Introduction

In November 2016, Shephard & Moyes Ltd were commissioned by the Youth Sport Trust (YST) to evaluate the Lancashire Active Healthy Mind project.

The project originated from the Lancashire PE and School Sport Head Teacher Alliance. This partnership brings together Head Teachers from both Secondary and Primary schools. The Alliance shares information across the PE and sport landscape and discusses common issues and how sport and PE can be activated to address them.

A common discussion at the alliance was the increasing problems schools faced around the wellbeing of their pupils. Head teachers identified that wellbeing among their pupils was falling. To tackle this problem YST sought funding from Lancashire CYP EWB and MH Transformation Board. This was then matched by Burnley Borough Council, Chorley Borough Council or local schools to allow them to provide the project to up to 40 schools across Lancashire.

Our approach to the evaluation is show in Appendix 1.

Developing a response

We set out in Appendix 2 some of the complex factors influencing a young person’s mental health. Each young person is different and not all young people will fit neatly into categories of expected risk. The response to the problem needs to be multi-layered and multi-faceted in order to address this complexity.

Lancashire Active Healthy Minds involves three stands:

- **An initial visit between YST and the School** – this visit aims to help schools embed a whole school approach to improving health and wellbeing.

- **My Personal Best** - a universal offer providing training and resources to make life skills explicit in PE delivery.

- **Targeted intervention** - specific work with a smaller cohort of young people.

The Lancashire Active Healthy Minds approach is building on many of the areas of good practice other interventions have identified. In particular it has a strong aspiration to promote a whole school approach, to combine universal and targeted provision and to support the PE department in promoting and developing a vision for physical activity and mental wellbeing in the school.
Programme reach

35 schools
Received an initial visit

35 schools
Received training on implementing My Personal Best

65 teachers
Were trained in My Personal Best. At least 510 young people benefited from the My Personal Best training

30 schools
Selected a targeted intervention to work with a small group of young people (average 15 per school)

The initial visit brought together the senior leadership team, wellbeing and pastoral leads, PE and the Youth Sport Trust. The meetings provided an opportunity for the Youth Sport Trust to learn about the school and the schools approach to wellbeing. These sessions provided valuable insight into how the schools operated and helped the Youth Sport Trust and the school identify what targeted intervention would work most effectively in their school.

Two teachers were offered training on My Personal Best in each school. The training provided teachers with a high quality resource pack, ideas tools and techniques for implementing My Personal Best in their school. The training also supported teachers to look more widely at whole school approaches to wellbeing.
Lancashire Active Healthy Minds outcomes

Increased physical activity

Our evaluation found being part of Lancashire Active Healthy Minds can help young people be more active.

91% enjoy taking part in PE lessons with My Personal Best

81% enjoy PE lessons more now My Personal Best is used in lessons

70% agree taking part in My Personal Best has made them feel fitter and healthier

67% agree they are more physical active

50% identified how they had changed their physical activity levels

Enjoyment of PE lessons with My Personal Best leads to greater engagement in sport and physical activity outside of the PE lesson.

The increased enjoyment was also highlighted during our case study visits to schools. Teachers identified how the sessions helped the non-sporty young people get more involved in the activities.

‘the non-sporty students now see greater value and purpose in PE and seem more willing to take up physical challenges when associated with a life skill’

Teacher

‘we have observed greater willingness of non sporty young people to get involved in activities that link with a life skill which has in turn resulted in greater team work and collaboration with young people who would not normally gravitate to each other in PE lessons’

Teacher

When we asked young people how they were more active they identified a number of different reasons. It highlighted how they were becoming part of groups, including Girls Active, were more organised and were bringing in their PE kit.

‘I have joined many different clubs such as tennis. I have started running’

Young Person

Key Finding

Implementing My Personal Best in a school can help engage young people in PE and increase their enjoyment levels. It can help non-sporty young people achieve in lessons and help increase levels of physical activity outside of lessons.
Increased personal assets

Lancashire Active Healthy Minds is promoting a way of working where personal assets are developed as part of the PE delivery.

‘as a school we are shifting from the traditional PE model that develops sport skills to one where it recognises the broader skills young people develop as a result of taking part in sport’

Teacher

The model helps incorporate discussion and reflection more into the lessons and encourages more working together to solve problems. It also encourages more collaboration. This in turn helps young people develop their skills.

‘I collaborate with others – in sport I tend to not work with others but am now working better with others as I can see how it helps achieve better results’

Young Person

We also found working on My Personal Best and across the targeted intervention helped young people increase resilience and increase motivation and personal responsibility.

‘I’ve learned a lot including how to manage stress and keep calm and to never give up’

Young Person

‘from the pupils taking part over the sessions I saw a definite increase in confidence and resilience of tasks being asked of them. There was a sense of pride they had been chosen to be RAIR champions that was captured well by our athlete mentor.’

Teacher

77%
felt they were more confident

72%
had developed empathy skills

82%
had developed integrity skills

80%
felt they had developed skills around resilience

80%
had developed skills around self-motivation

76%
had developed skills around responsibility

Key Finding
Implementing Lancashire Active Healthy Minds helps build personal assets in young people. It helps build confidence and skills around resilience and self-motivation. Both the targeted and universal strands can have a positive impact on young people.
Improved school engagement

Being part of Lancashire Active Healthy Minds can also help young people in their wider school life.

62% felt they could apply the skills they had learned through My Personal Best in other parts of their school life.

