increasing number of seals chilling out at the beach! The main reasons for this with less boat traffic, the seals are coming closer to shore and taking advantage of the empty beaches. There have been four adult male grey seals showing up almost daily on the coast around Hampshire and West Sussex.

If, while out on daily exercise, you do see a seal on the beach, please keep a safe distance and put dogs on leads.



Activity of the week

Mandala Art

Mandala art has been used throughout the world for self-expression and personal growth as well as being great for relaxation and comfort for adults as well as children and young people.



To create your mandala you can use a variety of resources you may have at home or if you are out on a walk you could collect. If you want to design your own mandala you can use a paper plate or cut out a circle from paper/card. Some examples of things you can use .stones/pebbles, shells, daisies, buttercups, dried flowers, buttons. You can download & print one (if you have access to a printer).

The following website has a large variety of themes for all ages.

Below is an example of a Mandala to print from the website.

<https://www.bestcoloringpagesforkids.com/free-printable-mandalas-kids.html>



Keeping Active

The floor is lava

This game can be made with household items being a safe zone (where the lava can't get you), in the picture scrap paper is used, however could be cushions, t-shirts, masking taped squares etc. Decide on the start and end point and use creativity to cross, you could include things like carrying a "bridge" to cross large gaps or areas where teamwork is needed. Want to make it more difficult? Make the gaps bigger or only be allowed to stand on certain colours.



Introduction to our MHST service and team

What are Mental Health Support Teams (MHSTs)?

- Mental Health Support Teams are a new resource, funded and accountable through the NHS.
- They will complement existing resources, rather than replace them.
- They will work with schools and colleges to support them with mental health and wellbeing issues and to treat mild/ mild-moderate mental health issues.
- Support will be delivered through one-to-one interventions, group work, or work with families in a range of low-level needs such as anxiety, low mood and challenging behaviour

When will the MHST start delivering a service?

The Southampton MHST service will be launched formally in January 2021.

During 2020 we are developing both the team and the service, ready for the service to 'go live' early in the New Year. As part of this development we will be gradually increasing a service offer to the schools and colleges within the city who are working with the MHSTs. Due to the current restrictions during the Covid-19 situation, this service offer is currently under review. We will share any updates with you as they happen.

Who will the MHSTs be working with?

The team will be working with individual and targeted group interventions with a focus on prevention & early intervention. They are offered for children and young people who present with mild/ mild- moderate emotional wellbeing/mental health difficulties.

Meet the Southampton Mental Health Support Team:

Mary Chisham – MHST Team Manager

Claire Hatch – MHST Business Support

Jenny Moore, Nikki Whitfield, Michele Moutray, Kate Allen, Emma Peacock, Roseanna Feltham-King, Beth Jackson, Liz Pitch – Educational Mental Health Practitioners(EMHP)

Nadine Joseph and April Harlow – MHST Practitioner and EMHP Supervisors

Matt Ford and Kaylee Harvey – MHST Practitioner and High Intensity CBT

Contact us

If you have any questions or queries for the Southampton MHST Team please email us at;

SouthamptonMHST@Solent.nhs.uk

Useful Services and Websites for Parents and Young People

Please see the details of the following services that may also be able to offer you and your child advice and support. **Please note that during this unprecedented time services have had to change the way they work and offer support, so please contact the service directly to find out what is currently on offer.**

THE SOLENT WEST CHILD AND ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE (CAMHS):

If your child is currently receiving a service from CAMHS, a duty line for advice in the event of deterioration in your child / young person's mental health is available. Please request to speak to the duty worker on 0300 123 6661. You are also able to contact the Behaviour Helpline for advice and strategies with managing challenging behaviour on 0300 123 6661, your contact details will be taken and a Behaviour Advisor will return your call within 1 week.

Please be aware that in the current situation there may be a slight delay in responding to duty calls.

The Public Health Nursing (PHN) Service offers support to children, young people and their families who live in Southampton. The team is made up of Nurses, Emotional Health and Wellbeing workers and PHN Assistants; who can offer support for a wide range of health issues such as growth concerns, support with long term conditions, sleep problems, continence issues, general anxiety and much more. They have a confidential text messaging service called Solent Pulse where you can text any health questions and have them answered by a nurse. They are currently offering support through telephone calls, emails, text messages and video calling to comply with social distancing rules. If you would like to contact PHN for support please use one of the methods below:

Phone: 0300 123 6661 Solent Pulse: 07491 163278

Website: <https://what0-18.nhs.uk/solent/school-nursing>

Email: snhs.publichealthnursingsouthampton@nhs.net

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS:

Southampton Multi-Agency Support Hub: 02380 833336

(Safeguarding advice & parenting support).

