

Suicide Safer Schools Programme

Incorporating mental health, wellbeing and peer support modules for pupils

Available from September 2022

The Suicide Safer Schools Programme is a whole school approach to suicide prevention being piloted across Cumbria by Every Life Matters from September 2022.

The programme aims not only to better prepare secondary school communities to protect against, identify and manage suicide risk but also aims to prepare a generation of young people to become more emotionally resilient as they grow into adulthood.



“Children and young people who experience thoughts of suicide or self-harm are dramatically more likely to go on to act on these thoughts as they turn into adults. Addressing the routes of this distress, and facilitating a culture of peer support and help-seeking behaviour within school pupils can result in an adult population that is far more resilient and safer from suicide in the future.”



The programme consists of;

- An evidence based and modular Pupil Education Programme covering mental health and wellbeing, peer support and suicide prevention.
- Whole school approach to staff training, supported by suicide prevention and postvention manual and policy base.
- Information and training for the parent/carer community.
- More information overleaf.

Pilot schools for 2022/23 now being recruited

The programme is fully funded and free to schools through support from Cumbria County Council, NHS Charities Together and the Freemasons Community Fund.

To discuss further details of the programme and how it can work at your school contact Vicki Boggon on 07877 647890 or vicki.boggon@every-life-matters.org.uk

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For Pupils

Mental Health Awareness, Wellbeing, Peer Support and Suicide Prevention Modules

- Modular approach of 5-15 hours (allowing flexibility of fit to school timetables) with three versions available for Years 7, 10 and 12 (TBC)
- Mental health awareness sessions developing understanding of the mental health continuum, range of available support and resources, suicide and self-harm, and promoting help seeking behaviour.
- Developing understanding how young people can promote positive wellbeing and mental health through a range of evidence based activity
- Peer support module re-enforcing what pupils can do to support each other, awareness of help and support locally and nationally, and when to take issues to trusted adults.
- Based around successful and evidence based approaches from the USA and Europe.

Note: In school age young people research suggests suicide prevention should be addressed within a broader framework of promoting understanding of mental health and encouraging help seeking behaviour. Building resilience, understanding of mental health and a willingness to reach out for support are the key ingredients in prevention.

For Staff and the School

Suicide Prevention/Self-harm Training

- Tiered approach to suicide prevention training, aiming to produce whole school awareness of suicide risk and mitigation. Programme is tailored to school requirements and availability of staff. Delivery through online/face-to-face, daytime/twilight sessions and eLearning.
- Training ranging from brief online suicide awareness modules through to specialised suicide intervention skills training for pastoral staff, safeguarding leads etc (ASK and ASIST).
- Replicated approach in broader community surrounding young people including key gatekeepers and trusted adults across youth work, sports etc.
- Youth MHFA and other specialist Mental Health training available by negotiation and at cost.

Suicide Safer Schools Manual

- Manual for managing suicide prevention activity in school community including comprehensive guidelines for staff on identifying, supporting and reporting young people at risk. Supporting young people back in to the school environment after suicide attempts, or absence due to suicide ideation. Policy templates and background to suicide prevention.
- Parallel Manual relating to postvention responses (suicide bereavement through death of pupil, staff, parent or other community member impacting school)

Suicide Safer Schools Pledge

- Options to sign up to Suicide Safer Schools Pledge based on action plan developed in partnership with Every Life Matters team covering implementation of staff training, adoption of relevant policy and practice and roll out of pupil programme.

For Parents/Carers

Information, Awareness Raising and Training within the Parent/Carer Community

- Parent/Carers focused sessions and information campaigns re-enforcing what parents/carers can do to support their children, listening skills, awareness of help and support locally and nationally, how to support help seeking behaviour.