72% felt they had developed listening skills.

74% felt they had developed speaking skills.

Although the sample size is small there are also indications through the more targeted work attendance and behaviour in schools improves with:

43% reporting excellent attendance at follow up compared to 35% at baseline.

45% reporting excellent behaviour at baseline compared to 29% at baseline.

This improvement in behaviour was noticed by some of the teachers involved in delivering the interventions. They highlighted how they had seen improved relationships and increased behaviour as a result of taking part in the intervention. Teachers also reported how they had been able to use the targeted intervention to work with young people to improve their behaviour.

‘Improved relationships with staff, improved attitude towards PE and school generally, behaviour incidents improving’
Teacher

‘Increased leadership and mentoring around the school. The behaviour of the target group has greatly improved’
Teacher

Key Finding

Working across a universal and targeted offer can help young people in their wider school life. Young people can develop communication and listening skills and transfer those skills to other lessons. Targeted work can also help improve attendance and behaviour.
Overall

Mental health and wellbeing is a growing issue within schools. Roughly three young people in every classroom will have a diagnosable mental health condition. Alongside this 1 in 7 young people aged 15 report low life satisfaction. If even a small section of this can be addressed there are clearly substantial benefits to be realised by individuals, their families and in the school community.

Our evaluation of the pilot year of Lancashire Active Healthy Minds has shown a relatively modest input into training and supporting PE teachers can make a positive difference within young people and schools. Lancashire Active Healthy Minds has inspired teachers to develop their PE delivery to directly incorporate personal skills development.

Lancashire Active Healthy Minds is part of the solution to improving wellbeing in schools. Mental ill health has a wide range of risk and protective factors. It is a multifaceted problem that requires a multifaceted approach. Where it is effectively implemented, this project equips PE teachers with a set of imaginative and creative tools to engage young people in physical activity and to develop skills which will over time help protect against mental ill health.

Recommendations

We found throughout our evaluation where the universal and targeted intervention are implemented with enough time and support from the school, they have the potential to make a substantial change to young peoples personal assets, physical activity and engagement with schools.

To help this implementation for further years of Lancashire Active Healthy Minds we recommend:

- Having more central resource from YST to support schools more regularly and help them overcome any implementation challenges
- Forming a stronger relationship with a smaller number of schools to help them develop a whole school approach to wellbeing with PE a key driver of this
- Providing more tools to schools to help them implement the universal and targeted intervention
- Exploring ways to develop the athlete mentor interventions to help upskill teachers while retaining the excitement of working with a professional athlete
Appendix 1

Evaluation Approach

This is the final evaluation for the pilot delivery of Lancashire Active Healthy Minds. The pilot extended over 18 months. Our approach to the evaluation is shown below.

Figure 1 - Evaluation Approach
Wellbeing in schools

The research and publications around young peoples mental health show mental health is increasingly being recognised as a challenge within schools. The data shows 1 in 10 young people have a diagnosable mental health problem and 1 in 7 15 year olds have low life satisfaction.

The research also shows there are complex set of risk and protective factors that can influence mental health. Figure 2 shows the range of risk and protective factors that will influence a young persons mental health. It helps highlight there is a complex interplay between the individual and the wider family, school and community.

Figure 2 - Risk and protective factors for mental health

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Factors</th>
<th>Individual</th>
<th>Family</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Genetic influences</td>
<td>Family disharmony or break up</td>
<td>Bullying</td>
<td>Socio-economic disadvantage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low IQ and learning disabilities</td>
<td>Inconsistent discipline style</td>
<td>Discrimination</td>
<td>Homelessness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific development delay</td>
<td>Parents with mental illness or substance abuse</td>
<td>Breakdown in or lack of positive friendships</td>
<td>Disaster, accidents, war</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication difficulties</td>
<td>Physical, sexual, neglect or emotional abuse</td>
<td>Deviant peer influences</td>
<td>or other overwhelming events</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficult temperament</td>
<td>Parental criminality or alcoholism</td>
<td>Peer pressure</td>
<td>Discrimination</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical illness</td>
<td>Death and loss</td>
<td>Poor pupil to teacher relationships</td>
<td>Other significant life events</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Academic Failure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of access to support services</td>
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<td>Low self-esteem</td>
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![Table of Risk and Protective Factors for Mental Health](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protective Factors</th>
<th>Individual</th>
<th>Family</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secure attachment experience</td>
<td>Family Harmony and stability</td>
<td>Positive school climate that enhances belonging and connectedness</td>
<td>Wider supportive network</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good communication skills</td>
<td>Supportive parenting</td>
<td>Clear policies on behaviour and bullying</td>
<td>Good housing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a belief in control</td>
<td>Strong family values</td>
<td>Open door policy for children to raise problems</td>
<td>High standard of living</td>
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<tr>
<td>A positive attitude</td>
<td>Affection</td>
<td>A whole school approach to promoting good mental health</td>
<td>Opportunities for valued social roles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiences of success and achievement</td>
<td>Clear, consistent discipline</td>
<td></td>
<td>Range of sport/leisure activities</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Capacity to reflect</td>
<td>Support for education</td>
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Developed from Public Health England – The Mental Health of Children and Young People in England

REFERENCES

1 Data in this section from a survey of 125 young people who took part in My Personal Best and 46 young people who took part in a targeted intervention. It also draws on 9 schools visits

2 Measured using the General Self-efficacy scale, baseline of 27.4 and end point of 28.3