Samaritans: Free phone 116 123

Parentline (24 hour advice): 0808 800 2222

Child line: 0800 1111

NHS direct: 111 – non emergency helpline

SANE mental health help line (every day 16.30-22.30) 0300 304 7000

Young Minds help line (Mon-Fri 9.30-4pm) 0808 802 5544

USEFUL WEBSITES – UNDERSTANDING SYMPTOMS, ADVICE AND SELF-HELP:

- <https://childdevelopmentinfo.com/> - This covers numerous 'symptoms' of developmental disorders and mental health conditions. It also has a lot of helpful advice ranging from 'online safety' to 'getting children to eat greens'. Mixture of articles and short videos.
- www.youngminds.org.uk – information and advice for young people, parents and professionals, includes a telephone advice line and videos. This website covers emotional health, mental health conditions and neurodevelopmental disorders e.g. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.
- http://www.sane.org.uk/resources/mental_health_conditions/ - information and advice, includes resources and useful leaflets to manage symptoms of many mental health symptoms. It also has online forums and a telephone advice line (above).
- www.getselfhelp.co.uk – this website is an invaluable resource containing free downloadable activities and videos for you to support your child to manage their emotional and mental health.
- <http://www.moodjuice.scot.nhs.uk/> - Similar to 'getselfhelp'.
- **Selected mobile phone 'apps'** to help manage symptoms can be viewed here, although please consider age appropriateness: <http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/Pages/mental-health-apps.aspx> (Or type 'Apps for Mental Health – NHS Choices into an internet search engine.)

Useful Services continued

NO LIMITS ADVICE PROJECT – <https://nolimitshelp.org.uk/> Contact Phone: 02380 224 224 – 13 The High Street, Southampton, SO17 1XN Email: enquiries@nolimitshelp.org.uk

Please contact the service via telephone, email or 'drop-in' to the advice centre.

The No Limits service offer advice and support to young people under the age of 26 years on many issues, including: housing, employment, money management advice, social support, symptoms of mental health, counselling for emotional ill-health, sexual health guidance, drug and alcohol support, victims and perpetrators of crime, plus much more.

SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL PARENTING ADVICE AND SUPPORT:

<http://sid.southampton.gov.uk/kb5/southampton/directory/results.action?familychannel=8-7-1> –

Please access this website to view a range of parenting support courses in Southampton. Or go into Southampton City Council's website and type 'families' into the search bar.

Please also contact the Southampton City Council MASH Team on the telephone number above for further advice around services and parenting support.

RE:MINDS:

A parent-led support group for families of children with autism or mental health issues.

<https://www.reminds.org.uk/> With a closed Facebook group of over 600 members -

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/reminds>

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS:

The Buzz Network - a group for Southampton parents/carers of children with disabilities/special needs. It is open to children with any disability from ADHD to visual impairments, as long as they meet the eligibility criteria. <http://sid.southampton.gov.uk> – type 'Buzz Network' into the search engine for contact details.

CHILDREN WITH SUSPECTED AUTISTIC SPECTRUM DISORDERS <https://www.autismhampshire.org.uk/> -

Autism Hampshire: Information, Advice, 'Needs Assessment' and support. Community Access, Southampton Office –1648 Parkway, Whiteley, PO15 7AH, Tel: 02380 766162 Email:

communityaccess@autismhampshire.org.uk

BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT SERVICES:

- <http://www.theredlipstickfoundation.org/> - The Red Lipstick Foundation are here to offer services to families in Hampshire who have been bereaved by suicide or immediate family members following a person's sudden death.
- <http://www.simonsays.org.uk/> - Tel: 08453 055 744 - Bereavement service for Children.
- <http://www.cruse.org.uk/?gclid=CMmGptiMktMCFYWRGwoduCOEjw> - National Bereavement Service.

DOMESTIC ABUSE SUPPORT SERVICES:

- <https://www.hamptontrust.org.uk/our-programmes/> - support projects for those who have perpetrated domestic abuse, and, adults and young people who have experienced domestic abuse.
- <https://www.yellowdoor.org.uk/> - Telephone: 023 8063 6313 - support project for adults and young people who have experienced physical and or sexual abuse.