Active in Mind
Synthesis of data from 2018-2022

ℹ programme overview

Active in Mind is an Athlete Mentor and student-led intervention, designed around the importance of looking after the body, mindset and environment to improve mental health and wellbeing issues in young people.

Through physical activity, the programme addresses declining mental health and develops life skills and character traits.

Why schools wanted to get involved with the Active in Mind programme:

"After working in a Head of Year role I have seen the impact on young people's mental health. Self harm has risen sharply and a lot of students have anxiety and depression. There is also a long waiting list for counselling so I wanted to get professional guidance on how to help our most vulnerable students.

Post pandemic, we have noticed that we have many students suffering from mental health problems. We want the Active in Mind programme to be a start to building mental health champion in our school and hope to build on this as we progress through the next couple of years.

We have always had a number of pupils who reach KS4 without the resilience and tools necessary to help them cope with exams and other pressures. We often notice traits in younger pupils that might make them more susceptible to this kind of pressure and stress therefore I wanted to run a programme to intervene before problems really develop."

Before the programme...

- Half of young people did not feel relaxed on either 'every' or 'most' days (n=883)

- 4 in 10 young people did not feel positive about the future on either 'every' or 'most' days (n=888)

- 1 in 10 young people never felt useful (n=886)

- 1 in 10 young people never dealt with problems well (n=885)

Teachers most often reported that the challenges young people were facing include:

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Low confidence
- Low self-esteem
- Poor motivation
- Poor social skills

Sample size: 64

ℹ REACH

21,216 young people engaged in the Active in Mind programme since it began

692 teachers have been trained as part of the Active in Mind programme since it began

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Following the programme...

Mentors

89% improved their leadership skills (n=402)

86% improved their team working skills (n=310)

84% improved their communication skills (n=309)

81% improved their empathy (n=163)

Mentees

71% felt more confident trying out new things (n=517)

65% felt more confident talking to others (n=515)

64% felt more relaxed (n=515)

What teachers believe are some of the greatest benefits of Active in Mind to young people (n=93)

- The amount of time spent participating in physical activity and sport (83% positive or very positive)

- Overall health and wellbeing (86% positive or very positive)

- The ability to achieve their potential (78%)

- Behaviour at school (77%)

What young people thought about taking part in Active in Mind:

" *Since starting this project I have felt more relaxed and more confident in things, like before if I wasn't good at something then I wouldn't attempt it but now I will give it a try anyway. (Mentee)*

I got a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction, knowing that I could help a group of students develop as people and have a positive impact on them. (Mentor)

I have really enjoyed taking part in this project because I love helping and collaborating with younger years. It has developed my leadership skills and highlighted the benefits of sport, not only for your physical health, but also your mental one. (Mentor)

I have been so much better after I joined this group and the activities have made me so strong and healthier than before. (Mentee)

The project allowed me to feel part of a group who I could trust, but also learn some new ways of dealing with problems. (Mentee) "

How Active in Mind can help teachers and school staff

97% rate their awareness of the value of physical activity to address the mental health challenges of young people are either very good or fairly good

92% feel more motivated

91% now rate their awareness of the value of physical activity to address the mental health challenges of young people are either very good or fairly good

91% of teachers reported feeling more competent and confident in their role following Active in Mind

77% of teachers have made improvements to their delivery as a result of Active in Mind

Sample size: 74

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