

Jeanette from Ashbrow School

We have had someone come into school to deliver some workshops to our parents to support and develop their own mental health and wellbeing, which have gone very well. We have done a 2 week workshop called Self Esteem and Resilience and have two more booked in this half term - Stress Management (2 weeks) and Assertiveness and Communication (3 weeks). We are then looking to do a 6 week workshop called Confidence to Work next term, to fit around Rosa's sessions. As well as getting a lot out of the workshops, it has also brought together some of our parents who don't always find it easy to mix with others, which has been really good.

Joanne Thompson from Royds Hall

Just to say though that we had a useful MHST parents focus group with Emma Turner, and from it we are going to look at having an emotional wellbeing stand at parents evenings to support families with further information about what is available in the local area but also with some guides and info about general wellbeing and teenage mental health (we love using the Charlie Waller parents guides, really useful for our families).

Also looking at putting in a coffee morning type group perhaps once a term to invite parents and carers in of students that come under our wellbeing umbrella for a chat and information sharing. This is something that our SEN team currently offer and works well for them so hoping to pinch their idea!

Emma (Royds Hall EMHP):

The groups were really useful for me as an EMHP to establish what the parents thoughts and feelings were about school's mental health approach – I would like to do some more work around this as five parents out of a high number of students in the high school is a small percentage.

In terms of engaging the parents in the other schools - I have done seven of these little workshops in my MHST schools and had a variety of attendance – the schools that didn't think many parents would engage was actually the highest attended. I would recommend identifying times and days which are better for the parents by sending out a little questionnaire – this may increase attendance.

In general, Joanne reported how helpful she found it just getting a little bit of feedback from parents about how they felt the school deals with mental health difficulties.

I guess if other schools not involved in the MHST wanted to do something similar they would need to identify what it was that they wanted to gain from doing it – for me I had a specific agenda of learning what parents would like to see more of within the realms of my role – I guess some schools could do this with a group of parents to identify what they think of the mental health approach in school and what more they would like to have available etc. The main challenge is setting expectations as everything the parents want to see isn't always feasible or possible.